

INDUSTRIAL UNIONISM:

Selected Editorials

By Daniel De Leon



Socialist Labor Party of America
P.O. Box 218
Mountain View, CA 94042-0218
www.slp.org

PREFACE TO PART I

Of prime general importance at this day and hour is the subject dealt with in this pamphlet—industrial unionism. And, dealt with as it is by the master mind of American socialism and industrialism—Daniel De Leon—who, during the last decade of the 19th century, sank deep the foundations upon which the structure of industrial unionism has been and will continue to be reared—special importance is added. The articles contained herein—seven in number—have all been culled from the files of the *Daily People*, the official organ of which De Leon was the chief editor until the day of its suspension early in 1914. From these files—a veritable mine of priceless information upon the subject of the American labor movement—the Socialist Labor Party is now engaged in preparing a series of volumes dealing with the various topics taken up by De Leon during his incumbency, the first of which is the topic of industrial unionism. It is from the matter thus being prepared that the editorial articles contained herein have been selected for circulation in a wider field such as can be covered by a low-priced booklet.

The first set of articles, contained in Part I of this pamphlet, are such as were written on the subject of industrial unionism during the period prior to the year 1908, that is to say, before the fourth annual convention of the Industrial Workers of the World was raped by an anarcho-syndicalist element, which, usurping the name of the organization, and fundamentally changing its Preamble, or Declaration of Principles, impressed upon it the stamp that the IWW bears today. Part II is composed of articles written after that event and dealing, critically, with what De Leon himself, in one of these articles, designates as “Haywoodism,” besides contrasting the constructive tendencies of *true industrial unionism* with the caricature the anarcho-syndicalist has ever since sought to foist upon the American labor movement.

The working-class reader, to whom this matter now becomes accessible, cannot but profit by a close and thoughtful perusal thereof. The times we live in are portentous: they are pregnant with change. Everywhere about us we observe signs of disintegration while integration, as yet barely discernible, is nevertheless present and in action, weaving the strands of the new fabric as the old, in a more obvious and often even spectacular manner, proclaims its own decomposition. All the institutional arrangements of capitalism—its political state, the pure

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

and simple craft union, the absurdly false relation between capital and labor which craft unionism has ever sought to impregnate and narcotize the working-class mind with—all that is today in the crucible to be fire tested in the light of the new conditions arising day by day.

And the millionfold working-class mind, receiving impression after impression, day in and day out, each impression driving home with cumulative force the untenableness of the conditions confronting that class, cannot but gain, by the close study of the matter here presented, the information and the stimulus that will serve not only as an antidote and a mental counterbalance against the spurious and misleading propaganda of the capitalist information-distorting press and other agencies, but also as solid ground upon which to stand and view the ever-changing panorama of capitalist dissolution with an understanding eye and a comprehending mind. To know, to understand, to comprehend what industrial unionism is—its goal, its methods and tactics, as well as its external form—is today a matter of utmost importance to every workingman and workingwoman, for it means nothing less than to obtain a clear perception of the framework of future society, that society which the present is laboring to give birth to.

The hour of birth pangs seems to have arrived and the hour of delivery cannot be too far distant.

HENRY KUHN

Brooklyn, January 1920

Two Flies With One Clap.

The Milwaukee, Wis., *Wahrheit*—a “Social Democratic,” alias “Socialist,” alias “Public Ownership” party paper, which more than once has branded the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* as corrupt—has now, together with its English yoke-fellow, the Milwaukee *Social Democratic Herald*, hurled the first fulmination against the Manifesto, issued recently from Chicago, and published in these columns, for the purpose of putting an end to the labor-disrupting practices of A.F. of L.-ism; and, as was to be expected, the *New Yorker Volkszeitung*, also of that party, reproduces with well explainable satisfaction the fulmination from the columns of its one-time brander. Thus these two flies have placed themselves nicely where they may be flattened out with one clap.

The “arguments” thus jointly made by the duo fall mainly under three heads:

The duo contends, in the first place, that it is a cardinal principle with their party not to “interfere in Trades Union differences.” The assertion is false; the reverse of it is true. What, if not an “interference in Trades Union differences” was their posture of support for the A.F. of L. or Tobin Boot & Shoe Workers’ Union in the “difference” that broke out between that Tobin-Carey-Sieverman concern, on the one hand, and the Lynn and Haverhill K. of L. shoeworkers, on the other, when the former stood convicted of being leagued with the manufacturers, and of recruiting for them convicts and plug-uglies to scab it on the latter? Or their posture of venomously echoing and spreading the A.F. of L. calumnies of “Union-wrecker,” “scab,” etc., against the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance in the “differences” that broke out between the two organizations, when the former, true to its labor-disrupting spirit, initiated strikes against the latter’s cigarmakers at Seidenberg’s and at Davis’s, against the latter’s machinists at Port Morris and Bloomfield, and has ever since kept up the false cry? Or their posture, at their last national convention, in slapping the face of the A.L.U. in the “difference” that broke out between the A.L.U. and the A.F. of L. on the subject of the latter’s endearing relations with the Civic Federation?—They do not “interfere in Trades Union differences,” don’t they? Why they are up to their elbows in interference, but always and only on the side of the labor-lieutenants of the Capitalist Class, always consequently, on the side of scabbery.

The duo next contends that “the rank and file elects the leaders; if

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

better leaders are wanted, the process should be to enlighten the rank and file.” The duplicity of the contention is transparent. Such a contention implies freedom among the rank and file. The organization of the Gompers style of unionism is builded upon capitalist economics, hence upon despotism for the workingman rank and file. The intimate connections of the pure and simple Union leaders with the employers—possible only in such guild form of Unionism—renders the leaders satraps of the capitalist class, with the Union rank and file as abject dependents, who dare not thwart the leader lest they be deprived of their bread. What about the Corregan case, where the leaders of the International Typographical Union sought to punish free speech and criticism with starvation? What about the Berry case in Tobin’s Union? What about the cases of Valentine Wagner and Schmidt in the Brewers’ Union? What about the cases untold, where goods, pronounced “scab” by the leader, are allowed to be worked upon in another and “union” shop with the connivance of the same leader, who would forthwith throw upon the street that unsophisticated rank and file man in such a shop who would dare to interfere with the leader’s “business?” Need more be said on the subject? Well, we shall cite just one more and crushing instance. The rank and file of the machinists affiliated with the A.F. of L. voted overwhelmingly in favor of Socialism and for throwing Gompers overboard. This notwithstanding, their delegates at the immediately following Boston convention of the A.F. of L. voted the membership solidly against both propositions. And who was it that opened wide its mouth and yelled at this act of betrayal? Why, the very papers that are now prating about enlightening the rank and file as the all-sufficient means for their liberation. It was the *Social Democratic Herald* of January 2, 1904, that came out with three-column wide and flaming headlines on the “Shameless Betrayal of Labor by Its Leaders,” over statistical tables showing that the rank and file of the machinists had cast a majority of 2,696 votes to endorse Socialism, and a majority {sic} of 1,062 votes to dump Gompers! It was the *Wahrheit* and *Volkszeitung* that echoed these denunciations and figures! And what did the “enlightenment” avail? Nothing, of course.—That the mere “enlightenment of the rank and file” will not suffice to change the leadership of bodies, whose economic and sociologic architecture places them at the mercy of their governing powers, Russia is now illustrating. Fain would the Czar and Russian Bureaucracy have the revolutionists limit their activity to “enlightening the rank and file,” provided the “enlightenment” always taught a proper deference toward the organization, and instilled a wholesome horror for the thought of upsetting the same. So, likewise, do the labor-lieutenants

Daniel De Leon

of capitalism gladly allow their rank and file to be “enlightened,” provided always such “enlightenment” be always accompanied with the warning—such as the “enlightening” *Wahrheit*, *Volkszeitung* and *Social Democratic Herald* are now uttering—to “be careful lest they give the death-blow” to the structural system upon which alone the labor-lieutenant of the capitalist class can stand and thrive, and by means of which alone the rank and file can be betrayed.

Finally, the duo advances the dogma that “a Trades Union is no political organization, and must be none.” In so far as the theory is true, it has no application to the point at issue; in so far as it is sought to be applied to the point at issue, it is false. Of course, technically, a Trades Union is not a political organization. Political organizations are constructed along the lines of existing political demarkations. These are, to-day, Assembly, Senatorial, Congressional, Aldermanic, Judicial Districts, and so forth. Trades know no such fictitious boundaries. They are entities of a different category. But why are they? This is the rub. They are entities of a different category because they are CONSTITUENCIES OF A DIFFERENT SOCIAL ORDER—of the Parliament of the Socialist Republic. In other words, the very circumstance, that compulsorily renders the Trades Union non-political to-day, forces to the fore the essentially political character of the Union. In short, the Trades Union is to-day a child a-borning—not yet freed from the ligaments of capitalist society, yet pulsating forwards into the life of the Co-operative Commonwealth. The evidences of the political character of the Trades Union are innumerable; nor does any quarter furnish these in larger numbers than the very quarter from which the dogma originates. Let a pure and simple Union—that is to say, a trade organization that ignores or even denies the irreconcilable class struggle between the Capitalist and the Working Class—let such a body meet, and watch it. In nine hundred and ninety-nine out of a thousand instances, lobbying committees to political bodies, or discussions on favors received, or injuries suffered from political quarters, will engage, often absorb its attention. A striking illustration of how utterly unable the labor-lieutenants of the Capitalist Class themselves are to suppress the solemn fact of the union’s political character was furnished in last week’s installment in these columns of Comrade H. J. Brimble’s matchless narrative of “The Irrepressible Class Conflict in Colorado.” Brimble there quotes John Mitchell, the President of the United Mine Workers’ Union, as declaring last year: “If there’s one Union coal miner in Colorado that is for Peabody—I say this so far as I am concerned—he will be put out of the Union. I say this with a full realization of what it means.”

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

The Trades Union cannot escape its political essence. A droll proof, and withal pathetic, is found in the hysterics of rage that the labor-lieutenants of the Capitalist Class are instinctively thrown into the moment a member of their organization utters Working Class economics. He need not mention the word “politics”; he need not breathe the word “party”; he need not even whisper the word “Socialism.” His utterance of economics that reflect the class struggle is all that is needed. The labor-lieutenants of the Capitalist Class will jump up with the cry: “No politics in the Union!” It is an instinctive act. No mouse scents the dreaded cat more unerringly. And brilliant is the fact. It illumines the field of the Labor Movement. By the light it sheds, two closely connected facts, both of transcendent importance, leap to sight:—

First—That the properly constructed trades union, under healthy social surroundings, need not mention the word “politics.” IT IS UNDERSTOOD;

Second—That a bona fide party of socialism cannot ignore the Trades Union: the party that calls itself Socialist and does ignore the Union, either is sincere, and then it breaks its own back; or it is fraudulent, and then it must have its back broken.

The dogma that a “Trades Union is no political organization, and must be none” is an old, old acquaintance. There never yet was a labor-lieutenant of the Capitalist Class who did not mouthe, nor yet an “intellectual” freak or fraud who did not rant it.

These three are the straws with which the *Wahrheit-Volkszeitung* duo seeks to oppose the Manifesto issued from Chicago—the herald of the second, and, it is to be hoped, the culminating wave in a Movement, the first wave of which was the S.T.&L.A. And well befitting such straws is the whisk with which the duo binds the bunch. That whisk is: “We shall refuse to join!” Who are the “we’s”? If the “we’s” are to be understood to mean the private owners of the two papers and their two English poodles, who cares! Nor do the “we’s” mean their own wee bits. By “we” they mean their party. They assume to speak for it. In other words, they are doing again what they did once before when they (privately owned concerns) initiated “referendum” votes in a party that they have sought to palm off on the Working Class of America as a party of Socialism—they are issuing orders to their menials.

Like bunch of straws, like binding whisk. It is impossible to be Socialist in a manner more perfectly bourgeois.

Daily People, Vol. V, No. 209. Wednesday, January 25, 1905

Daniel De Leon

A Mission of the Trades Union.

The discussion, now going on upon the Trades Union, is bringing to the surface one point after another of vital importance to the Socialist Movement. The revelation of these various points is turning the light upon two facts of deep interest—first, that the Trades Union is the point upon which the Socialist Movement must revolve, and, secondly, that the “pure and simple” style of Unionism has wandered into the wilderness, far away from its real mission. While almost all the points that are coming to the surface, whether they proceed from friendly or unfriendly sources, tend to prove the latter fact, there is one not yet touched upon that illustrates stronger than any the degeneration of “pure and simpledom,” and that at the same time has the merit of aiding in the understanding of events that are casting their shadows before them.

A mission of the Trades Union is to drill the membership of the Working Class in the habit of self-imposed discipline. The mission of capitalism, the Socialist knows, is to so organize the mechanism of production that wealth can be so abundantly produced as to free mankind from want and the fear of want, from the brute’s necessity of a life of arduous toil in the production of the brute’s mere necessities of life. Socialist philosophy has made this clear. American conditions, however,—the conditions possible only on an area of vast dimensions and where capitalism has been able to develop untrammelled and reach its highest economic and political expression—American conditions, accordingly, have revealed a subsidiary mission of capitalism, to wit, the mission of KEEPING ORDER, while the revolutionary class, the working class, is gathering the needed qualities for itself to assume control. This mission of capitalism is one that all previous ruling classes have also had to fulfill towards the class below. With capitalism, however, the mission assumes infinitely graver importance. The Working Class, a property-less class, and in this respect unique in the succession of revolutionary classes, lacks an element that is a drilling force in itself—property. The defect must be substituted from another source. Thorough education in its own class-interests is valuable, is indispensable, but it is not all-sufficient. The habit of self-enforced discipline is an essential accompaniment to class-consciousness. The latter, without the former, leads to magnificent but fruitless displays of heroism—vide the Paris Commune; the former, without the latter, leads adown to the plane of mercenary bands—vide the cohorts of Imperial Rome of old. Combined,

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

however, the two will blast the rule of capitalism, smite the shackles off the limbs of Labor, and rear the Socialist Republic. That “pure and simpledom” neglects the drilling in class-consciousness, aye, prevents it, has been amply shown. “Pure and simpledom,” however, also interferes with and undermines the habit of self-imposed discipline.

As that division of the Labor or Socialist Movement that will have to give the final and decisive blow to capitalist rule, the Trades Union must necessarily illustrate in its make-up the fullest development of all that is implied in that product of civilized man known as “organization”—UNITY. In the vocabulary of the bona fide Trades Union, “anarchy” is a term of derision, “autonomy” a burlesque, “fusion” buffoonery, “broadness” a mockery, “tolerance” a trick, and despotism an impossibility. As that division of the Labor or Socialist Movement in which none belongs but the wage-slave, the facilities enjoyed by the Trades Union as an Academy for drilling its membership in the two essentials for the emancipation of their class—discipline and class consciousness—are matchless. “Pure and simpledom” prevents the latter and lets slip the opportunity for the former. Being partly an organization built by the grace of the employer, often entirely so, the “pure and simple” Union is essentially a compulsory affair. From this circumstance a number of others flow. The most important one of all for the subject under consideration is that the membership in innumerable instances are held to the Union only by the bond of “paying dues.” This being about all that is demanded of them, they either put in an appearance at the meetings only to pay the blackmail and then go away again, or they never come; they are spared even that trouble; an officer goes around where they work and collects the money. As a consequence, the educational powers of the Union are lost. The discussions at its meetings are vapid, if not harmful,—and as to discipline, it becomes a monstrous caricature, the abjectness of men tyrannized by the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class.

How far astray “pure and simpledom” has wandered from the mission to drill in discipline, and to what extent it has poisoned the mind of the Working Class, was three years ago pathetically illustrated by the American Labor Union. This body was struggling to free itself from the trammels of “pure and simple” superstition. Its constituent bodies had attested incipient clear-sightedness by tearing themselves loose from the American Federation of Labor. They had seen glimmerings of the truth that the Labor Movement is essentially a political Movement. They were shaking off the baneful superstition that fetters the workers to political scabbery as a “glorious act of freedom.” In short, the

Daniel De Leon

American Labor Union was groping its way out of “pure and simple-
dom.” What was the reasonable expectation under such circumstances?
The expectation under such circumstances was natural that such an
economic organization would simultaneously realize its disciplinary
mission, and act accordingly. The Trades Union that has matured to the
point of deserving the name, manifests its sense of the importance of
discipline, not only by its action within, but also by its action without.
Its vocabulary will attach the proper contempt to “anarchy,” “autono-
my,” “fusion,” “broadness,” “tolerance,” etc.; and doing so it will have
nothing but contempt, especially for an organization, that, pretending
to be a political party of Socialism, pretending, accordingly, to be no less
important a division of the Labor Movement than its vanguard, disre-
gards the essentials for discipline. The American Labor Union did not.
So powerful was the mental domination of “pure and simpledom” that
the American Labor Union endorsed the so-called Socialist, alias Social
Democratic party—a body, which, being a genuine breath of American
Federation of Labor “pure and simpledom,” throws discipline to the
dogs as “narrow,” preaches different tenets in different latitudes and
longitudes as “autonomy,” fuses with capitalist parties as an evidence of
its “tolerance” and tolerates an irresponsible privately owned press as a
proof of its “freedom.” The sight was pathetic. Trying to escape “pure
and simpledom” by one door, the American Labor Union’s disregard of
the disciplinary mission of bona fide Unionism on the field of Labor
caused it virtually to tumble back into the same quagmire by another
door.

The signs are that this blunder will soon be rectified. So long as the
Working Class has not disciplined itself into fitness, so long will the only
remaining mission of the Capitalist Class demand the latter’s continu-
ance in power. Capitalism has fully fulfilled its economic mission: the
country’s mechanism of production is ready for Socialism. But the
Working Class is not yet ready for the Spirit of the Age to entrust it with
the charge of society. The Working Class still is a tumultuous mob. **NO
REVOLUTIONARY CLASS IS EVER RIPE FOR SUCCESS BEFORE
IT HAS ITSELF WELL IN HAND.** Until the Working Class of America
shall have taken itself in hand, the Capitalist Class has a mission to
perform—to **KEEP ORDER**, and it is doing so with a rod of scorpions.

It is one of the missions of the Trades Union to drill its class into the
discipline that civilization demands.

Daily People, Vol. V, No. 247. Saturday, March 4, 1905

“The Intellectual.”

Everywhere, the serious Socialists in the world are engaged in the effort to extricate the Movement from the meshes of the “Intellectual,” and to set up barriers against his approach, or at least dams against his pernicious influence. Nowhere, however, are conditions so favorable as in America for the detection of the microbe. American conditions furnish an easy test to tell the “Intellectual” by. The test is his attitude on the Trades Union, meaning thereby the economic organization of the Working Class.

The general feature of the “Intellectual” is superficiality, coupled, of course, with the usual accompaniment of vanity and conceit—the features that the sage had in mind when he declared that “a little learning puffeth up.” Unschooling in the prime requirement for knowledge—the art of thinking—the “Intellectual” equips himself with scraps of learning, and, decked with these ill-fitting feathers, he forthwith sets himself up as a perambulating lump of wisdom. Of course, he is twisted on every important practical question and revels only in abstractions; of course he bumps up at every step against facts that, “intellectual” though he calls himself, he lacks the intellect to apprehend; and, as a natural consequence of all this, he slowly acquires an instinctive, if not involuntary aversion for whatever requires exact knowledge, and a malignant hatred for those before whom, being of superior caliber than himself, his “genius” feels rebuked. The general principles of Socialism are so obvious that the “Intellectual” is fascinated by them. He drifts into the Socialist Movement as straws drift into a vortex. He comes there to shine, generally also to gather coppers; and he flutters his loose-hanging feathers. As a rule he considers himself a God-ordained Editor, and forthwith proceeds to throw upon others the blame for his utter failure, being wholly unable to detect the cause in his own short-comings, and thus to improve. The “Intellectual,” named so in mockery, is incapable of learning; and, seeing that he joins the Movement, not for the Movement’s sake, but for his own, at all critical moments he is found utterly oblivious of the Movement’s interests, ready to sacrifice these interests to his own crossed malevolence. Words and sound being the “Intellectual’s” realm, he is ever found an adept in the tricks of the juggling fiends who palter with words in a double sense. He will say anything; he will sign anything; and, just as soon as the maggot bites him, wriggle out of it. Of course, the “Intellectual” is found out, eventually—

Daniel De Leon

if not later. There is the rub! His meretricious glitter often deceives the expertest eyes and ears. Often he has done incalculable harm before he is "got on to." Now, then, everywhere, outside of America, and the English speaking world in general, the microbe of the "Intellectual" must be given time to develop before it is dealt with and stamped out. In America it is not necessary to give the evil rope before checking it. The conditions in the English speaking world, in America especially where capitalism is fullest-orbed, furnish the test by which the nuisance can be immediately detected, and, withal, furnishes the means to abate it instantly.

Socialism, it has been well said, can spring only out of the lap of capitalism. But capitalism, together with all its necessary appurtenances, is not equally in evidence in all countries. In America. Prominent among these appurtenances, and important in connection with the subject under consideration, are three circumstances:

First:—The total absence of the last vestige of feudalism, including therein the sense of honor in the ruling class;

Second:—As an immediate consequence of the first, a corrupt and elaborate electoral machinery through which none but capitalist principles will be allowed to filter to triumph; and

Third:—As a consequence of the second, the sense of the unquestioned necessity of a bona-fide and powerful economic organization of the Working Class.

It follows from this sequence that here in America the Union, the economic organization of Labor leaps to the transcendent importance that Marx's genius dimly descried in the distance, and that it has or can have nowhere outside of the English speaking world. The proper economic organization of Labor, the Union, in short, is indispensable in America for the emancipation of the Working Class. No Union, no Socialist Republic. The political arm of the Movement will be worn away useless without the economic arm is ready to second, to supplement, and at the critical moment, to substitute it. Nay, it may happen worse. Without the regiments of the class conscious Union step close upon the heels of their vanguard, of the political wedge, the "carefully selected" Socialists whom the electoral machinery of the capitalist class may allow to filter through to "victory" will ten to one lose whatever honor they had: they will become what we have seen the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic, alias Public Ownership party's successful candidates, without exception, became,—fakirs, that is, traitors in disguise; and what that means to the Movement, it is needless to explain.

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

Accordingly, the Union that is a “Brotherhood of Capital and Labor” concern is a capitalist brigade; accordingly, only the class conscious Union stands within the pale of the Labor Movement; accordingly, the question of Unionism is of prime importance to the Socialist Movement; and finally, and capping the climax of sequences, the Socialist, whose opportunities for education raise him in letters above the rank and file of the wage slave, but who considers the Union a “passing affair,” who does not give it as much thought as he does to the political movement, and who sees in it only a quarry for votes—such a Socialist lacks the grasp of the Movement; he can be safely put down from the start as an “Intellectual,” and looked out for. It is an unerring test. Needless to wait until he betray the Cause later: he is betraying it now.

Every cause has its effect, and every effect re-acts back upon its cause, and, in turn, itself turns into cause. It was the Socialist Labor Party, a political and not an economic organization, that flashed across the path of the American Labor Movement the needed light upon Unionism. The education that the Party spread about called forth from the ranks of fully 15,000 workingmen—the initial membership of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance—the demand for the organization of that body. What it meant was speedily recognized by kindred spirits of evil. The Gomperses, whose occupation would be gone, and the “Intellectuals,” whose heels felt giped in advance by the prospect of an economic body that would compel them to walk straight, struck hands. With slander and other such means they fought the new body. But all their efforts were of no avail. The Truth, that they were periodically pronouncing “dead,” kept them hopping; and, to-day, the event in the Labor Movement of America is the call that proceeded last January from a conference in Chicago, of which, in his report published in *The People*, Frank Bohn said that its members “were practically unanimous in unqualified ratification of class conscious, industrial Unionism as advocated by the S.T.&L.A.” The call summons the working class of America to a convention to place the Economic Movement of the land upon a plane that befits the country. The applause with which the call has been received justifies the expectation that a new, large and class conscious Union will be born in June. Thus the expectation is justified that what was at first effect will now be powerful enough to re-act back upon the cause—that the economic movement will take and be powerful enough to enforce a stand, which, among other virtues, will have the virtue of smoking the “Intellectuals” out of their last haven of refuge—the so-called Socialist party, whither they fled out of the S.L.P. when the S.T.&L.A. was established—and thus purge and solidify the political

Daniel De Leon

Movement of the American Working Class.

The “Intellectual” cannot grasp the importance of Unionism. It is a case of material interests and moral and mental make-up combining. For bona-fide Unionism the “Intellectual” has the feelings that a scalded cat has for water; to bogus Unionism he takes like a duck does to a mill-pond;—in short, the question of Unionism is a test that assays the “Intellectual,” and proves him dross.

Daily People, Vol. V., No. 262. Sunday, March 19, 1905

The Chicago Convention.

Frederick Engels, next to Karl Marx, the greatest Socialist philosopher, reiterates in his great work, *Socialism, Utopian and Scientific*, the old Greek philosophy first clearly enunciated by Heraclitus, who said “Everything is and yet is not, for everything flows, is in constant motion, is in constant process of formation and dissolution.” In other words, life is not a fixed but an ever changing and growing phenomenon. In no phase of life is this philosophy so applicable in its general features as in the economic and social spheres of man. There integration and disintegration are constant and incessant.

To-day a great portion of the Working Class of this country is turning its gaze in the direction of Chicago. In the great lake city of the West there opens to-day a Convention of Workingmen, which, judging from the Manifesto calling it, is destined to mark an important change in the history of labor in this country. This convention promises to launch an economic organization of the Working Class on the lines of the conflicting interests of Capital and Labor, in direct contradistinction to the prevailing organization, that is based on the principle of the mutual interests of Capital and Labor. Such an organization necessarily demands integration and disintegration. It necessarily ignores those who regard the present form of trades unionism as fixed and stable, and proceeds to build in conformity with sound principles, philosophical as well as economic.

That such promises as those of the Chicago Manifesto have been held out before and have ended in comparative failure—that the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance and the American Labor Union, for instance, have attempted the same thing with a measure of success less than that

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

confidently expected—is no valid reason for discrediting such promises, or not aiding in the work that would fulfill them—integration and disintegration are processes that must often be accompanied by failure and experimentation in order to be finally successful. The fact that the efforts to launch a class-conscious organization of Labor are attaining a certain cumulative force, despite their comparative failures, argues well for their final triumph.

Another fact, worthy of consideration, is the more favorable condition of affairs in which the new organization will be launched. First, it is backed by a larger number of weekly and monthly papers, free from the throttling influences of capitalist trades unionism than ever supported such a movement before. Headed by the *Daily* and *Weekly People*, and the Swedish, Jewish, German, Hungarian and Italian organs of the Socialist Labor Party, it has a press that wields a wide influence and can do much constructive as well as destructive, as much defensive as well as offensive, work in its behalf. Again, the growth of Socialist sentiment and of revolutionary Socialism are factors that cannot be ignored. They possess a power for good in combatting the fallacious and treacherous workings of capitalist unionism, that was not so conspicuously present in the past attempts of the kind promised by the Chicago Manifesto. With them present, capitalist reasoning and calumny no longer possess the field undisturbed, but are confronted by opponents whose increasing strength threatens them with overwhelming disaster. Finally, the new movement has the existing disgust against the treachery and futility of Gompersism, combined with its disintegrating tendencies, to aid it. The Working Class look from 'Frisco to Fall River. They note mutual scabbery, bribery and defeat everywhere. They note the National Civic Federation and its malignant influence in their affairs, as exemplified in the Subway strike. They are, accordingly, alive to Gompersism's impotency and treachery. Moreover, and above all, they note the organic changes in the system of Capitalism itself, and the corresponding fallacies of the Gompers' unionism. Hence they are leaving the latter and turning toward class-conscious unionism, with all that that implies. When were the promises for such unionism ever more favorable and worthy of support? Never before in the history of the American Labor Movement.

It is to be hoped that the Chicago Convention is alive to these facts, and will improve upon them. A step backward from the Manifesto would be deplorable, while conditions justify many steps forward. The mere declaration of industrial unionism will not suffice without the determination to make class-consciousness the essence of the new movement.

Daniel De Leon

Some sapient “Socialists” proclaim the International Typographical Union an industrial union, because it includes in its ranks many branches of the printing industry. The fact that these are the better paid branches, who use the inferior branches to raise their own salaries exclusively, as was done in the Brooklyn *Eagle* strike, doesn’t affect the thinking apparatus of these wiseacres any. Nor does the International Typographical Union’s endorsement of the Cragg-Jorgessen* (sic) policy of settling the Labor question, have the slightest impression upon their “wisdom.” They, now as always, are pleased with the form, the essence is beyond them. Save us from such “industrial unionism.” It is the old poisonous adulteration with a new label! If the Chicago Convention measures up to its duty and answers Labor’s prayer for relief, it will progress as it deserves. Otherwise retrogression will be its lot, while integration and disintegration will continue in the world of Labor as of yore.

Daily People, Vol. V, No. 362. Tuesday, June 27, 1905

Morgan and the *Federalist*.

No student of the Labor Movement should miss a line of the stenographic report of the recent Chicago Industrialists’ Convention, now being published in the *Daily People*. Important as were all the other episodes of the Convention, none is comparable with the episode that is just now going through these columns. It is the episode concerning what may be termed the constituencies of the future parliament of the Socialist Republic. The debate on Section 2 of Article I is of prime value, and valuable in more ways than one. It is valuable for the facts that it brings into light in the matter of the present development of production; it is valuable for the resultant conflict of opinion as to what that development portends; it is valuable in that it illustrates the governmental revolution that is impending; finally, it is valuable in that it heralds a new cycle in the affairs of man—a cycle no less leading than was the transition from the gens into the State form of society. He who

*“Krag-Jorgensen” was the name of the military rifle adopted by the U.S. Army in 1892. “The Krag-Jorgensen policy of settling the labor question” was the policy of calling out the militia to “settle” the labor question with a gun.

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

would profit by all these features of the debate had better brush up both on the *Federalist* and on Lewis H. Morgan's great work on Ancient Society.

When this country freed itself from England a magazine, named the *Federalist* sprang into existence. The masterminds of the day were the contributors. The articles were not written to sell. They dealt with the form of government that the recently emancipated colonies should adopt; they dug deep into other systems, established comparisons and contrasts, and drew conclusions for immediate guidance. Opinions frequently differed widely. To-day, reading those debates—because debates they were in substance—by the light of the torch lighted by Morgan, they assume invaluable importance. Understanding them, they will be seen to be preparatory for the debate on Section 2 of Article I. Understanding both them and Morgan, the seeming confusion and seemingly irreconcilable views expressed at the Chicago Convention become luminous.

The gens social system was built upon men; territory was reached only through men. The gens period was the period of the early communism of the human race. Out of the gens grew the present political State; it is built upon territory; in it men are reached only through territory. The political State marks the culmination of the march of the human race from primitive communism to capitalism. In its spiral march the human race is now headed, not backward, but upward to higher communism. The break-up of capitalism means a reversal to gens conditions, only upon the higher plane that capitalism makes possible. The form of government that the gens system required had to make way for the form of government required by capitalism; inevitably, therefore, the form of government of capitalism must and will be supplanted by another, which shall be the true shadow and reflex of the changed material conditions that mark this third revolution. In the transition of society from the gens form to that of capitalism, there was much confusion and conflict of opinion as to the method of administration; no less confusion and conflict is noticeable at the various stages in the formation of the capitalist State; similar confusion and conflict inevitably manifests itself to-day in the Labor Movement touching the form of the administration of the oncoming Socialist Republic. The confusion and conflict of thought on this subject was focused in the Chicago Convention. By the light of Morgan and the *Federalist* the confusion becomes intelligent, and the conflict instructive.

There may be said to have been three groups, or tendencies, at Chicago, each of which marked the degree to which it had emancipated

Daniel De Leon

itself from capitalist governmental habits of thought, and the degree to which it was conscious of whither the social drift led.

The lowest of these groups may be said to have been typified by Fairgrieve of Montana. Fairgrieve's group realized the necessity of the industrial or Socialist form of government, but its mind was still clogged with capitalist habits of governmental thought. As a consequence, the Fairgrieve group proposed Industrialism based upon State boundaries. But, now, Industrialism partakes of the gens feature in which, not territory, but men (industries wherever located, regardless of the political demarkations of the capitalist State) are the constituencies; the State, on the contrary, implies the capitalist thought of territory as the basis for government. The plan of the Fairgrieve group was a mongrel concept; by taking a bit of each it got wholly out of touch with both.

The next higher group was the group represented by Coates. Coates would probably consider it a joke upon him to say that what he represented was the extremist's application of Industrialism: Industrialism run riot. The Socialist governmental constituency is the Industry. Coates' mind was correctly swayed by that idea. But the constituency that he wanted was not the broad constituency of the Industrialist, it was the narrow fractional constituency of the craft—a fragment of the egg-shell of pure and simpledom out of which he was hatched, and which clung to his back. His plan was as irrationally Industrialist, as the capitalist governmental plan would be irrationally capitalist that proposed countries for the constituents of Federal Senators. Whatever administration a social system sets up it must be workable. The Coates plan was not workable; it was a caricature of Industrialism: he represented an element that always accompanies great movements: the element that is wide awake enough to realize that the bottom has dropped out of the ship on which they were embarked, and seek to save some slight, little bit of property before they leap over board. There, no doubt, were elements corresponding to the Coates group when the gens system broke up. Indeed, Morgan tells of them; and the study of them is of no little interest.

The third group is the group that prevailed. It was the group represented by Sherman, Trautmann, De Leon, Hall, Hagerty, Haywood, Riordan, etc. It was the group that understood the meaning of the revolutionary period that we are approaching the safety of which depends upon avoiding both mongrelism and caricatureism: it was the group that recognized the only basis upon which the administration of the Socialist Republic can be reared—Industrial constituencies to the total exclusion of political constituencies.

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

The *Federalist* and Morgan's great work is a reading that all should buckle down to who realize that the work done at Chicago was but the beginning of a work that has yet to be perfected.

Daily People, Vol. VI, No. 68. Wednesday, September 6, 1905

Industrialism.

It is curious to watch how the gospel of the Industrial Workers of the World—the Movement of which it was prophesied that it would be launched still-born, and concerning which one hears the occasional remark that it is actually dead—is being seized upon by its very foes and the very element whose doom the Movement sounds. Is this an instance of that highest form of adulation that one man can bestow upon another—IMITATION? Does the manifestation, perchance, go deeper, does it imply CONVERSION, and is it, as such, a symptom for cheers? Far from that! It is a siren song intended to lure to destruction. An instance in point is the language that is being held by the *Journal* of the United Mine Workers, the Civic Federation decoy duck for the working miners. The *Journal* declares that the United Mine Workers believes in industrialism and that it is organized upon that principle. This is a false statement.

“Industrialism,” no more than “capitalism,” no more than “Socialism,” no more, in short, than any other institution consists of any one thing, nor yet of an aggregation of things. “Industrialism” like “capitalism,” like “Socialism,” etc., is a whole, the essence of which is a principle, and all the external appearances of which are manifestations of that one central principle, to which all the external manifestations are subservient and all of which jointly illustrate it.

Capitalism, for instance, does not consist merely in the private ownership of the necessities for production. If such ownership were the determining feature and quality of capitalism, then capitalism reigned in the days of serfdom. The serf owned his tools, the feudal lord owned the land—two necessities for production. Yet that was not capitalism. Capitalism is that social system under which the tool of production (Capital) has grown to such mammoth size that the class that owns it rules land and sea like a despot, inaccessible and undethronable by economic competition, and steadily swelling the number of its slaves, the

Daniel De Leon

wage-slaves, thereby itself recruiting the forces that will overthrow it, and push civilization onward to the Socialist Republic.—That is capitalism, not any one or set of seemingly capitalist manifestations.

So with Socialism. It does not consist merely in the overthrow of private ownership in any one or all of the necessities of life. If such overthrow of private ownership were Socialism, then the overthrow of the one-time private ownership of military forces, and the present State ownership of the same, would be Socialism. Obviously that is not Socialism. A limb of a human being is not a human being. Socialism is that social system under which the necessities of production are owned, controlled and administered by the people, for the people, and under which, accordingly, the cause of political and economic despotism having been abolished, class-rule is at end.—That is Socialism, nothing short of that.

So, again, with “Industrialism.” It does not consist of a clubbing together of a few closely kindred trades into one industry. If that were “Industrialism,” then, indeed, Mitchell’s organization, which holds together several, not even all of the crafts, that work immediately in and around the mines, but which is an autonomous body; which is a body that has its hands at the throats of all other crafts and industries, leaving them all in the lurch every time they are under capitalist fire; which is a body that holds that the capitalist plunderer and the plundered wage-slave are brothers with reciprocal interests; and which as a result of its inherent principle, is a body that aims at the preposterous task of establishing “harmonious relations” between the Baers and their victims, the miners—then, indeed, would such a monstrosity as Mitchell’s organization, with its capitalist mine-holders as secretary-treasurers for the Union, be a sample of Industrialism. That, certainly, is not Industrialism. Industrialism is that system of economic organization of the Working Class that denies that Labor and the Capitalist Class are brothers; that recognizes the irrepressible nature of the conflict between the two; that perceives that struggle will not, because it can not, end until the Capitalist Class is thrown off Labor’s back; that recognizes that an injury to one workingman is an injury to all; and that, consequently, and with this end in view, organizes the **WHOLE WORKING CLASS** into **ONE UNION**, the same subdivided only into such bodies as their respective craft-tools demand, in order to wrestle as **ONE BODY** for the immediate amelioration of its membership, and for their eventual emancipation by the total overthrow of the Capitalist Class, its economic and its political rule.

A being in a bonnet is not therefore a woman, a being with a beard on

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

is not therefore a man, nor yet is a wolf in sheepskin a lamb. The I.W.W. respectfully declines kinship with Belmont's labor lieutenant's Mitchell's concern.

Daily People, Vol. VI, No. 207. Tuesday, January 23, 1906

With Marx for Text.

“Only the economic organization is capable of setting on foot a true political party of Labor, and thus raise a bulwark against the power of Capital.”

—MARX.

It happens with Marx as with Shakespeare—their sentences are weighted with meaning. As it does not suffice to “read” Shakespeare, neither does it suffice to “read” Marx. Their utterances must be STUDIED. There is hardly a sentence-utterance of Marx that does not contain, compressed, half a dozen separate thoughts, which, combined, present a simple-looking sentence enough, heavy, however, with meaning. The sentence used for text at the head of this article is typically Marxian. It compresses fully six distinct subjects, running along parallel lines. It condenses the essence of fully six distinct sociologic topics, which, woven together constitute a mighty thought. The sentence is a flashlight upon the nature and mission of the economic organization, upon the nature and mission of the political action, upon the relation there is between the two, and, by inference, upon the theories of “Neutrality towards Unions,” of the “Transitoriness of the Union,” and of “Physical Force.”

The first sentence of the Marxian text declares: “Only the economic organization is capable of setting on foot a true political party of Labor”—in other words:

1. A political party of Labor is a necessity. It could not be a “true political party of Labor” if not useful and necessary.—Incidentally, it follows from this, as the reverse of the thought that a bogus party of Labor must, in some way, be the product or reflex of some bogus economic organization.

2. A political party of Labor can not ignore the trunk from which it is a shoot. “Neutrality” by the shoot towards its trunk is unconceivable.—

Daniel De Leon

Incidentally there follow from this, as reverses of the thought, first, that a true political party of Labor is bound to carry into the political arena the sound principles of the revolutionary economic organization which it reflects, and feel bold to proclaim the fact; secondly, that a bogus party of Labor is likewise driven to carry into the political arena the false principles of the bogus economic organization, and be prompted by the cowardly feeling of striving to deny its parentage. There is a third conclusion, and one of no little importance to the practical understanding of the subject—only the political reflex of the bogus organization of Labor can set up the theory of “Neutrality in Unionism”—a theory known by the said political reflex to be at odds with the law of its own existence and the facts that dominate it.

The closing, or second sentence of the Marxian text, “and thus raise a bulwark against the power of Capital,” defines the mission of the “true political party of Labor.” That mission is to “raise a bulwark against the power of Capital,”—in other words:

1. It is not the part of “political action” to “take and hold” the Nation’s productive powers; consequently, that the revolutionary ACT of “taking and holding” is independent of political action.

2. The part of “political action” being the transitory, though necessary, function of “raising a bulwark” against Capital, it follows as incidental to the thought, first, that the revolutionary act of achieving the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of Socialism is the function reserved to the economic organization; secondly, that the “Physical Force” called for by the revolutionary act, lies inherent in the economic organization; thirdly, as a corollary of the second conclusion, that the element of “Force” consists, not in military or other organization implying violence, but in the STRUCTURE of the economic organization, a structure of such nature that it parries violence against itself, shatters it, and thereby renders the exercise of violence in return unnecessary, at least secondary, or only incidental; finally, that the economic organization is not “transitory,” but is the present embryo of the future Government of the Republic of Labor.

Marxian sentences are like thick racemes of grapes. They yield grape after grape. Digested, they enable the digester to see as on a map the border lines of the contiguous territories of the A.F. of L. and the S.P., and of the I.W.W. and the S.L.P. They allow an insight into the theories regarding “Neutrality,” the “Transitoriness of the Union,” and “Physical Force” in the sense of organized violence. They explain the appearance, on the political arena, in the shape of resolutions on “inferior races,” then on “backward races,” then in the shape of resolutions on “inferior

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

“races,” then on “backward races,” then in the shape of a string of words intended to concede the same thought—of the Craft Union principle of Anti-Immigration, Race and Craft Conflicts.

Marx has uttered many pregnant sentences. None more so than the text that heads this article.

Daily People, Vol. VII, No. 364. Saturday, June 29, 1907

PREFACE TO PART II

In presenting to the American working class this, the second part of the editorial articles from the pen of Daniel De Leon on the subject of industrial unionism, the Socialist Labor Party renders to the labor movement, not of America alone but of the world, a signal service.

The first part dealt with the subject at a time when swords had to be crossed only with the traditional foes of true working-class organization—industrial unionism—the pure and simple craft unionist under labor faker leadership on the one hand, and, on the other, the pure and simple politicalist “Socialist” Party dominated by “intellectual” faker leadership. The present series of articles—six in number—deals with the same subject at a time when a new foe had arisen, or, rather, when certain tendencies inimical to true working-class organization, present all along in both the pure and simple craftist as well as the pure and simple politicalist camp, had coalesced and had taken on organized form in the present anarcho-syndicalist IWW.

As the knife blade can be brought to fine edge only upon a suitable grindstone, so was the keenly analytical mind of De Leon brought to hair-trigger precision by the rise of this new antagonist. The pure and simplers of the craftist and politicalist pattern were, after all, only “traditional” foes who had to be fought, of course, but in regard to whom one always felt that, in time, they would be overtaken by social evolution and then kicked aside. But the pure and simple bombist, the anarcho-syndicalist “direct actionist,” represents a tendency that is as old as the human race and for that reason presents a problem of entirely different complexion. We are in this case face to face with the centrifugal force in human society, the force that tends to drive apart from within and which, once it has taken on organized form, is bound to prove itself a gadfly-annoyance to the general movement of labor. Not that this tendency can ever become dominant—for the trend of social evolution that guides the movement of labor is plainly the other way—but it is nevertheless a force against which incessant war must be waged within the movement of labor.

Against this new menace to *true industrial unionism*, all the more serious because it appeared decked in the garb of that which it is the bitter foe of, and sailing under its name, the trenchant pen of De Leon took on added sharpness. Clear-cut as in a steel etching, that pen draws the line between the true and the false, between the original and the

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

caricature. So important is the information contained in these articles that no effort should be spared to give them the widest possible circulation, for, let us all bear in mind that, since anarcho-syndicalism does not sail under its own flag but takes on the outward appearance of industrial unionism, including its very name, it will often corral the unwary, the uninformed, who could not be taken in by the advocacy of out-and-out anarchism.

For the information of the reader it may be said that the Socialist Labor Party has in preparation the publication of the editorial articles written by De Leon from 1891 to 1914 on a variety of topics, but all bearing upon the labor movement. It is from the first of these topics—industrial unionism—that the articles contained herein have been selected for circulation in a wider field than can be reached by the larger volumes now being prepared.

In the measure that a clear understanding is disseminated amongst the working class of the destructive tendencies that seek to enter and work within the movement of labor, in that measure will the movement be safeguarded against these tendencies.

HENRY KUHN

Brooklyn, February 1920

“Syndicalism.”

“Syndicat” is the French word for the English “Union.” From that it would seem that “Syndicalism” must mean “Unionism.” It does not. Due to one of those unaccountable freaks of language, “Syndicalism” has come to be understood everywhere as meaning a particular sort of “Unionism,” to wit, a theory of economic organization with the revolutionary purpose of overthrowing capitalism by the specialized means of physical force.

Everybody, whose information is not below par, knows that, in order to understand an institution, a movement, or a document, the history of the country and of the times in the country of its birth must first be known. No play of Aristophanes can be properly appreciated without knowing the history of Greece; Don Quixote is a closed book, at any rate, merely a funny book, to those who do not know Spain; or, who could weigh the Civic Federation who knew nothing of American conditions? “Syndicalism,” a word of French origin, reflects a thing of French birth. If these facts were kept in mind, then, on the one hand, the non-French Europeans, who denounce “Syndicalism” sweepingly, would curb their pens, and, on the other hand, the American would-be imitators of “Syndicalism” would realize that they but play the role of monkeys at the North Pole, or Polar bears under the tropics.

The point can be best understood by turning the telescope upon two typical representatives of the two seemingly opposed currents of the Movement in France—Guesde, the Anti-Syndicalist, and Lagardelle, or Herve, Pro-Syndicalists.

At Nancy, in 1907, Guesde expressed his estimate of the economic organization as a place whither men were attracted in search of immediate material and individually selfish (not therefor improper, or unnecessary) gain. The economic organization, according to him, was not and could not be a body animated with any high ideal, least of all with that loftiest of ideals, the Socialist Republic. That ideal could be pursued only by the political movement. Yet, before closing, Guesde completed his speech saying he by no means meant to deny that the hour for physical force would arrive. That hour was certain to arrive. Then the men of the party would seize the gun, and fall to.—Stick a pin there.

Lagardelle, in his scholastic style, Herve, in his hammer and tongs way, interspersed with wit and satire, ridiculed the excessive expectations

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

their opponents entertained from the political movement. That neither Lagardelle nor Herve repudiate political action appeared substantially from their being delegates to the convention of a political party. The burden of their song was, however, that the economic organization had the pre-eminent mission, and was pre-eminently called upon to gather within its fold the insurrectionary elements that would furnish the requisite physical force wherewith to knock down capitalist rule.—Stick a pin, there, too.

At first blush, it would seem that the two tendencies are irreconcilable; that they are not off-shoots from a common trunk; that, consequently, one or other must be a freak affair. Not so. At this stage of maturity in the International Movement, there is no freak manifestation that does not, besides betraying intellectual weakness, generally betray also intellectual uncleanness. The Guesde and the Lagardelle-Herve forces are too intellectually powerful and intellectually clean for either to be a freak-fraud affair, or to be even remotely tainted therewith. They are children of identical parentage: their principles will be found to resolve themselves into the identical practice.

A knowledge of French conditions makes this clear.

Herve stated in Stuttgart to the writer of this article that the factor that acts as the most powerful deterrent upon the ruling classes to push the proletariat to extremes, is the knowledge that “on the continent everyone knows how to handle a gun.” The observation is pregnant with most pregnant conclusions, that bear directly upon “syndicalism,” and, not very much less directly upon the course that events dictate in other countries:—

First. In a country where compulsory military service has not only made the people skillful in the handling of a gun, but has familiarized them with military tactics, an insurrectionary call to arms cannot be imagined to gather 50,000 men without the vast majority of them are readily organizable. From the militarily schooled mass the requisite military chief and lieutenants will spontaneously spring up, and be spontaneously acknowledged. The organized insurrectionary force would be on foot.

Second. In a country like France, where as yet there is no large capitalism to rank the proletariat into the battalions of an industrial insurrectionary organization, and thereby to furnish the Revolution, as an equivalent for a military force, with a mighty non-military engine of physical force, but where, on the other hand, compulsory military service has amply prepared the soil for militarily organized insurrection, and in which, moreover, national traditions lightly turn the thought to

Daniel De Leon

just such methods,—in such a country the only real difference between the Guesde forces and the Lagardelle-Herve forces is that the latter utter the still unconscious sentiments of the former. It is a difference of importance, salutary to both. It rescues present Anti-Syndicalism from the possible danger of losing itself in the mystic mazes of what Marx called the “cretinism” (idiocy) of bourgeois parliamentarism, and it holds Syndicalism in check, lest it rush headlong, driven by premature impetuosity. It is a difference that marks the one somewhat unripe, the other somewhat too ripe. In fine, it is a difference that proves identity—the spot where both currents will and are bound eventually to merge.

Third. In all the other European countries, where, as in France, compulsory military service prepares the soil for militarily organized insurrection, but where, differently from France, temperament and traditions are other, thoughts of “Syndicalism” naturally seem wild—at present; and as naturally, will seem rational and be adopted in the ripeness of time. Present condemnation, provided the condemnation be not too sweeping, of “Syndicalism” from such quarters is imperative, even to those who may see beyond the present. Any other policy on their part would have no effect other than the harmful one of furnishing grist to the crack-brained mill of Anarchy.

Fourth. In a country like the United States, where, differently from France and other European countries, there is no compulsory military service to prepare the soil for militarily organized insurrection, but where, on the other hand and differently from everywhere else, large capitalism is in such bloom as to have ranked the proletariat into the battalions for an industrial insurrection, and thereby to have furnished the Revolution, as an equivalent for a military force, with a mighty non-military engine of physical force,—in such a country Syndicalism has no place. In such a country, whosoever struts in the phraseology of Syndicalism is as ridiculous as a monkey would be in the frozen North, or a Polar bear in the wilds of the torrid zone. The social-political atmosphere makes them freak-frauds.

Fifth. Stripped of some casual expressions, “Syndicalism” is not “Industrial Unionism.” Syndicalism lays hardly any stress—it cannot choose but fail to lay stress: the capitalist development in the land of its birth does not furnish it with the foundation for laying such stress—upon the STRUCTURE, its main stress is laid upon the FUNCTION of the economic organization,—that function being, according to “Syndicalism,” physical force. Industrial Unionism, on the contrary, being the product of American highly developed capitalism, lays main stress upon the STRUCTURE of the economic organization; the FUNCTION

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

of the same—the overthrow of the Political State and the seizing of the reins of government as the Socialist or Industrial State—flowing, as a matter of course, from its structure.

Daily People, Vol. X, No. 34. Tuesday, August 3, 1909

Industrial Unionism.

Commenting upon the late convention of the Industrial Workers of the World, “Chagrin,” the correspondent whom the metal workers of Germany felicitously charged with the mission of proceeding to our shores, and study and report the American Labor Movement, writes in the Stuttgart, Ger., *Metallarbeiter-Zeitung* of last July 17th as follows:

“The debate turned upon the Preamble, or, more accurately, upon the following passage in the same: ‘Between the working class and the employing class a struggle must go on UNTIL ALL THE TOILERS COME TOGETHER ON THE POLITICAL, AS WELL AS ON THE INDUSTRIAL FIELD.’ Against this passage, the underscored portion thereof, the ‘revolutionary’ oratorical cannonade was directed. The bone of contention was removed in the identically radical manner that a certain theatrical manager kept the bad air out of his building. As the well known story runs, he said to his architect: ‘On all sides there are complaints about the ventilation; just leave the thing out, so that I may have peace.’ The passage, that was objectionable to the ‘revolutionary’ ears was simply dropped out of the Preamble, and, in lieu of its former positive utterances, now are found merely feuilleton-like verbosities.”

A terser and more accurately pictorial representation of that allegedly I.W.W. convention it would be difficult to give. It snaps off the “revolutionists” to perfection. So perfect is the snapshot that photographer “Chagrin” may be forgiven for the error he falls in of heading his article on the I.W.W. with the title “Syndicalism in America.” In the hurly-burly of events in America, a visitor may well be forgiven for judging the I.W.W. by the crew that gathered at the last I.W.W. convention, and the pranks they there indulged in—their “revolutionary” rhodomontades; their glorification of individual theft as expropriation by installments; their outbursts of ruffianly, and, of course, cowardly brutality; their “I’m-a-Bum” lyrics; in short, their noisy capers of Indians who have found a watch.

Daniel De Leon

When the said I.W.W. convention met, the I.W.W. had ceased to exist—at least, there were only fragments left of the organization that was set on foot in June, 1905. That organization was not “syndicalist,” as the term is generally understood in Europe. Indeed, the very passage quoted from “Chagrin’s” article is at fisticuffs with the theory that the I.W.W. and Syndicalism are the same thing.

What “Syndicalism” is was treated extensively in these columns, last week, in the article under that title. Whether or not it be correct to denounce the thing, sweepingly in Europe, one thing is certain—in America it has no standing ground. As stated in last week’s article, whosoever struts in America in the phraseology of “Syndicalism” is as ridiculously out of place as a monkey would be in the frozen North, or a Polar bear in the wilds of the torrid zone. Here in America such creatures are freak-frauds.

Industrial Unionism is the product of American development, economic and social.

American economic development has proved the craft Union system of organization the surest means to dislocate the working class. Next to the labor-dislocating vanities, born of nativistic superstitions, the vanities born of the material interests that craft Unionism generates, are the most effective in keeping the proletariat rent asunder. Whether the thing called the “General Strike” be or not be rational, certain it is that the conduct of an economic body of one craft in continuing at work in a shop, railroad or yard, where another body is at strike, and, by so doing, killing the strike, is a conduct unworthy of proletarian ethics, and delightful only to the employer. Such is the case with craft Unionism. Its craft method of autonomous organization prevents any other conduct: its craft method of organization even bars the entrance of any principle that looks to the solidarity of the proletariat. Such being the situation, and American capitalism pointing the way by its mammoth system of co-ordination of industries, Industrial Unionism made here its appearance.

Industrial Unionism is banked upon the principle that, for the same reason that loyalty is demanded of every individual member towards all others in any craft organization, loyalty is likewise demanded of every individual craft towards all others in the industrial world. As a matter of course, from such a position inevitably flowed a recognition of the necessity of a correct political posture for the very existence of the organization. It follows that, perceiving the working class ruptured into craft bodies on the industrial and, consequently, ruptured into as many political fractions on the political field, the I.W.W. was launched

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

with a preamble in which the call rang clear and distinct to the proletariat to “come together on the political as well as on the industrial field.”

“Industrial Unionism,” accordingly, presents a marked contrast with “Syndicalism.” With the latter, the FUNCTION of the organization—the physical force overthrow of capitalism—is accentuated; with the former, the thing accentuated is the STRUCTURE of the body. With the latter—due to the circumstance that the popular military education of France prepares there the ground for organized armed insurrection—the STRUCTURE of the economic organization receives little attention; with the former,—due to the combined circumstances that the absence of popular military education in America does not here prepare the ground for armed insurrection, and that capitalism has here furnished us with a powerful substitute for physical force by shaping the mold for the industrially organized and integrally constructed battalions of useful labor—the ultimate FUNCTION of the economic organization flows so naturally from its STRUCTURE that it requires little thought. While attending intelligently to its immediate and economic needs, the revolutionary function of the Industrial Union falls within the province of its political expression to agitate and educate for.

Such was the I.W.W. For reasons too numerous to repeat the organization, at least in national proportions, has been ground to dust. The creative principle, however, which is set up, and which its literature formulated, is undying. To-day, as “Chagrín’s” article attests, the monkeyshines of the handful of freak-frauds, who masquerade in the name of I.W.W. and rant “Syndicalism,” may cast a cloud upon the fair name of Industrial Unionism. The thing itself is bound to revise in more powerfully organized form.

Daily People, Vol. X, No. 41. Tuesday, August 10, 1909

Industrialism.

A Bisbee, Ariz., correspondent writes:

“Shortly after the so-called 4th convention of the I.W.W., the *Industrial Bulletin* had two articles, one entitled ‘The Intellectual Against the Worker,’ claiming to report the argument of delegate De Leon at that convention, the other entitled ‘The Worker Against the

Daniel De Leon

Intellectual.’ In the latter article St. John maintains delegate De Leon is wrong in stating that we should organize according to the *special tool* used: rather do we organize according to *industries*. I should like a word of explanation on such a matter.”

At the time, a number of articles—reportorial, editorial and Letter-Box answers—covered the field quite extensively. The general subject is, however, of such permanent interest as to deserve being taken up again systematically.

The two articles in the *Industrial Bulletin* referred to are essentially loose, confused and incoherent. This was the consequence, partly, of the false position that St. John was, by that time, well aware he had allowed himself to be wheedled into; partly, no doubt, of his lack of grasp of the subject.

Industrialism is a trefoil that constitutes ONE leaf; it is a term that embraces three domains, closely interdependent, and all three requisite to the whole. The three domains are Form, Tactics and Goal. The Goal is the substitution of the industrial for the political government: another term for the Socialist Republic; the Tactics are the unification of the useful labor of the land on the political as well as the economic field; the Form concerns the structure of the organization. Each of the three domains covers an extensive field, being the gathered experience of the Labor, or Socialist Movement. It is next to impossible to handle properly any of the three departments without touching the others. Unavoidably they closely dovetail with one another. The specific question raised by our correspondent concerns mainly the first department—Form, or Structure. To the extent that it can be treated separately the treatment will be here undertaken.

In the matter of Form or Structure Industrialism is a physical crystallization of the sociologic principle that the proletariat is ONE. From the fundamental principle of the oneness of interests of the proletariat arises the ideal to be obtained—their solidarity; and that shatters all structures reared upon the theory of Craft Sovereignty. It shatters that theory as completely as, upon the political field, State Sovereignty was shattered in the country. It does so for parity of reasoning. Whatever the State lines, the separate States are but fractions of the whole Nation. Whatever the craft lines, the separate crafts are but fractions of the whole Proletariat. Consequently, however different the nature of the occupation, the work done, and the conditions of work, the useful labor of the land is ONE NATION, hence, must be organized as ONE UNION.

The Industrialist principle of ONE UNION, on the ground of ONE NATIONSHIP, excludes, as a matter of course, the jelly-fish conception

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

of oneness. The oneness of the high structure of the human being is a different oneness from that of the lower jelly-fish. As the structure of the human being implies parts and co-ordination of parts, so does the structure of Industrialism, a concept born of the higher development of modern society, imply divisions and sub-divisions. The field upon which Industrialism operates warrants the parallel with a modern Army. One though an Army is, it has its separate divisions and sub-divisions. These are also imperative to the Industrialist Army—it also has and must have its companies, battalions, regiments, brigades, divisions. The important question then arises, What fact traces the lines that are to mark these several parts from one another?

At first blush this question looks complicated. It is not. At the first convention of the I.W.W. the element of complication was thrown in by the craft vanities of several crafts men. The lead in this sinister direction was there taken by David C. Coates in the interest of the typographical craft. Despite all his efforts to tangle up the convention [See stenographic report], and despite the general unpreparedness of many of the delegates, the efforts failed. The convention took a broadly correct position, which the second convention completed by definite specifications. At the last, the so-called fourth convention of the I.W.W., the element of complication was again injected into the matter. The effort that time, however, did not, as at the first convention, proceed from any viewpoints affecting Form, or Structure. The Form, or Structure, arguments were merely pretexts, required to cover the purpose of the element who packed the convention against the organization, by seating delegates not entitled to admission and unseating others entitled to a seat. The purpose of this element had not Form, or Structure, in contemplation. It had Tactics in contemplation—the substitution of Anarchist for Socialist methods. What the line of demarcation is among the several parts of the Industrialist Army is determined by the FACTS IN PRODUCTION. The central principles in the determination flow from the facts that dictate the Form, or Structure, of the corps designated by the second convention as the “Local Industrial Union,” and correctly so designated seeing that, although the “Local Industrial Union” does not comprise the whole organization, but is only a part thereof, nevertheless its structure typifies Industrialism.

Does the same fact, which traces the line between one Local Industrial Union and another in one Locality, also trace the line between the “Trade and Shop Branches” which the second convention designated as the component factors of the Local Industrial Union? It does not. The fact that traces the line between one Local Industrial

Daniel De Leon

Union and another in one locality and the fact that determines the boundaries of the component factors of the Local Industrial Union, are different. What facts are these? The answer to this question answers the question, How does Industrialism organize?

The fact that traces the external boundary lines of the Local Industrial Union is the *output*.

Here are two illustrations—one, the printing shop, a concern which turns out an actual product, printed matter; the other the trolley line, a concern which does not turn out any actual product, but fills that necessary and supplementary function in production which consists in transportation. In each instance the *output*—printed matter in one case, transportation in the other—draws the boundary lines of the respective Local Industrial Union.

In the instance of the printing shop, the *output* being printed matter, all the wage-workers, whatever their specialized occupation may be, are, in that locality, engaged in the same industry. Being so engaged, they belong in one printers' Local Industrial Union.

In the instance of the trolley line, the *output* being transportation, all the wage-workers, whatever their specialized occupation may be, are, in that locality engaged in the same industry. Being so engaged, they belong in one, in a traction Local Industrial Union.

Before proceeding to the internal construction of the Local Industrial Union, an objection, that has been raised against the external construction of the Local Industrial Union, must be here considered.

Compositors, proofreaders, etc., are frequently found employed in other than establishments the output of which is printed matter: they are found employed in some large textile concerns, they are found employed in electrical, in hotel, in railroad and other establishments. In the traction industry there are electricians, firemen, etc. At the same time, electricians and firemen are found employed in other than establishments the output of which is transportation: they are found at work in hotels, in foundries, in big office buildings. And so all along the line. There hardly is an establishment, yielding a certain output, which does not employ occupations that contribute to some other output in some other establishment. This fact has been seized by A.F. of L. Craft Unionism as a proof positive of the "absurdity" of Industrialism. "Think of it," these gentlemen have said and even written, "one time a compositor is a 'printer,' another time he is a 'weaver,' in another place he is an 'electrician,' in a fourth place he is a 'restaurant' worker, in a fifth place he is a 'railroader'! As to electricians and firemen, in one instance they are 'traction' workers, in another 'hotel and restaurateurs,' in a third

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

they are ‘foundrymen,’ in a fourth ‘elevator and janitormen’! How laughable!” And much is the mirth these gentry have indulged in on that score.

For one thing, the foundation for the seeming absurdity is “Craft Vanity,”—a sentiment, which, traced to its source is a denial of the oneness of proletarian interests. For another thing, the only alternative to the “absurdity of Industrialism” is the tragedy of “Craft Sovereignty.” The first objection superficial thinkers may be disposed to dismiss as “theoretical.” Sound reasoners will be less prone to sneer at a “theory.” In this matter, however, the theory can be left aside. Its practical manifestations is “Craft Sovereignty,” and the practical manifestation of that should be shocking enough to shock the laughter out of the most mirthful Craft Unionist—provided, of course, he is not a labor-lieutenant of the capitalist class. What the practical manifestations of “Craft Sovereignty” are have for several weeks been on the pillory of the Philadelphia strike. The Brewers, the Compositors—not to speak of other “Craft Sovereigns”—all of them Federated with the Traction men, deserted their allies; and, worse yet, Tim Healey’s Powermen, men directly engaged in the output of transportation, remained at work, furnishing power for the strike-breaking motormen and conductors to run the cars. If in the case of the Brewers and Compositors there was the deep damnation of desertion; in the instance of the Powermen there was the even deeper damnation of treason from within. The Philadelphia general strike, which but repeats a lamentable spectacle common at all strikes of any magnitude, to say nothing of the disgraceful sights presented with the regularity of clockwork at A.F. of L. conventions, where whole bunches of delegates denounce one another as “scabs,” places the practical issue, or alternative, squarely—either Industrialism, despite its incidental and very limited “laughableness,” or Craft Unionism, despite its permanent and chronically constitutional scabbery—in other words, either a little and far fetched AMUSEMENT, or a mass of actual TRAGEDY. Industrialism—that form of economic organization that capitalist development dictates—dictates the *output* as the controlling fact which traces the external line of demarcation for the Local Industrial Union.

What, now, determines the internal lines of demarcation for the Local Industrial Union? As the FACT IN PRODUCTION that traces the boundary line of the Local Industrial Union is the *output*, the correlated FACT IN PRODUCTION which traces the boundary lines between the component factors of the Local Industrial Union, that is, the Trade and Shop Branches, is the *tool*.

From all that precedes it follows that the Local Industrial Union is a

Daniel De Leon

unit composed of a variety of occupations. The article “Notes on the Stuttgart Congress—The Trades Union Issue” (*Daily People*, October 20; *Weekly*, October 26, 1907), cites a charming British delegate, the then Miss Mary MacArthur who had recently visited America, as frantically exclaiming in the room of the Committee on Unionism: “They [the I.W.W. and the S.L.P.] are mad! Do you know what they want? They want plumbers, and switchmen, and weavers, and coalheavers all in one Local Union to transact their business together! They are m-a-a-d! They are m-a-a-a-d!” Indeed they would be “m-a-a-a-a-d” if the lady were right—and she would be right if the “I’m-a-bummery,” which has since claimed to be the I.W.W., and which spoke through the articles quoted by our Bisbee correspondent, really vocalized Industrialism.

The component parts of the Local Industrial Union are the “Trade and Shop Branches.” These Branches consist of workers engaged in specific work; within each Branch belong all and only those engaged in such specific work. What characterizes their work in each instance? The *tool* used by each.

Sticking to the two illustrations—the printing industry and the traction industry—used before, all the workers who in one locality contribute to the *output* printed matter belong in one Local Industrial Union. The specific occupation of all these workers is, however, not the same. Some are compositors, others stereotypers, still others editors, etc. The specific work in each instance is different, requiring specific consideration. Each specific occupation requires its own organization—Branch. The *tool* used by the individual in his specific work determines the boundaries of his Branch, and the Branch to which he belongs—the workers whose *tool* is the type-case or machine belong in a compositors’ Branch; the workers whose *tool* is the stereotyping apparatuses belong in a stereotypers’ Branch; the workers whose *tool* is the pen belong in a writers’ or editorial Branch; and so forth. Likewise with the traction industry. Different being the specific occupations of the workers who jointly contribute to the *output* transportation, each specific occupation has its own specific business, requiring a specific Branch—the workers whose *tool* is the motor belong in a motormen’s Branch; those whose *tool* is the machinery in the power house belong in a power Branch; and so forth. All the Trade and Shop Branches of each Local Industrial Union, being properly connected by respective representative bodies, constitute the local unit of Industrialism. With the Trade and Shop Branches there is order within the Local Industrial Union; without them there would be Miss Mary MacArthur’s bedlam.

For the completion of this sketch, in the descending line of organiza-

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

tion, there remains one organism to consider—The “Recruiting” or “Mixed Local.” This organism is purely transitory. Its members are transient. So long as there are not enough workers in any one specific occupation to organize a Trade and Shop Branch the worker is temporarily housed in a Recruiting Local, from which he is transferred to a Trade and Shop Branch of his industry, just so soon as there are enough of such workers to constitute such a Branch.

How does Industrialism organize?

From the sketch rapidly traced above the answer is, in the ascending line:

1st. By gathering into and keeping in “Recruiting Locals” the individual workers of whose specific occupation there may not as yet be enough to organize a “Trade and Shop Branch.”

2nd. By gathering into “Trade and Shop Branches” all the workers who use the identical *tool*.

3rd. By gathering into “Local Industrial Unions” all the several “Trade and Shop Branches” whose combined work furnishes a given *output*. There can be no “Local Industrial Union” without at least two “Trade and Shop Branches.”

These are the first three stages. The further stages, in the ascending line,—Industrial Councils, National Industrial Unions, and Industrial Departments—are obvious. Their structure, hence, the method of their organization, flows from the structure and reason for the structure of the “Local Industrial Union.”

Daily People, Vol. X, No. 266. Wednesday, March 23, 1910

Industrial Unionism.

In these days, when the term “Industrial Unionism” is being played with fast and loose—when, in some quarters, partly out of conviction, partly for revenue, “striking at the ballot-box with an axe,” theft, even murder, “sabotage,” in short, is preached in its name;—when, at the National Councils of the A.F. of L. lip-service is rendered to it as a cloak under which to justify its practical denial by the advocacy and justification of scabbery, as was done at Rochester, this very year, by the Socialist party man and International Typographical delegate Max Hayes;—when notoriety-seekers strut in and thereby bedrabble its fair

Daniel De Leon

feathers;—when the bourgeois press, partly succumbing to the yellow streak that not a member thereof is wholly free from, partly in the interest of that confusion in which capitalist intellectuality sees the ultimate sheet-anchor of Class Rule, promotes, with lurid reports, “essays” and editorials, a popular misconception of the term;—at this season it is timely that the Socialist Labor Party, the organization which, more than any other, contributed in raising and finally planting, in 1905, the principle and the structure of Industrialism, reassert what Industrial Unionism is, re-state the problem and its import.

Capitalism is the last expression of Class Rule. The economic foundation of Class Rule is the private ownership of the necessaries for production. The social structure, or garb, of Class Rule is the political State—that social structure in which Government is an organ separate and apart from production, with no vital function other than the maintenance of the supremacy of the Ruling Class.

The overthrow of Class Rule means the overthrow of the political State, and its substitution with the Industrial Social Order, under which the necessaries for production are collectively owned and operated by and for the people.

Goals determine methods. The goal of social evolution being the final overthrow of Class Rule, its methods must fit the goal.

As in Nature, where optical illusions abound, and stand in the way of progress until cleared, so in society.

The fact of economic despotism by the Ruling Class raises, with some, the illusion that the economic organization and activity of the despotized Working Class is all-sufficient to remove the ills complained of.

The fact of political despotism by the Ruling Class raises, with others, the illusion that the political organization and activity of the despotized Working Class is all-sufficient to bring about redress.

The one-legged conclusion regarding economic organization and activity fatedly abuts, in the end, in pure and simple bombism, as exemplified in the A.F. of L., despite its Civic Federation and Militia of Christ affiliations, as well as by the Anarcho-Syndicalist so-called Chicago I.W.W.,—the Bakouninism, in short, against which the genius of Marx struggled and warned.

The one-legged conclusion regarding political organization and activity, as fatedly abuts, in the end, in pure and simple ballotism, as already numerous and lamentably exemplified in the Socialist party,—likewise struggled and warned against by Marx as “parliamentary idiocy.”

Industrial Unionism, free from optical illusions, is clear upon the goal—the substitution of the political State with the Industrial

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

Government. Clearness of vision renders Industrial Unionism immune both to the Anarch self-deceit of the “No Government!” slogan, together with all the mischief that flows therefrom, and to the politician’s “parliamentary idiocy” of looking to legislation for the overthrow of Class Rule.

The Industrial Union grasps the principle: “No government, no organization; no organization, no co-operative labor; no co-operative labor, no abundance for all without arduous toil, hence, no Freedom.”—Hence, the Industrial Union aims at a democratically centralized Government, accompanied by the democratically requisite “local self-rule.”

The Industrial Union grasps the principle of the political State—central and local authorities disconnected from productive activity; and it grasps the requirements of the Government of Freedom—the central and local administrative authorities of the productive capabilities of the people.

The Industrial Union hearkens to the command of Social Evolution to cast the Nation, and, with the Nation, its Government, in a mold different from the mold in which Class Rule casts Nations and existing Governments. While Class Rule casts the Nation, and, with the Nation, its Government, in the mold of territory, Industrial Unionism casts the Nation in the mold of useful occupations, and transforms the Nation’s Government into the representations from these. Accordingly, Industrial Unionism organizes the useful occupations of the land into the constituencies of Future Society.

In performing this all-embracing function, Industrial Unionism, the legitimate offspring of civilization, comes equipped with all the experience of the Age.

Without indulging in the delusion that its progress will be a “dress parade”; and, knowing that its program carries in its folds that acute stage of all evolutionary process known as Revolution, the Industrial Union connects with the achievements of the Revolutionary Fathers of the country, the first to frame a Constitution that denies the perpetuity of their own social system, and that, by its amendment clause legalizes Revolution. Connecting with that great achievement of the American Revolution; fully aware that the Revolution, which it is big with, being one that concerns the masses and that needs the masses for its execution, excludes the bare idea of conspiracy, and imperatively commands an open and above board agitational, educational and organizing activity; finally, its path lighted by the beacon tenet of Marx that none but the bona fide Union can set on foot the true political party of Labor;—Industrial Unionism bends its efforts to unite the Working Class upon

Daniel De Leon

the political as well as the industrial field,—on the industrial field because, without the integrally organized Union of the Working Class, the revolutionary act is impossible; on the political field, because on none other can be proclaimed the revolutionary purpose, without consciousness of which the Union is a rope of sand.

Industrial Unionism is the Socialist Republic in the making; and the goal once reached, the Industrial Union is the Socialist Republic in operation.

Accordingly the Industrial Union is, at once, the battering ram with which to pound down the fortress of Capitalism, and the successor of the capitalist social structure itself.

Daily People, Vol. XIII, No. 204. Monday, January 20, 1913

Apropos of “Direct Action.”

No serious person will “chew the rag” over a word, or term. That is the delight of idle minds. Yet minds that do not come under the category of “idle” are often seen tangling themselves in words. Which is the foot that these specimens limp of?

The social season that we are living in, when the Nation is rapidly—and the process is rather to be welcomed—being converted into a broad debating club, renders the contemplation of the phenomenon not interesting merely, but deserving of examination. “Political action,” “Free Trade,” “Direct Action,” “Single Tax Sabotage,” “Protection,” “Anarchy”—these, for instance, are words over which, as the French put it, the “field is beaten” until the “beaters” know not whether they stand on their heads, or on their feet. That would matter little if the galimathias, or confusion, were limited to the rag-chewers themselves. The trouble is the spectacle tends to confuse the “audience.”

What is the essence of the “clash of words” the din of which is assailing the Nation’s ear?

The clapper-claw over “Direct Action” affords a good portal through which to approach the question.

The Labor Movement started with violence—the unconscious theory that physical force is an all-sufficient and creative power.

Socialism started with utopia—the belief that good will is all that is needed to redress social ills.

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

Then came Science. It gathered the facts; weighed and marshaled them in proper focus; raised the theory of the Class Struggle; elucidated the economic foundation therefor; and established the goal identity of the Labor with the Socialist Movement. The result was the organized Socialist, or Marxian Movement.

The Movement did not, could not, instantly cast off the navel string that connected it with its sources—pure and simple politicianism, i.e., the repudiation of all thought of physical force; and pure and simple physical force, i.e., the repudiation of all thought of political action.

Obviously, the two extreme tendencies contain, and not choose but contain, in common the theory of physical force. Obviously, also, the common theory was thrown out of focus in both—the one extreme utterly rejecting, the other extreme planting itself exclusively upon the theory, and scornfully rejecting all other. As the Socialist Labor Party officially put the matter at the Stuttgart Int'l Congress (1907), without political action, Socialism could never gather the physical forces (the industrially and integrally organized proletariat) for ultimate triumph; without the said physical forces, the day of the political triumph of Socialism would be the day of its defeat.

To a great extent, the energies of the Socialist Movement are inevitably expended in disentangling and ridding itself of the clogs of its natal soilure—pure and simple politicianism, on the one flank, pure and simple physical force, on the other.

The historical setting of a term is essential to its understanding. The above condensed sketch of the evolution of Socialism reveals the historic setting of “Direct Action”—a more modern term for pure and simple physical force, expressly repudiatory of all thought of political action, and embodying contempt for the same as wasteful of time and efforts, besides being peculiarly exposed to corruption, hence, all the more wastefully indirect.

That “Direct Actionists” there are who say they do not object to political action does not alter facts. If these straddlers are sincere, then they are not “Direct Actionists,” but use the appellation giddy-headedly. There may be such people. Historically, the type is well known of “Direct Actionists,” who “do not object to political action.” It is a type which the caught Anarchist is frequently found to illustrate. When Anarchists are on trial they frequently hide behind the skirts of Socialism. Ettor did so at Salem. When his lawyer, himself an Ettorite, endeavoring to prove Ettor was a peacefulite, submitted as documentary testimony the Manifesto which called forth the I.W.W., he read from the document especially the clause which indicated the necessity of political action, an

Daniel De Leon

idea which the Ettore I.W.W., pictorially designated as the “Bummery,” had ostentatiously expunged from their “I.W.W.” preamble. The same shuffling is met whenever the Anarchist, or the “Direct Actionist,” is “caught” in a debate. He plays scuttle-fish. The scuttle-fish does not cease to be a scuttle-fish because of the animal’s dyeing the water around him inky. The scuttle-fish does not, thereby, become inky water; nor, vice versa, does the inky water, thereby, become scuttle-fish.

What has here been said about “Direct Action” and “Anarchy,” generally, flash-lights the clapper-claw that is going on over so many other “theories”—pure and simple political action, “Free Trade,” “Single Tax,” “Sabotage,” “Protection,” etc.

All these one-ideas, virtual monomanias, contain a fraction of truth, or fact. In all, the truth, or fact, is thrown out of focus, and, thereby, becomes Nonsense. Now, then, it is the feature of Nonsense that it “dares not stand alone”; it cannot stand alone. Hence, we see pure and simple political actionists periodically throw out their chest, mock-heroically, and “talk big,” real “blood and thunder”; hence, the experience of “patriotic” Protectionists indulging in smuggling wherever, and to the extent that they may have a chance; hence, the sight of “Single Taxers”—the upholders of a theory to the effect that the cause of involuntary poverty is the private ownership of land, and that by removing all taxes, except one on land values, involuntary poverty will cease to be—hence, the sight of these theorickers propping up their Nonsense with Socialistic props; hence, the common spectacle of “Sabotage,” a branchlet of “Direct Action,” seeking to identify its individual crimes with the legitimate measures of mass warfare; hence, the droll performances of “broad-minded” Free Traders in Congress, ever hedging to “protect” their own “home industries,” from pineapples in Florida to tin in Missouri;—in each instance playing scuttle-fish with their exact opposites, exactly as our lady and gentleman “Direct Actionists” do with political action.

The manifestation is the homage that Nonsense renders to Sense; the confession of its own untenableness. So far as that goes, the manifestation is a rose. But the rose has ugly thorns—it incites the “clapper-claw” and “chewing of the rag,” the talking at random, shallowly, round about a subject, with, frequently, the fan of vanity fanning the flames of angry resistance to what slovenly minds designate as the “straight jacket” of logic, which demands the careful ascertaining of facts, and the cogent reasoning from them.

Seeing that the gratifying manifestation of the homage that Nonsense renders to Sense has the evil effect of inciting the clapper-

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

claw and the rag-chewing, it behooves the militant Socialist to cause the thorn of the rag-chewing and clapper-claw, in turn, to yield its rose—the spur to the militant Socialist to set the pace of reasoning from below up; never a moment to yield to the butter-fly lure of fluttering all over the face of the earth; to insist unflinchingly upon the observance of all that is meant by the “historic method of reasoning” and of all that is implied in logic;—to insist upon all this, despite all insult; indeed, to crave the insult as a further homage clue to Sense from Nonsense.

It is a duty of the hour, apropos of “Direct Action.”

Daily People, Vol. XIII, No. 276. Wednesday, April 2, 1913

Haywoodism and Industrialism.*

Haywoodism, in the title of this article, does not stand as the diametric opposite of Industrialism. It stands for what it is popularly, however mistakenly, understood to be—a variant of Industrialism.

In order to understand Haywoodism, we must first know what Industrialism is. In order to understand Industrialism, we must first know what the “political State” is. The steppingstones of information must, accordingly, be—the political State, Industrialism, Haywoodism, in the order stated.

The “political State” is that social structure which marks the epoch since which society was ruptured into classes, and class-rule began. This fact determines the foundation of the political State. The foundation of the political State is not, as it was with previous society, man; the foundation of the political State is property. The governmental structure, that is the reflex of such a socio-economic foundation, must needs match the socio-economic status on which it is reared. The immediate consequence, the consequence of importance to the subject in hand, is that the constituencies of the political State are territorial. The representatives of Congressional, Senatorial, Assembly, Aldermanic, etc., etc., etc., districts represent sharply marked territorial areas. The essence of the fact is graphically condensed in the Socialist dictum con-

*This article is the original English of an article written by De Leon for the New York Yiddish *Zukunft* at the request of its editor. It appeared in the April 1913 issue of that magazine, and in the *Daily People* of April 13, 1913.

Daniel De Leon

cerning bourgeois society: "Property rules man, not man property."

The political State was no scheme of fiends, bent upon plaguing humanity. The political State was a step that ethnic-sociologic law compelled society to take. It was within the shell of the political State that the tool, or machinery, of production was to be perfected; production itself organized; co-operative labor brought about; and, thanks to the abundance thus rendered potential, lift from the shoulders of man the primal curse of the brute's arduous toil for bare physical existence. This to accomplish being the ethnic-sociologic mission of the political State, the arrival of the human race at that stage—the stage that our generation has reached—when abundance for all is possible without arduous toil for any, is the trumpet-blast announcement that the shell of the political State is no longer needed, and should be broken through and cast off.

At this stage of social evolution arises Industrialism, or, the Industrial Union, as the next logical link in the evolutionary chain; hence, it is the vital aspect of Socialism. It is the aspect of Socialism which drills, by educating, the "army of occupation" that, by supplanting the political State, is to reestablish the government of the race's original days of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity—the government that rests upon man, and of man over property. In other words, it is the aspect of Socialism that attends the re-casting of Modern Society into the constituencies of Future Society, in keeping with the altered, improved and perfected, in short, revolutionized economic possibilities. In still other words, Industrialism is the aspect of Socialism which gathers and organizes the new constituencies in the mold of Industry, in order to supplant the property-and-class-rule-dictated mold of territory, and thereby overthrow the property-and-class-rule-dictated governmental structure of the political State.

In addressing itself to its historic task, the Industrial Union connects intimately, as all evolutionary process must, with the present from which it evolves. America being the highest developed class-rule State, under the highest expression of class-rule, to wit, untrammelled capitalism, it is here in America that—gathering the experience, left in rough outlines by previous efforts in the same direction, and its steps lighted by the Marxian triple teachings of demanding the overthrow of the political State, of simultaneously warning against "parliamentary idiocy," and of pointing to the necessity of joint political and economic action, with the economic organization of the proletariat as the basis for the political revolt,—it is here in America that Industrialism first arose, first promulgated its program, and first formulated its structure. This

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

it did with epoch-marking precision at the first national convention of the Industrial Workers of the World, in Chicago, 1905.

Needless to say, it was a political State, hence, a political government that the Revolutionary Fathers established in America. Nevertheless, the State and Government which they established was, and, as a matter of course, has increasingly developed into the nearest point of transition from the political State and Government to the Industrial or Socialist Republic, with the Government appertaining thereto. The fact transpires from two historic documents that are of prime import in Social Science—the Constitution, and Washington’s Farewell Address.

The Constitution which the Revolutionary Fathers set up is the first in recorded history to legalize revolution—a marked innovation in the spirit and traditions of the political State—an innovation that meant nothing less than the contemplation, and rendering at least theoretically possible, of institutional change without the thitherto inevitable accompaniment of violence and stoppage of industry. The Constitution accomplished the feat of legalizing revolution by means of its amendment clause, thereby providing for the overthrow of the institutions which itself reared, and thereby also providing for the method—political action, thereby raising the revolutionary propaganda above the murky and murky-thoughts-promoting level of conspiracy, and thereby enabling the revolutionary propaganda to preach and teach, and clear the way for Revolution in the open.

Washington’s Farewell Address rings the note of warning against the seductions, and against those who would promote the seductions, of State Autonomy. Let not, said he—I quote the substance, and from memory—let not your pride lie in being citizens of Pennsylvania, as against South Carolina, or citizens of Virginia as against Massachusetts; let your pride lie in being citizens of the Nation. The Nation is greater than any one State; it is something vastly greater than the mere sum of all the individual States put together.

The Constitution and Washington’s Farewell Address are but convergencies with the sociologic evolution which begets the Industrial Union.

Connecting with the Constitution, Industrialism plants itself flat-footed upon the field of political action—a field upon which every member of the proletariat, even if not equipped with the ballot, can exert his or her activity as an agent of civilized revolutionary propaganda. Accordingly, Industrialism projects what Marx designated as the only bona fide political party of the Working Class.

Connecting with Washington’s Farewell Address, Industrialism perceives in “Craft Autonomy”—together with its autonomous “contracts,”

Daniel De Leon

and the innumerable other Labor-dislocating mischiefs that flow therefrom—the exact counterpart, on the economic field, of “State Autonomy” in political state-craft. Accordingly, Industrialism warns against the mischief; and, finding it must more than warn, it wars against, by ruthlessly exposing the mischief of Craft Autonomy, misnamed “Unionism.” Industrialism holds the organized useful occupations of the land to be greater than any one Craft, something vastly greater than the mere sum of all the individual Crafts put together.

As the broad mission of Industrialism—the re-construction of the Nation—dictates to the Industrial Union that it gather all the population engaged in useful occupations into ONE Union, a Union co-extensive with the Nation’s confines, so does the specific mission of Industrialism—the reconstruction of the governmental constituencies—dictate to the Industrial Union that it organize the Nation’s usefully occupied population into Industries.

To the former end, the existing formations and the status of the States furnish the general scope; to the latter end, the existing methods of production furnish the details.

What the several States are to the present Nation, the several Industries are to the Industrial, the Socialist, or Co-operative Republic—with the difference that, whereas the boundary lines of the States are arbitrarily geographic, the boundary lines of the Industries are dictated by the output. What counties, municipalities, townships, etc., are at present to the several States of which the counties, municipalities, etc., are component and subsidiary parts, the several subsidiary occupations are to the specific output which they jointly yield—with the difference that, whereas the boundary lines of the counties, etc., are likewise arbitrarily geographic, the boundary lines of the respective subsidiary occupations in each Industry are drawn by the tools, or sets of tools, that the specific occupations ply.

Thus Industrialism focalizes in its goal, its structure and its methods, all the gathered experience of the race.

Aiming at the abolition of class-rule, Industrialism bends its efforts to the overthrow of the political State.

Aiming at the overthrow of the political State, Industrialism brings together, in the integrally organized industrial forces of the proletariat, both the requisite Might wherewith to make good the Right, and also the new constituencies through the representatives of which to seize the reins of government, and administer production.

Aiming at bringing together the integrally organized industrial forces of the land, Industrialism proclaims the necessity of proletarian unity

Industrial Unionism: Selected Editorials

upon the political field as the only field upon which the revolution can be openly preached.

What, then, is Haywoodism?

The circumstance that Industrialism carries in its fold the requisite Might to enforce its Right, prompts the temperamentally unstrung to doctrines of pure and simple physical force.

The circumstance that Industrialism is uncompromisingly opposed to the autonomous Craft organization, and promulgates the program of ONE Union embracing the whole population of useful occupations, starts, with the shallow, the notion that the ideal in Unionism is promiscuity of occupations.

The circumstance that Industrialism lays down the principle that the prime mission of a bona fide political party of Socialism is to promote the economic organization of the proletariat, without which class-conscious and goal-conscious organization the day of victory by a political party of Socialism would be the day of its defeat,—that circumstance induces minds constructed on the pop-gun, one-idea principle to discard and jeer at political action as a waste of time and effort.

The circumstance that Industrialism proudly issues through its Preamble the call for Working Class expropriation of the machinery of production, prompts unbalanced minds to acts of “individual expropriation.”

The circumstance that Industrialism implies the smash-up of class-rule, together with its political State and other institutional appendages of Despotism and Exploitation, fans in undisciplined and heated brains the flames of Revenge.

The collective manifestation of these errors, half-truths and confusions of thought, hooped together with lurid declamation, is Haywoodism.

Unresponsive to the warnings of Experience which denies creative power to physical force, Haywoodism attaches to physical force creative powers, and, by pushing physical force agitation to the fore, places the cart before the horse of Revolution.

Unresponsive to the anatomy of organization, Haywoodism logically enough started with the “lodging house” as its ideal, and fatedly continues to turn the units of the Industrial body into a mob, an un-organic hotch-potch of crafts.

Unresponsive to the sociologic tenet that, important though the vote is, it is not the only, or most important factor in political action, the leading purpose of which is to preach the revolution upon the only field on which it can be preached to a purpose, hence that investiture with the

Daniel De Leon

suffrage is a non-essential for political action,—unresponsive to all that, Haywoodism persistently asks: “What sense is there in political action when 75 per cent. of the working people are not voters?”

Unresponsive to the sharp distinction between individual and collective, private and public, single and mass action, Haywoodism advocates by preachment and example acts of petty and private mischief, such as “sabotage,” theft, and even worse.

Unresponsive to the loftily constructive demand of the Age, Haywoodism raises Destruction to the dignity of a goal.

The world being one city; the human race one; and the human mind working, within narrow limits of variation, within the same channel; it is impossible to fail to detect in the partly written, partly unwritten, program of Haywoodism the theoretic note and practical conduct of the officially adopted program of Bakounin’s Revolutionary International Brothers—a mob whose staff, “having the devil in their bowels,” confused the “revolutionary idea” with “destruction,” and had no conception of revolutionary agitation, education and organization other than—to use Bakounin’s official expression—“the unchaining of what we have been taught to call the bad passions.”

From the camp of Haywoodism the definition has come of Industrialism as Socialism with its working clothes on. Taking the terms “Industrialism,” “Socialism” and “working clothes” in their proper sense, the definition fits—and, therefore, it hints at the definition of Haywoodism itself as “Industrialism with its shirt off.”

Daily People, Vol. XIII, No. 287. Sunday, April 13, 1913