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EDITORIAL

BOUNCE MCMACKIN!

By DANIEL DE LEON

LAST week's article entitled "[Talk and Facts](#)" should be ample ground for the Republican administration at Albany to bounce [John McMackin](#) from his job as Commissioner of Labor with short shrift.

The article brought out that a computation of the statistical figures, published by the bureau of Labor on wages, shows that wages are petering down. The same bureau published figures to show that the pure and simple Unions are gaining greatly in numbers. A synthesis of these two sets of figures points out the conclusion that wages go down to the tune of the increase in the pure and simple pet organizations of the capitalist class. This is about as strong an argument against the Lieutenants of Labor as one can want, and it is a demolition of the theories of pure and simpledom. Now, then, it is not for any such purpose that Mr. John McMackin is paid a salary.

The bureaus of Labor, originally conceived for the purpose of furnishing the working class official information on the downward slope that capitalism leads them, soon degenerated into what everything, intended for the benefit of the working class, must degenerate into under capitalist administration. Accordingly, the office was speedily turned into a "pap" with which to keep some malodorous Labor Lieutenant of Capitalism in bread and butter, and, as an inevitable result thereof, the "information" retailed from such offices was doctored in such way as to deceive the rank and file of the workers. This explains a McMackin as "Commissioner of Labor" in Albany. This also explains his booming, in his "reports," the pure and simple Unions, and boasting of their increase. In a measure, this also explains the slip of allowing the figures to appear that demonstrate the futility of pure and simpledom, and for this reason:

It goes without saying that the tribe of the McMackins is essentially an igno-

rant tribe. To mention any of that gentry in the same breath with statistics is enough to draw laughter from mourners. Hence it comes that the public is regaled with the sight of the capitalist concerns, who placed McMackin there to boom pure and simple, hoisted with their own petard. Their ignorant lackey, this old-time Labor Lieutenant of Capitalism, John McMackin, does not know enough to lie consistently. While he does all he can to give figures as large as possible on the numerical strength of the pure and simple Unions, and thus seeks to insinuate a false idea suitable to the interests of his paymasters, he hasn't gumption enough to know that all such increase in the membership of the fakir-led Unions means nothing unless he can at least show that such increase keeps up wages. He knows nothing of that. He did not digest his orders. He has not sense enough to digest them. As a result the document he publishes turns out to be an argument against pure and simple Unionism, in that it betrays the fact that despite increasing numbers in membership, the Union's wages are going down, down.

Of course it takes an extraordinarily powerful mind to lie consistently; and of course the Organized Scabbery's forte does not lie in powerfulness of mind. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that McMackin has proved himself exceptionally stupid.

Bounce him!

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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TALK AND FACTS.

Pure and Simple Claims That Do Not Withstand Examination.

In the last number of the "Machinists' Monthly Journal," the official organ of the International Association of Machinists there appeared a number of articles which are ostensibly intended to prepare the membership, especially in the matter of the recent Convention of the organization, for a continuation of the hitherto unavailing reactionary policy. The two gems in this sentiment-moulding batch were an essay of the "man with a reputation," Hoyt McGregor, and an article taken from the "Tailor," the organ of the International Tailors' Union.

McGregor repeats his denunciatory lies about the history of the Socialist movement, which according to him is identical with wholesale robbery, rapine, arson and wholesale massacre, and declares that the complete refutation of Socialism is the first step for the further development of trades unionism, which already has achieved such great things.

The article from the "Tailor" promulgates as a duty activity in the trades unions. It claims that they act as a safety valve for the discontent that naturally grows out of the competitive system. They do this by obtaining more favorable conditions of work, and they lessen, through beneficial features, the greatest hardships under which the worker has to suffer at present.

In both articles the working class is also told that they can only improve their condition by organizing in a manner that will show itself useful in the support of the present Capitalist system of society. As proof of the correctness of this assumption it is claimed that the labor organizations that have developed pro-capitalistic and anti-revolutionary, have attained material progress in their trades.

Such sentiments characterize the whole American trades union movement under the auspices of the American Federation of Labor.

Will the workers be influenced by it for any length of time?

The answer to this question does not depend on any talk of the trades union leader, but on the actual experiences of the workers themselves.

The experiences flow from the actual fluctuations of wages.

There may be a time, when the capitalists are so hard pressed by a Socialist revolutionary movement that they will prefer a diminished profit rather than risk the overthrow of their whole profit-system. But this period can only be reached when the revolutionary Socialist Labor movement has become so powerful that it makes the capitalists fear the fast oncoming overthrow.

Until this period has been reached, the capitalists will make no concessions that as a whole do not make for them the exploitation of labor more lucrative. Concessions will only be granted to the trades union, if through it the rate of profit can be increased, although a small percentage of workers in an industry is granted an inconsiderable increase in wages.

The tactics of leading pure and simple cannot yet utilize the fear which is created among capitalists by a revolutionary Socialist movement. The success such tactics has attained so far, through the betrayal and at the cost of the majority of the men in certain industries, were gains only for a very small minority. What a part of men employed in the building trades, the compositors, and metal workers gained, they were granted because their influence forced the majority of their colleagues in the trade to be satisfied with lower wages.

The statistical facts prove it. We refer to the last publication of the Labor Bureau of the State of New York, of which John McMackin is the head, and he has used this bureau for years to boom the reactionary trades unions.

McMackin compiles his reports from the information he receives from the employers and trades unions.

According to his last report, the number of members in the conservative trades unions has increased from year to year. For instance, from 1897 to 1899 it increased 60,000. But this only proves that a greater number of workmen have allowed themselves to be duped by the boasts and promises of the fakirs. The further statistics of McMackin show that with the increase of membership, there has not been a corresponding improvement of the condition of labor for the mass of the workers.

The report of the New York labor commissioner gives the fluctuations in wages from 1890 to 1899 for sixty-six firms in metal and stone industry.

In these industries the average wages was:

1890-91	\$521
1896, a crisis year.....	519
1899	512

The same tendency; that is, a falling below the crisis level of 1896, shows itself in the statistics of 3,553 firms and twelve industries.

Among them are the industries that furnish the bulk of the membership in the trades unions of the State of New York; for instance, stone, machine, metal, woodworking, building, printing, tobacco food industry.

In the 3,553 establishments there are employed from 300,000 to 350,000.

The yearly average wages were:

1896	\$467
1899	456

But this number only gives the decrease in the income, and does not show the actual fluctuations in the rate of wages. To ascertain this as closely as possible, one must consider that the income in 1896 was earned in less weeks than in 1899. According to the same report these workers in 1896 barely worked forty-three weeks, while in 1899 they worked forty-six weeks.

There average weekly wage was in

1896	\$10.86
1899	9.01

The labor commissioner does not give the rate of wages for the year 1890 of the 350,000 workers. We compare therefore the above given rate with the

average wage the census of 1890 gives for all the workers of the State, and find the following downward trend:

1890, yearly wage.....	\$492
1896, yearly wage.....	467
1899, yearly wage.....	456

The same tendency shows itself by an investigation of the single industries. In the better paid industries, where the trades union movement is boasting of numerous achievements, the downward trend is still more forcibly shown.

In the machine and metal industry, the average wage per year was

1890	\$594
1896	522
1899	501

In the printing trades, in which the introduction of the linotype has become general since 1890, the decrease was still more rapid. The average yearly wage was

1890	\$689
1896	579
1899	537

These facts speak louder than words.

If the workers have in spite of them joined trades unions in any number, then they have done the same as before when, misled and blinded through glittering generalities and promises, they flopped en masse to the K. of L.

The facts, which were ignored then brought on the disruption of the trades union heyday which existed in 1886-88. Those facts are to-day more effective than ever. They come through the capitalist system. The manifesto of the Socialist Trades and Labor Alliance sums them up as three factors through which the capitalist system has:

First, taken from the worker all property and compelled him through fear of starvation to sell his labor power to the capitalist;

Second, it has given the capitalist a monopoly in the means of production and distribution and puts him in a position through improving these means to displace human labor, and thereby overcrowd the labor market;

Third, The capitalist can, through the public powers which he commands, stamp as a crime any attempt to raise the price of the article which he wants to buy (namely labor power) and bring about its suppression.

These facts will be effective as long as Capitalism and capitalist class rule exist.

When the revolutionary movement of the workers has become powerful enough to shake Capitalism, then the capitalist class will undoubtedly seek to prolong its existence by throwing sops to the workers. But the workers who will then be won by concessions will form only a traitorous minority. The majority of the workers will be in the ranks of the army of the class-conscious Fighting S. L. P.—Hugo Vogt, in "Sozialistische Arbeiter Zeitung."

WARREN STIRRED UP.

A Town that Offers the Proper Material for a Staunch Section.

WARREN, June 18.—A large open air meeting was held here last evening by William S. Dalton, who delivered an excellent address, and made a lasting impression.

The boilermakers, who had but recently gone on strike because some of their number here were discharged for organizing a union, were forcibly shown how their pure and simple union would not aid them in the struggle, and that only by bringing Socialist politics into their union could they expect to become a force in their community.

Dalton showed the crowd in clear-cut language that when bullets fired by the militia are found in the bodies of the workers, behind the bullets will be discovered the ballots voted at the last election. He also said the man is as great a scab who votes against his class as the man who works against his union.

All the copies of "Reform and Revolution" and "What Means This Strike" were quickly disposed of, and many more copies could have been sold if they were at hand.

The Section here is not very flourishing. There is no large workingman's movement, and unionism here has only made its appearance in the past few months.

There has been a branch of the custom tailors and cigarmakers' unions existing for a number of years, but merely existing; they seldom met, and are as ignorant of unionism as they are of Socialism.

An organizer for the A. F. of L. has recently succeeded in getting together eleven organizations, and forming a central trades body. Then occurred the boilermakers' lock-out and strike. The firm opened up Monday, demanding that each returning employe sign an agreement not to have anything to do with the union. About half of the force who were not members of the union, but who had struck with the others out of sympathy, and partly out of fear, signed the agreement and returned. The union men are still holding out. If the boilermakers lose, the pure and simple union will probably receive its death-blow in its infancy. As the men get no strike benefits, their chances of holding out very long are poor.

Dalton gave them convincing arguments as to why they should fight on the political field, as well as on the economic, and that the political trades union, the class-conscious workingman's political union, was the only kind to foster and to organize. An effort will be made to put new life into the Section here, but if a man like Dalton could be with us a week instead of a single day, we have no doubt a first class Section could be built up.

Steel Cast Explodes.

CHICAGO, July 2.—Three tons of molten metal accidentally dropped in running water at the Illinois Steel Company's plant at South Chicago caused an explosion to-day that killed one man, seriously injured eight or nine others, and tore out 100 feet of masonry.

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