

# *Industrial Unionism*

*By Olive M. Johnson*



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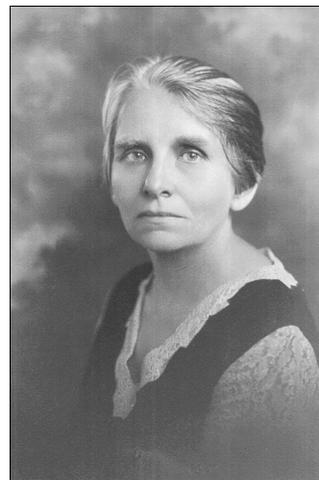
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...“Industrialism” [industrial unionism]...does not consist of a clubbing together of a few closely kindred trades into one industry. If that were “Industrialism,” then, indeed, Mitchell’s organization, which holds together several, not even all of 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.

—DANIEL DE LEON, Jan. 23, 1906

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OLIVE M. JOHNSON (1872–1954)

## *Preface*

This pamphlet is composed of a number of articles dealing with various phases of the subject of *Industrial Unionism*, which subject is assuming ever greater importance day by day to the working class of America.

Added to the main portion of the pamphlet is a supplement by Thomas Grady, of Philadelphia, an indictment of the American Federation of Labor.<sup>1</sup> Such indictments of the Federation and its leaders, the “labor fakers” or “labor lieutenants of the capitalist class,” have been issued from time to time from the press of the Socialist Labor Party. Notable among such indictments is Daniel De Leon’s classic, “Plebs Leaders and Labor Leaders,” from his pamphlet, *Two Pages from Roman History*. Grady’s statement lays no claim to completeness as a record of recent acts of commission and omission on the part of the A.F. of L.—but it serves as a fair sample of A.F. of L. treason to the workers whom it pretends so flamboyantly to serve.

As the capitalist system rides toward its fall, the lines of the class struggle are drawn ever sharper, and as the capitalist class feels ever more keenly the icy hand of death on its shoulder, it will be driven to ever greater frenzy which is bound to manifest itself in ever greater outrages against labor and ever stronger assumptions

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Grady’s “The Faker-Ridden American Federation of Labor” not included here. [Click here](#) and scroll to the “Miscellaneous” section to view separate posting.

of righteousness, infallibility, yea, actual godliness, on its own part.

The class struggle in America has so far manifested itself principally in economic skirmishes between capital and labor—the tightening of the economic screws on the one side, the demand for higher wages, shorter hours, more sanitary conditions of employment, and so forth, on the other, these opposing desires blossoming out into strikes and lockouts of more or less serious character. The ruthlessness with which the economic masters, who constitute the capitalist class of America, have crushed the tiniest aspirations of labor during the period generally known as the “Industrial Revolution,” demonstrates beyond a shadow of a doubt that the capitalist class of America—backed up by its “executive committee,” the Political Government—looks upon itself—by the grace of God—as the master, the absolute ruling class of this nation, and the workers as its slaves.

Every strike, that has assumed any considerable proportions, has been ruthlessly treated as a “civil war,” with the “recalcitrant workers” as the “rebel state.” The Pennsylvania mines have furnished ample bloody illustrations, and so have the steel mills. The railroads had their Pullman strike and their American Railway Union strike before the workers were strapped hand and foot by the “Brotherhoods” whose “leaders” have made strikes well-nigh an impossibility for the workers who have peaceably taken one economic clubbing after another, or have been branded as “rebel strikers,” taking their clubbing between their leaders and their employers. The Western mountain districts, Idaho, Colorado, Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico have been from time to time convulsed by gigantic and bitterly fought strikes, in which the Political State has served capitalism as its obedient henchman, driving the workers from their homes, maltreating and killing them. So frequent and so glaring has been this collusion to crush labor between the industrial barons and the Political State that it is superfluous to mention instances. There is not a mill nor factory town, a railroad center, a lumber district, a seaport, that has not witnessed a more or less bitter demonstration of the class struggle, with blood flowing—always the workers’ blood, of course.

Throughout all this struggle the workers, who dare call attention to the exploiting outrages of capital by a strike and the exposures it carries with it, are unceremoniously *treated as rebels*. It was, however, under the wings of the Blue Eagle and the aegis of the New Deal—with the government more and more assuming the position of an economic dictator—that an outright pronunciamento,

was made, declaring a strike a rebellion and the striking workers to be traitors to the government of the United States.

Rumblings of this kind were heard already in 1933, and the very labor leaders of the American Federation of Labor were pushed forward to stop minor “rebellions” of labor against unreasonable codes. But it took the ports strike of the Pacific Coast, and particularly the general strike of San Francisco and the Bay Region, in sympathy with the marine workers, actually to dignify this fake idea of “rebellion” with the blessings of the Federal government.

No sooner was the general strike contemplated than the press of the country, led by such intellectual spokesmen of capitalism as Walter Lippmann and David Lawrence, started carefully to cultivate the “rebellion” idea. The radio shouted it; the NRA and Labor Department officials—including Edward F. McGrady, Assistant Secretary of Labor, and former A.F. of L. vice president—sang the identical tune. General Johnson, then still the honored NRA chief and presumably in matters relative to the relation between capital and labor the spokesman of the President himself, swooped down on the Bay Region, threatening death and destruction to those concerned in this “insurrection.” “A general strike,” said General Johnson, speaking directly of the San Francisco strike, “is a threat to the community. It is a menace to government. It is civil war.—This ugly thing is a blow to the flag of our country and it has got to stop.”

To all this “rebellion” litany the high priest of the A.F. of L., President William Green, shouted “Yea and amen!”

Rebellion! Civil war! Trampling on the Constitution! Certainly all these outrages have been frequently committed and it is up to labor to ram these charges down the throats of the capitalist masters and their spokesmen. No better material for this can be expected than this very San Francisco strike itself.

When the strike of July, 1934, was over, the papers admitted freely that over a million persons in the San Francisco Bay area had been affected by the strike and the more general laying down of work that naturally followed. The workers in the Bay District, the workers along the whole Pacific Coast, as everywhere else in the country, are in the great majority. The strikers’ demands were ludicrously mild. Apparently they mildly accepted wages and hours as proposed in the ridiculous codes of the NRA. The main bone of contention of the marine and port workers was

the “hiring halls,” through which abominable institutions the ship owners were able to discriminate in the hiring of men and subject willing and able workers, whose political or economic views or perhaps mere complexion for some reason did not suit them, to unemployment and starvation. Thus the workers were fighting for their very lives, with the only means which society has grudgingly accorded them, viz., the strike. The other workers of the community, perceiving the injustice, the threat to the very right to live, to their fellow workers, were loyally and beautifully ready to risk their own chance of existence in order to help the marine workers win the slightly improved conditions and admittedly just demands of labor they asked. They laid down work in sympathy with the original strikers.

Instantly the welkin rang with the shouts of “rebellion,” “attack on society,” “trampling on the Constitution,” “threat to the government,” and so on and so forth ad nauseam.

Why are the workers “rebels” who ask nothing more than the merest concession of rotation of employment so that all may exist somehow? Why are the *majority* of the people classed as “subversive” and anti-government, when putting forth a ludicrously small demand in a land which boasts of equality or *equal opportunity*? How can they be trampling on the Constitution, who struggle at the very risk of their livelihood for the *right to life* which that Constitution and that government are supposedly written and instituted to protect and guarantee?

On the other hand, were not these very ship owners the real “rebels,” the “subversive element” in society, the trampers on the Constitution? For the sake of their evil “right” to the “hiring hall,” which reads discrimination of labor, they starved the port and marine workers up and down the Pacific Coast for more than two months. They interfered with commerce and the natural flow of traffic and exchange of goods. They caused suffering to large populations. They aroused anger against themselves and sympathy for the strikers of millions upon millions of people, causing angry outbursts of passion. They attempted to move goods, in defiance of the workers who imagine they own their jobs. They induced or coerced workmen truck drivers to run trucks through the picket lines, causing angry outbursts and thus actually *inciting to riot*. They collected thugs to act as strikebreakers in the manner of the worst criminal racketeer associations, thus challenging law, order (aye, even the “law and order” of the capitalist class!) and the decency of the community. They inspired mobs under the high-faluting name of

“vigilantes” to commit illegal acts such as raids and destruction of property. They egged on private clubs of World War veterans to defend the capitalists’ private exploiting privileges in the manner that these veterans once used to fight the foreign enemy. They called upon the police, the militia, the federal army, all supposedly constituted for the protection of our people, to rush in—club, gas bomb, rifle, machine gun in hand—to protect the infamous “hiring hall” institution, even if it meant the wiping out of a million of our best and most useful people—a work for which none of these agencies, except by ruling class perversion, can by any stretch of the imagination have been organized and constituted under our “*democratic*” government and Constitution.

The actions of the ship owners in all these rebellious and Constitution-trampling respects are, of course, nothing new in capitalist history. A couple of hundred miles south of the glorious Bay Region that has recently witnessed this ugly capitalist outbreak of rebellion, in the same much ballyhooed “sunny California,” there lies Imperial Valley, a region so fertile, so inviting, as amply to supply nourishment for millions of people. In this potential earthly paradise the useful and capable food workers have been made to toil under conditions that would shame the slavocracy of Ancient Rome. And when these ragged starvelings asked for the merest increase in their starvation rations the slavocrats of America gave them—not stones! They gave them what was more deadly, a lead diet! Every crime on the calendar, every crime against the Constitution and “free democratic government” has been ruthlessly committed against the workers in Imperial Valley, and the authorities—those sworn to uphold the Constitution of the state and nation, the supposed dispensers of democratic government and free institutions—have not only acquiesced in the outrages, but have aided and abetted them.

With, this before their eyes, no wonder the ship owners of San Francisco and the entire Coast were arrogant. They knew beforehand that they too could trample on the Constitution with impunity, that they could use “the government of the people” to suppress the mass of the people, the working people, to shoot them down in cold blood, to poison them with gases.

This group, then, the small predatory capitalist class entrenched in their usurped property, the means of production, built and operated by the workers alone, are the real “rebels.” It is they who are trampling on the Constitution and turning free democratic institutions into a howling farce.

They are the slavocracy of today, depicted by Lowell in the lines:

“Here we stan’ on the Constitution, by thunder!  
It’s a fact o’ wich there’s bushils o’ proofs;  
Fer how could we trample on’t so, I wonder,  
Ef’t worn’t that it’s ollers under our hoofs?”

The onus of “rebellion” against the flag and the Constitution thus falls definitely on the capitalist class.

We workers of America are the “Demos”—the people of America. We are the great majority and hence ours is the Constitution, ours is the government instituted in revolution by the declaration that the people of this nation have a right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. Whosoever interferes with this right is a rebel, a trampler on the Constitution, a subversive element in society.

It is, however, useless, to prate about “rights” while the existing social order with all its laws and trappings conspires to abrogate those rights. The strike, the boycott, a few pennies more in wages, shorter hours, the abolition of hiring halls and other abuses, will not furnish a better life to the workers, for, as long as capitalism lasts, the workers will continue wage slaves.

The real struggle between the workers and the capitalists centers, therefore, around the ownership of the means of production, the abolition of capitalism.

This historic act of the workers, however, requires organization—united action, both on the political and the economic fields. It is with the structure and mission of the necessary economic, or union, organization of the workers of America that this pamphlet deals. It analyzes in detail the differences between the outmoded and obsolete craft union structure of the A.F. of L. and the new union, known as the “Industrial Union.”

The subject of Industrial Unionism is becoming one of the live topics of the day, so much so that “counterfeit” Industrial Unionism is being held out to the workers on every hand. Whenever the American Federation of Labor is forced into “amalgamation” or to organize a shop—temporarily or otherwise—into so-called vertical unions, up goes the cry that the A.F. of L. is moving toward Industrial Unionism. The so-called progressive unions, sponsored by the Communists, mere conglomerations of workers from an industry, are where they exist at all other than

on paper—pawed off as “Industrial Unions.” Even the company unions, organized “vertically” through the industries, are held up by hired confusionists and newspaper writers as model “industrial” unions. It is the object of this pamphlet to clear up the confusion which exists in regard to this subject, so essential for working class progress toward a better life. It is indeed as important to know what Industrial Unionism is not, as to know what it really is. The two subjects run into one.

The Industrial Union, said De Leon, is a trefoil comprising structure, tactics and goal. The goal is Revolution, the Socialist Industrial Republic; the tactics are political and economic on the basis of the class struggle; the structure calls for all workers of an industry in one local union and all the workers of the nation in one great Industrial Union, with proper subdivisions.

The few simple charts presented throughout the text will help graphically to illustrate the essential and all-important difference between Industrial Unionism, on the one hand, and the fake imitations as well as the pure and simple craft unions, on the other.

A careful study of the articles that follow will show not only that such an organization of the workers of America would be able successfully to cope with the industrial capitalist bosses, but that it would be able to serve as an instrument (as *the* instrument—coupled with the civilized weapon of the ballot) of the Socialist Revolution, and in the fulness of time as the scaffolding for the Socialist Industrial Republic of Labor—a republic which inevitably and soon must take the place of capitalism if society is not to go down in chaos, that is, if progress of humanity shall continue in the future as it has done in the past.

OLIVE M. JOHNSON.

New York, N. Y., August 1935.

## ***What Industrial Unionism Is Not***

As the disintegration of capitalism progresses and the inevitability of a social change creeps into the common conscience, a great deal of nervousness exhibits itself in speculation as to the possibility and methods of that change. The Industrial Union organization, being unquestionably the instrument of the coming Revolution, and being more and more recognized as such, naturally comes in for an overdose of this speculation. How will it be organized? When do we start? Shouldn't we begin now? Capitalism breaking as fast as it does, will there be time for organization of the workers? What are we to do with the unemployed? Etc., etc. These and many more questions are asked repeatedly, and quite evidently require an adequate treatment.

To find out what a thing is, it is often of first importance to learn what it is not. We shall go on that principle and dispose first of some present caricatures of Industrial Unionism.

The "left wing" that broke away from the reformistic Socialist party way back in 1919–20 was generally characterized as Bill Haywood's band of roughnecks. As such they were—in notion at least—"I.W.W.s," that is, strongly tainted with "I'm-a-bummery." Naturally, they took these ideas with them to the "Workers'" or Communist party, where these ideas soured even more thoroughly than they had done in the old S.P. The I.W.W., in its closing era, had been pretty much of a racket—for that day and age. The Communist party inherited the racketeering spirit and went on improving upon it. Under half a dozen aliases it steadily plucks the gullible and many of the non-gullible by various methods. The union field naturally presented an open market for these vultures.

The I.W.W.'s latter-day tactics were to proceed from place to place and foment strikes, which is an easy matter since dissatisfaction and grievances of the workers lie on the very surface everywhere. A strike once started, the I.W.W. lived on the sentiment aroused until it was totally exhausted and then the "bummery" contingent moved on to a new camping ground. The Communists attempted to carry on these tactics—though they were already somewhat played out. There have accordingly been a latter-day Lawrence and Paterson, there have been a Passaic and Gastonia, and many other places somewhat less reputed—though no less odious—on a smaller scale.

The Communists "organized" unions, "new" or it "progressive" unions by

designation. We have heard of these unions for the textile workers, clothing workers, shoe workers, restaurant workers, wood workers, miners, etc. In every case they exist on paper only. But these paper unions carry on perpetual “strikes” and *picketing*. This picketing racket may be observed all over New York City, for example. In almost any place outside a—usually low-class—store or restaurant can be seen in steady relays, as long as the place is open, a man or woman parading back and forth with a placard announcing that this place “does not employ union cooks” or “waiters” or “salesmen” or “help,” as the case requires. It is to be noted that these cards do not, as a rule, announce the place to be struck—merely that no “union” workers are employed. Now as far as these classes of workers are concerned, it is certain that non-union, that is, non-organized workers are employed by every great store, hotel and restaurant in the city. Yet we see no placard people outside of Wanamaker’s, Macy’s or Rogers Peet, nor any of the more popular eating places—and for good reason, since these firms would not tolerate the nuisance and the police at a wink would come to the rescue. But the poor little cockroach business man is between the devil and the deep blue sea. If he can’t afford to pay for a nice police riot, he has no choice but to tolerate the placard nuisance unless he can strike a bargain with the officers of the paper union and have it called off. In the meantime a few of the miserable unemployed have jobs as “pickets” at “relief” prices. That this sort of union “propaganda” is worse than a caricature of a union is self-evident. It is only the lowest and meanest form of racketeering.

Another style of “new” and “progressive” “industrial union” propaganda works as follows. A band of footloose Communists get into a field where there has been in the past a well organized and “closed shop” union of the A.F. of L. Such a union today, in a hundred cases out of a hundred, is run by official racketeers. This has two inevitable results—seething dissatisfaction among the rank and file, and hatred of the leaders in *the ring* by others who are out of the graft ring but who feel the genius of leadership bubbling in their souls. These inevitably turn “radicals” and “Communists,” their radicalism and communism consisting solely of their opposition to the fakers on the inside and the desire to supplant them. So these Communists “bore from within” until they are thrown out head over heels by the fakers in control. Result—a “progressive union.” The rank and file is exhorted to desert the old fakers and follow the new. This is the present situation among the miners, painters, moving picture operators and others.

The miners' case is typical. The racketeers and vultures of the "Progressive" union are not in the least less voracious than the old set of the United Mine Workers, the only difference being that they can get a foothold only in the petty, cockroach mines, and hence their operations are on a meaner, lower and pettier scale altogether. Between the two sets of vultures, the miners of Illinois are being hacked to pieces, their wage scale hammered down, and when they are not intimidated by one set, they are intimidated by the other, so no matter where they can catch a day's work they take their lives in their hands to, pursue it.

That such "unions" are not revolutionary or Socialist Industrial Unions, nor, for that matter, unions at all, requires no long argument to prove. They stand self-convicted, not only as caricatures but as out and out frauds.

The workers cannot too carefully beware of being roped in by their cries of anti-fakerdom and progressivism.

### ***Rump Unions***

When in 1908 the Industrial Workers of the World threw out the political clause from its preamble and went Anarcho-Syndicalist, the Socialist Industrial Union element left in a body, abandoning the I.W.W. to its fate, which was bound to overtake it sooner or later. Most of the Socialist Unionists—and among these was Daniel De Leon—were willing to face the facts of the situation, knowing that the labor movement does not march on from victory to victory, but, on the contrary, from defeat to defeat, each defeat imparting new experiences and new strength for the next struggle, until at last the working class is ready for the last and final struggle and—victory. Hopes had run high in 1905 that the workers of the United States were ready to organize for the final struggle to throw off the chains of wage slavery. But the Anarchists and blow-hards of the Haywood-St. John type were able to capture the organization, because the masses still stood aloof. Some were utterly suspicious of all unionism because, since they belonged to the poorer-paid branches of labor, they had been perpetually snubbed by "union aristocrats," had been kept from organizing and at the same time branded as scabs. Others, those in the A. F. of L., still sat on the top of the labor world and, like elephants mad with pride in their petty ignorance, denied the class struggle, imagined they were capital's brothers and on the high road to wealth and affluence. On the other hand, a large group,

some 50,000 to start with, had broken with the deadly reasoning of both the unorganized and the pure and simple unionists and had subscribed to the tenet that “the capitalist class and the working class have nothing in common,” that “between these two classes a struggle must go on until all the toilers come together on the political, as well as on the industrial, field, and take and hold that which they produce by their labor.” But it soon became evident that the “struggle” meant no more than a bread and butter struggle under capitalism, every bit as pure and simple as, though on a cheaper and rougher scale than, the A.F. of L. Mere doughnut and pork chop artists capable of making an inordinate amount of empty noise!

The Industrial Union idea had been ushered into the world, but the industrial organization had failed. The true Industrial Unionist, as said above, was willing to recognize and accept this defeat and to go on with the agitation—since it was evident that a tremendous amount of Industrial Union propaganda was necessary before a sound revolutionary organization could be launched. This agitation and education, we know, could best, in fact, could only, be conducted through the political organization that recognized the necessity of a revolutionary Industrial Union to overthrow capitalism and reorganize society on a Socialist basis—viz., the Socialist Labor Party.

But there are literal souls, unimaginative souls. To such, a thing must physically exist or it simply does not exist. Industrial Unionism, therefore, could not exist and propagate itself as a living idea without a body called an Industrial Union. So this group, against the advice of De Leon, decided to hold on to the I.W.W. on the principle of the first preamble—hence the Detroit I.W.W., later the W.I.I.U. Though this body, to start with, held some organizations of workers in certain industries, it never had even a single, bona fide Industrial Union, and hence it was not, of course, a real Industrial Union at any time except in principle. Naturally, it could not compete with the I.W.W. in noise nor in sensational strikes. It soon dwindled, therefore, to a mere propaganda organization which could do nothing but duplicate the work of the S.L.P.—only it never in any true sense *duplicated* our work, for it had neither the personnel nor the facilities of the S.L.P., meager as our facilities are in relation to the situation. Moreover, it was out of its element, since to be a propaganda organization entirely is not the function of the economic but of the political organization.

The W.I.I.U., accordingly, in time developed into a rather emphatic nuisance that became a hindrance rather than a help to Industrial Union agitation. The Detroiters came actually to look upon themselves as a privileged group who had to be referred to and boosted every time the Industrial Union idea was mentioned—if not, protests and resolutions of condemnation would issue: The S.L.P. was ignoring the Industrial Union; the S.L.P. was turning traitor to De Leon's principle. Since this "union" was only the merest caricature of a union, it became more and more impossible to recommend it in good faith to the working class. Pretty soon, there issued from Detroit the demand, in effect, that every S.L.P. man and woman who was an actual wage worker *must* belong to the W.I.I.U. or prove themselves traitors to De Leonism. In other words, at the period of the very lowest ebb in the bona fide Socialist movement of America, when it cost all the nerve and energy and every penny that most of us had to keep afloat the S.L.P., the one and only scientific Socialist organization in the country, these would-be industrialists demanded that we split ourselves in two, humanly and financially to keep up a shadow of an economic organization, which, as far as it could do any work at all, was only a meager imitation of the work of the S.L.P.

By this time, moreover, this little group of serious thinkers was becoming more than a nuisance; it had started to fester as a center of disruption. One reason that a political party is so eminently fitted to be a revolutionary propaganda organization is that it has the power to keep itself clean and straight. Wobbly, half-baked material, or out-and-out disrupters can be got rid of and are got rid of sooner or later before much damage can be done. The scientific principles of Socialism and Industrial Unionism have never been compromised by the S.L.P. A political party can be very small and yet no citizen is deprived of his right to vote for it, if he so desires. It is quite otherwise with the Union. It presupposes numbers; it can, in fact, never be a real union without numbers. In principle, the Union exists to protect the industrial worker in his rights to live and work. Hence, in principle, to cast a person out of the Union is to cast him out of a job. When that happens the worker can even have recourse to the laws of the land to protect him. Hence the very fundamental principles upon which a union is built prevents it from being a scientific, educational organization—because it is greatly hampered in its ability to keep its ranks free from poisonous weeds. It cannot actually do so.

This deficiency as a propaganda organization showed itself in the W.I.I.U. It

became a soft nest for disgruntled S.L.P. folks—ex-S.L.P. and the growlers who still hung on for the damage they could do. From the shelter of the W.I.I.U. these spat venom at the S.L.P., more or less openly, and for what they did as W.I.I.U. members, in criticism, articles and resolutions, the Party could not easily touch them. For years this nuisance continued, until it became so emphatic that the S.L.P. in convention in 1924 severed all relations with the Detroit outfit. It died a natural death soon after—showing that without the S.L.P. to ride upon, it could not possibly exist. From that time on, the S.L.P. has had a clearer and smoother road. The Industrial Union idea is taking root among the workers throughout the land.

However, it may be pretty nearly laid down as a rule in our corrupt society that, wherever a genuine thing takes hold, a counterfeit will almost instantly appear. No sooner, therefore, was the idea of a genuine Industrial Union found to be growing than groups would attempt to pose as industrial unions, industrial leagues, industrial councils and what not. And what could be more fit and proper than that such groups should either be almost solely composed of disgruntled ex-S.L.P. folks and actually expelled disrupters, or that where a few genuine shop workers are got together they \*should be led by a gentry that had found the S.L.P. too narrow for its “genius,” and S.L.P. discipline too strict for its proclivities. Such groups, while stealing S.L.P. principles, are conducting a vicious anti-S.L.P. propaganda either out of pure hate or for the fundamentally vicious purpose of injuring the Party by poisoning the minds of the workers against it.

It goes without saying that members of the S.L.P. cannot treat such contingents in any way except as opponents and enemies. It also goes without saying that the mere adoption of the word “industrial” in any name combination does not make a rag-chewing club an Industrial Union. As we go on elucidating the requirements of a true Industrial Union, we shall, from time to time, throw a spotlight on these groups that will expose more thoroughly the fraudulence of their pretenses.

### ***A Union Must Have Numbers***

Of late there is no question that pops up with more regularity to the S.L.P. agitator than that of Industrial Unionism:

You say that the Industrial Union is the basic thing? That it constitutes the framework for the now order? That it and it alone can furnish the force in

the coming revolution? Granted. What then are you doing about it? Why haven't you an Industrial Organization right now? Or, when is the S.L.P. going to start its industrial organization? Or, is there any Industrial Union now in existence?

To this the S.L.P. answers: There is no Industrial Union now in existence. The S.L.P. has no intention of starting an Industrial Union now or ever. When such a union will be started depends entirely on *when* the working class as a class in fairly representative numbers has become so imbued with the idea of Industrial Unionism as a revolutionary force that it is ready to turn from its worm condition. It is the working class itself which must organize the Industrial Union. The work of the S.L.P. is to propagate the idea, to tell the workers HOW; the WHEN rests with the working class.

The above questions emanate from the foolish notion that an Industrial Union can be started like a grocery store, by selecting a good stand and starting on a small scale. The W.I.I.U. worked on that notion and failed—was bound to fail and become a nuisance. There are such attempts started today—only punier and more foolish. All they will succeed in making of themselves is more or less emphatic nuisances in their different localities. We might as well make up our mind, therefore, that it will be one of the pests we shall have to bear with in the future, for so far from the nuisance abating there will probably be an epidemic of it as time goes on. Movements, like children, are bound to get measles and other infantile disorders. The only thing for the S.L.P. to do is to pay absolutely no attention to such eruptions except insofar as they directly interfere with our work. To be sure, such a group is bound to become a nuisance to the S.L.P. in some manner. First it will try to use the Party. Since the S.L.P. is, in this country, the one and only true exponent of Industrial Unionism, the egotist promoters of “a sample Industrial Union” imagine that all they need do is to attach the Industrial Union label to an ordinary rag-chewing society and the S.L.P. must endorse its existence and promote its being. If the S.L.P. refuses, as refuse it must, the rag-chewers instantly turn vicious: The S.L.P. is turning against De Leon! The S.L.P. is proving false to the idea of Industrial Unionism! That proving ineffectual, the vicious ones resort to lies and slander of the Party and its officials; new and untrained members and sympathizers are seen, with attempts to stuff them and turn them against the Party. Fortunately the Party has developed a tremendous power of resistance, not to say total immunity, to these infantile disorders. At worst they only amount to a

slight itch between the toes.

The bona fide Industrial Union cannot be started on the corner-grocer plan. The first essential of a union is numbers. A political, party, large or small, being essentially a propaganda unit, can do its work. The union is different; it cannot be a gradual growth; it must have numbers from the start, or die a gradual death. In the first place, members of a small revolutionary union—or any insignificant union, for that matter—will be marked men on their jobs, and soon be eliminated. In the second place, as soon as a union is actually connected with a trade or an industry, it will be subject to attack both by the A.F. of L. or other similar organizations, or by the employers. A small union, with no backing by labor in general, will soon be weeded out or in some manner eliminated. Again, if it has any kind of local strength in any industry, there is bound to be trouble. If nothing else, it will have a strike on its hands. The grievances of the workers are legion. A union spells betterment, better wages, shorter hours, removal of abuses. If a union, during a gradual constructive period, cannot effect these things, the workers are not going to stick to it. This was one of the rocks on which the I.W.W. stumbled and fell.

The S.L.P., on the other hand, is not required to make promises. It can propagate the revolution directly and in the open and show the workers that revolution alone can effect any change for the better in the workers' conditions. Hence it is subject to none of the pitfalls of a union propaganda group.

When the workers move to the Industrial Union, they must of necessity move as a mass, as a force large enough to be irresistible, both to attacks from labor fakers and from the employers themselves. When they move, they must move as a revolutionary force, not as a reform force. Reform, immediate demands, will spell death. Not more work, better work, more wages or shorter hours must be the goal, but the ownership and control of industry. No union group of untutored workers can ever be held together long enough—if no immediate —benefits are procured—for the revolutionary idea to be inculcated. The *idea* must precede the union. In other words, the revolutionary union must already exist in the workers' minds before it is put on paper or gathered in the shape of an organization. To perform this mental revolution is the work of the S.L.P.

A page from the Russian Revolution will serve to make this clear. The revolutionary organization—the revolutionary weapon, so to speak—was the Soviet. Soviets were started during the revolutionary upheaval of 1905. The upheaval

failed. The Soviets died down completely. Neither the Bolsheviki nor any other organization made an attempt to carry on corner-grocer sample groups. But the *idea* was there; it was agitated all the time. The Soviet revolution was being performed in the minds of large groups of workers. When the bourgeois revolution took place in March, 1917, the Soviet organization suddenly sprang into life, large enough at once so that it could not be snuffed out. The agitation from that time on grew fast and furious. The Soviet organizations soon learned what they wanted—not reforms, but *All Power to the Soviets*. The Bolshevik idea of workers' revolution from then on swiftly gained ground.

So the Industrial Union must and can be born only as a mass organization, born while the revolutionary wave is already in strong motion, born with the slogan: *All power to the Industrial Union!*

### ***A Miscellaneous Rag-Chewing Society Is Not a Union***

The old I.W.W. and the W.I.I.U. provided a place in the organization for the mixed or so-called recruiting local. De Leon in his early writings, therefore, when occasion so demands, mentions the recruiting local as a legitimate part of the organization structure. But his I.W.W. experience caused him to lose faith completely in the mixed local as a necessity or any kind of aid to the organization of the Industrial Union. In 1908, when the split had come in the I.W.W., he said to more than one close associate that never again would he join the industrial organization until there was an organization of his own industry. He severely condemned the mixed locals as inevitable sources of infinite trouble, as roosting places for cranks, slummists and social derelicts of all kinds. Emphatically he stated it had no place in the union.

Industrial Unionism and an Industrial Union organization, can mean only one thing—a union that embraces at least one industry. And, in fact, even one industry does not produce the Industrial Union organization in any true sense, any more than one swallow makes a summer. Industrial Unionism implies the union of Industrial Unions. Hence a craft union in a given industry is no more than a caricature of Industrial Unionism—calling it an Industrial Union does not make it so—even if such a craft group were fairly classconscious and knew what it wanted. It requires *structure, tactics* and goal to make an Industrial Union—and a group

union, even with a clear goal, could develop neither structure nor tactics. If this be true of a shop group, how much more is it true of the mixed local.

But, the argument goes, the mixed local is necessary as a recruiting force. This, of course, is nonsense. If no Industrial Union exists, then a mixed local does not make a union. If unions already are in existence, then these are the best recruiting forces. At any rate, a mixed recruiting local can have a meaning only within the limits of *an industry*, before the given industry is quite ready to organize in its various departments—and this can have meaning only after the Industrial Union organization is well under way in society at large.

The mixed local, as it is generally conceived, by the advocates of piecemeal Industrial Unions, may be put down as an unqualified nuisance. The nuisance arises, in the first place, from the fact that such a body has no true reason for being. It has no real work to do. As a *union*, it has absolutely no *union*, that is, factory or industrial, affairs to deal with. The workers dragged together from various walks of life as union members, as actual industrial workers, have absolutely nothing in common. Thus lacking a foundation of industry, it has actually no foundation. As a pure agitational force, it is worthless, since it is neither fish, fowl, nor good red herring. It has no standing inside an industry and no concern outside it. It differs in the latter respect from the revolutionary political party which has a standing on the political field and has, as such, a large work laid out for it, in getting on the ballot and carrying on agitation during and between election campaigns. The revolutionary political party is a recognized social entity. The miscellaneous group, posing as a union, is a freak and a fraud and is easily recognized as such.

Accordingly, the mixed affair soon develops into a pure fools' paradise. Its sole business in life is rag-chewing. Being ostensibly a "union," it is obliged to take in Tom, Dick and Harry. Bona fide industrial workers will stay shy of it. Freaks will gather, and freaks draw freaks. The urge to talk grows tremendous, and rag-chewing soon becomes an object in itself, until the principal loud speakers interfere with each other's noise-making—and that's usually the beginning of the end.

### ***Political vs. Economic Organization***

Perennially the discussion arises as to which is the more important, the political or economic organization. As far as the S.L.P. is concerned, that discussion

was closed many, many years ago. As far back as 1896 De Leon laid down the principle:

The Social Question and all such questions are essentially political. If you have an economic organization alone, you have a duck flying with one wing; you must have a political organization or you are nowhere. Watch the capitalist closely and see whether the Social Question is exclusively an economic one, or whether the political wing is not a very necessary one. The capitalist rules in the shop. Is he satisfied with that? Watch him at election time, it is then he works; he has also another workshop, not an economic one—the legislatures and capitols in the nation. lie buzzes around them and accomplishes political results. He gets the laws passed that will protect his economic class interests, and he pulls the wires, when these interests are in danger, bringing down the strong arm of political power over the heads of the striking workingmen, who have the notion that the Wages or Social Question is only an economic question.

Make no mistake: The organization of the working class must be both economic and political. The capitalist is organized upon both lines. You must attack him on both.

Eight years later, De Leon refuted and routed the pure and simple political “Socialists” in his speech, *The Burning Question of Trade Unionism*. Here he laid down the principle:

Thus we see that the head of the lance of the Socialist movement is worthless without the shaft. We see that they are not even parallel, but closely connected affairs; we see that the one needs the other, that while the head—the political movement—is essential in its way, the shaft of the lance—the industrial movement—is requisite to give it steadiness. The Labor movement that has not a well-pointed political lance-head can never rise above the babe condition in which the union is originally born; on the other hand, unhappy the political movement of Labor that has not the shaft of the trades union organization to steady it. It will inevitably become a freak affair. The head of the lance may “get them,” but unless it drags in its wake the strong shaft of the trades union it will have “got there” to no purpose.

Accordingly, the trades union question is indeed a burning one. On it is pivoted the success of the Socialist movement. And for the reason I have indicated the confusion on the subject is inevitable. Seeing that a thing called a union may act as a drag upon the Socialist movement, the temptation is strong upon the part of anti-unionists to drop it. I have shown you how fatal such dropping would be. The political and the industrial movement are one, he who separates them dislocates the Socialist movement.

Again, two years later, the same moot question was still the topic of the day, but then it was the “pure and simple” I.W.Wites who were declaring the political movement superfluous. In the *As to Politics* discussion, De Leon answers this contention most adequately and the subsequent development and decline of the I.W.W. bore out in their very illogicalness the laws of organization laid down by De Leon. We turn to his first answer to the pure and simple industrial unionists:

The organization that rejects the method [the political method] and organizes for force only reads itself out of the pale of civilization, with the practical result that, instead of seizing a weapon furnished by capitalism, it gives capitalism a weapon against itself. The inevitable result is that the agitation has to degenerate into “conspiracy”; conspiracy can be conducted in circumscribed localities only, such localities exclude the masses—and the wheels of time are turned back. *The bringing together of the physical force organization becomes impossible.* Political agitation equips the revolution with a weapon that is indispensable. Political agitation enables the revolution to be preached in the open, and thereby enables the revolution to be brought before the million-masses. In short, political agitation, coupled with the industrial organization able to “take and hold,” or “back up” the political movement, places the revolution abreast of civilized and intelligent methods—civilized, because they offer a chance to a peaceful solution; intelligent, because they are not planted upon the visionary plane of imagining that right can ever prevail without the might to enforce it.

As the Anarcho-Syndicalist I.W.W. swept onward to its destruction, one thing became ever more clear—the launching of a classconscious Revolutionary Industrial Union in 1905 had been premature. There had not been enough agitation done, the mass of the workers were still in either a “brotherhood of capital and labor” stage, or were totally ignorant on and indifferent to the labor question. Those who were radical’ or interested were so scatter-brained and untrained that the mass of them were easily led by pork chop bums and other ranters.

It was evident that a tremendous amount of education was necessary before a sound mass movement—such as the Industrial Union must inevitably be—could be launched. This agitation must be and could be carried on by the political party of Socialism, the Socialist Labor Party alone. Said De Leon at that time:

As to whether the political movement of Socialism is the more important, or the economic movement the more essential of the two, that may very well be left as a subject for the essayists. Its discussion now

would serve no practical purpose. It may well be left aside as inconsequential. One thing, however, stands out clear.—Under existing conditions, that organization of Socialism which is bound to appear first is the political. The very nature of its mission, essentially propagandist, determines its priority. The political organization of Socialism must be the disseminator of that knowledge and information which will take organic shape in the classconscious, industrial organization of the working class—the foundation and structure of the Socialist Republic. Thus, although the political is the transitory, and the economic organization the permanent formation of future society, the political organization, like the scaffolding, must precede the permanent structure.

The necessity for pre-organization agitation and education is still here. The demand for it grows in volume and becomes ever more insistent. The demand is straining the S.L.P. resources to the utmost. It is clear as crystal, however, that as yet the moment is not ripe for economic mass organization. The apathy on the one hand, and the confusion and bewilderment that manifest themselves, wherever the apathy breaks, demonstrate beyond all doubt that the workers of America are still unprepared for classconscious revolutionary activity. To drag the half-awakened, dazed and confused workers together into conglomerate groups and label these Industrial Unions can only add to the present confusion and serve to retard the movement in the future.

Agitation and education through the classconscious political revolutionary organization are the necessities of the hour. When the workers start to move, they will and *must* move quickly—and then it is all-important that they move without blundering.

### ***Social Character of the Industrial Union***

One of the “doubts” about Industrial Unionism is expressed something like this:

That as time passes, Industrial Unionism is bound to become less and less effective with every improvement in the machinery of production and distribution.

This notion arises from a lack of understanding of the revolutionary mission—the goal—of the Socialist Industrial Union. The notion has its origin in the conception that unless a union can secure better wages, shorter hours and more

tolerable conditions for the workers—in other words, accomplish reforms of capitalist exploitation—the union is useless. This mission of the union is almost totally ended—it belonged to the upswing period of capitalism.

The model industries today, with their “shop welfare” movements, with their sanitary measures, rest rooms, medical examinations and provisions, shop sports and what not, have gone further in these directions than any union demand would ever have dared go—and all for the purpose, of course, of producing more efficient and more contented wage slaves and doing away with the costly labor turnover of more restless days. Today it is the capitalists, the large industrialists, who are fighting much harder than labor for the six-hour day, five-day week, as the best means of killing off the smaller producers, being certain that in large and well-equipped establishments they will be able with improved machines, speed-up and the intensification of labor of the well rested six-hour worker, to more than compensate in their own profits. Last, the battle for higher wages is almost certainly ended under the capitalist system. With, on the one hand, machinery reaching ever higher perfection of productive capacity, in fact, approaching the automatic, and, on the other hand, the multi-million army of unemployed ever on the increase, any possible wage improvement becomes an empty dream. Unionism as a reforming factor under capitalism may, therefore, be set aside as a negligible factor. But, nevertheless, if any real improvements are indeed possible, they can come only through Industrial Unionism, for when the workers are once organizing to demand and to *take* all, the capitalists, trembling in their stolen boots, may be more than anxious to grant concessions—while and *if* there is still time.

He, however, who associates the union and its purpose only with the wage and hour movement under capitalism has entirely missed the true purpose of Industrial Unionism, its revolutionary purpose, its goal, viz., the abolition of capitalism and wage slavery. When this is comprehended, then it becomes evident that so far from the Industrial Union’s becoming “less and less effective with every improvement,” etc., on the contrary, every improvement in the machinery of production and distribution will be an aid to the organization and perfection of the Industrial Union.

Industrial Unionism was unthinkable in an age of scattered and small-shop production, even after this had grown to deserve the name of industry. Even in 1905, the Industrial Union idea was obscured and the organization work hampered

by the existence of innumerable minor workshops of considerable importance. Small, competing shops, imperfect, semi-individual machinery, did not fit into the Industrial Union, and the Industrial Union did not fit into such workshops and such general conditions. The war and its aftermath almost entirely swept away the intermediate capitalists—at least as any dominant factor in the social scale. The large factory with its highly perfected machinery is the order of the day.

It is exactly for this social condition that the Industrial Union is molded; the structure of the Industrial Union, with the local Industrial Union of the industry, with its shop and trade branches within the industry, fits admirably into the modern industrial workshop with its perfected machinery separating the workers into their branches and departments. Let's emphasize that the Industrial Union fits no other structure.

National Secretary Arnold Petersen, in answering this objection, has given the following illustration:

“What is it that makes Industrial Unionism the logical thing in a country like America? The fact that a high industrial development, with its consequent elimination of crafts, provides the very mold for Industrial Unionism, as logically as the matrix provides the ‘mold’ for the stereotyped plate. It would be absurd to say that the more perfect you make your matrix, the less effective, that is, the less perfect will be your stereotyped plate. It is equally absurd to say that the more perfect the industrial ‘matrix’ becomes, the less ‘perfect’ (or the less effective) will become the industrial ‘stereotyped plate’—viz., Industrial Unionism. Quite to the contrary, and obviously so. As the mold is, so will be the substance poured into it after it congeals. The ‘mold’ is there the industrial plant. The ‘liquid’—unorganized or disorganized labor—is being prepared by the logic of events. When poured into the ‘mold,’ and when it ‘congeals,’ you have your industrial organization. The ‘form’ need not worry us, it is already here. It is the substance labor that requires attention.”

### ***Industrial Unionism and the Unemployed***

The union formation is bound to appear, and re-appear, and keep on re-appearing, forever offering to the intelligent, serious and honest men in the Labor or Socialist Movement the opportunity to utilize that instinctive move by equipping it with the proper weapon, that shall

save it from switching off into the pure and simple quagmire so beloved, and develop into the new trade union so hated, of capitalism.—*DANIEL DE LEON*.

Another doubt that we frequently hear in relation to the possibility of organizing Industrial Unions in time for the Revolution runs something like this:

Because of ever more perfected machinery it will be only a few years until those employed in the industries will form an insignificant part of the population. Is it not, then, because of the fierce competition for jobs, visionary to expect organization?

It is indisputable that the army of unemployed will continue to grow as long as capitalism exists. But it does not follow from this that organization of the workers is, therefore, impossible, nor that the organization idea has died a natural death. Quite to the contrary.

Marx says: “Competition begets monopoly.” He spoke of the tendency toward concentration of capital. Apply the same principle on the field of labor, and the statement would read: Competition among the workers leads to concentration of labor—that is, to organization. This has been true in the past. It is becoming overwhelmingly true now, and would be a fact today but for the fake unionism which acts as a blind and a stumbling block even as fake Socialism and fake Communism act as blinds and stumbling blocks to the growth of revolutionary Socialist organization. Nevertheless, other things being equal, the freer the competition among the workers, the sooner the law of self-preservation will drive them into organization—and the next mass movement of the workers can scarcely fail to be revolutionary Industrial Unionism.

When the union organization is once placed firmly on the revolutionary and classconscious basis, the army of unemployed—which is bound to become revolutionary and classconscious in the same measure—will act as a spur rather than as a hindrance. It is becoming a maxim that the majority of those who are today unemployed will never get regular or “lucrative” work again under capitalism. Soon they will know it and can do no otherwise than accept it. As they become classconscious and revolutionary, they will know also that their only hope lies in the abolition of capitalism. They will know that for that they will need and must have Industrial Union organization. Out of revolutionary necessity they will then do all

they can to spur the employed on to organize. The unemployed will turn agitators and educators. They will join the unions of the industries in which they last worked.

The worry in the minds of most workers, when they contemplate the union in relation to the unemployed, is that their conception of unionism is merely as a job agency and a job monopoly. That job psychology of the worker is rapidly changing and will totally vanish as the revolutionary psychology develops. Even now the saying is spreading that there is not a job under capitalism that is worth going across the street for nor holding on to at any sacrifice to a worker's self-respect. Better starve as a human being than starve as a slave in body and soul. With the job psychology killed—and capitalism itself is rapidly killing it—the revolutionary psychology is bound to take its place, if humanity is not just going placidly to lie down and die. Employed and unemployed are then going to join hands to perfect the Industrial Union organization which alone can put an end to capitalism, can take, hold and operate industry, and reorganize society into a Workers' Socialist Industrial Republic.

### ***Organization of the Unemployed***

Frequently the question is raised concerning the relation of Industrial Unionism and the unemployed. Either it is that, the union cannot be organized because of the unemployed or else the S.L.P. is accused outright of poking fun at the organization of the unemployed.

The S.L.P. does *not* poke fun at the idea of organizing the unemployed *into* Industrial Unions. On the contrary, we assert that no scheme of unionism is either complete or possible that leaves unemployment out of the account. De Leon in *The Burning Question of Trades Unionism* puts the matter succinctly:

In the first place, the trades union has a supreme mission. That mission is nothing short of organizing by uniting and uniting by organizing, the whole working class industrially—not merely those for whom there are jobs, accordingly, not only those who can pay dues. This unification or organization is essential in order to save the eventual and possible victory from bankruptcy, by enabling the working class to assume and conduct production the moment the guns of the public powers fall into its hands—or before, if need be, if capitalist political chicanery pollutes the ballot box. The mission is important also in that the industrial organization forecasts the future constituencies of the parliaments of the Socialist Republic.

The fact that a worker is unemployed does not affect his status as an industrial worker, except, of course, that he is without an income, more or less permanently. A machinist unemployed is a machinist still; a miner unemployed does not cease being a miner by trade.

Just as the worker remains a wage worker, even if, because of unemployment or sickness, he is not earning a wage, so he remains an industrial worker even though he may not for the time being be employed in an industrial plant. Therefore, the unemployed industrial worker must take his place in the Industrial Union side by side with the employed worker and both will, if properly informed, and the union is a classconscious Revolutionary Industrial Union and not a mere job trust, be animated with the identical purpose—the overthrow of the system that reduces both—the salable and the unsalable—to commodities on the market, though one may have found, while the other may be seeking, a buyer for his commodity, labor power.

The problem of unemployment is much too serious for the S.L.P. to indulge in any levity about it. However, what we do not only “poke fun at” but more often seriously condemn—for all methods are necessary to bring people to reason—is the loose and senseless drawing together of unemployed in would-be organized groups, distinct from the employed. This is not union, it is disunion. The unemployed thus come to look upon themselves as having interests, demands and hopes distinct from those of the employed. The unity and class spirit are destroyed and often a decided antagonism grows up between the employed and unemployed. Something, like that is taking place on a larger scale in the mine fields today, actually taking the proportion of a civil war between two sets of so-called “organized” miners. But even where it does not reach such ultimate proportions, the organization of the unemployed as a distinct and separate entity is an evil growth. The unemployed come to look upon themselves and each other as something special, requiring special treatment. A demoralizing group self-pity develops. Charity-taking becomes a “demand,” a lark. Eventually, it even grows into an honor to dodge work and be able to extract a living from society by hook or by crook. This is not *unionism*, but organized mass slummary that is more apt to turn into a detriment to the Revolution than an aid to it. Men—and women—once addicted to charity, petty extortions, thievery and the like, usually turn into the most ardent upholders and defenders of the system from which they are able to extract their livelihood,

disgraceful and precarious as this livelihood may be.

The Industrial Union, by recognizing the worker's status as an industrial worker, whether employed or not, must strive in every way to keep up the worker's morale even when he is unemployed. Only the Industrial Union can do this and only through the Industrial Union, in which employed and unemployed workers preserve their industrial status alike and on equal terms, is it possible to keep up the morale of the unemployed and by this method develop the class solidarity essential in the revolutionary Socialist movement.

### ***Industrial Unionism Inevitable***

The time element is important, hence our feverish activity. It is a race between the collapse of capitalism and industrial organization. But the difficulties that are placed in the way of our attaining an object have, to men of character and backbone, never yet been considered a reason for slackening of efforts. On the contrary, they have ever been considered added reasons for still greater exertions. Moreover, there is no alternative. De Leon has expressed it better than we could ever hope to do it when he said:

The social revolution is not accomplishable unless the proletariat becomes conscious of its class interests, conscious of its historic mission, *and is organized accordingly*. To deny the fact, and yet expect Socialism, is vain Utopia, in conflict, moreover, with historic evolution. To ignore the fact and yet practise political Socialism, is a dastardly deception practised upon the proletariat...efforts will be vain . . . unless the proletariat is organized economically in the battalions that will enable it to assume the reins of industrial government on the day of its political victory.

No Socialist in his senses contends that the workers can achieve their emancipation without organization; and no sane Socialist would argue that they can be organized on the basis of anything but their class interests. Surely, they cannot be organized on the basis of bankers' interests, or corner grocers' interests, or farmers' interests. *They are organizable only upon the basis of their class interests as industrial workers. He who says, then, that the workers cannot be organized industrially, thereby declares that they cannot be organized at all, which is tantamount to saying that we can never have Socialism.* Those who pretend otherwise are arguing, in effect, that the workers may be organized on the basis of

the *economic past*, and not on the basis of the *economic present*. The silly talk, for example, about organizing Soviets in industrial America, is just such an argument, precisely because the Soviet, from the standpoint of industrial America, reflects the *economic past*. The working class can be organized because it is, first, the only class that has no stake in capitalism, second, because it is the only class that has a unifying principle, and third, because it is the only class which is indispensable.

Revolutionary ideas and principles are slow in developing and in taking hold of the minds of the revolutionary class. But when the conditions are ripe, and when the workers have lost faith in the ability of the prevailing system to furnish them with a living, that revolutionary idea will spread like wildfire; and organization will follow as logically as harvest follows seed time. But we must not expect a harvest until we have sown. We may be dealing with imponderables at this stage, but one thing is certain, and that is that the revolutionary class instinct will assert itself, and it will assert itself in its own logical form—i.e., unionism, just as life itself does, because it is the human thing to do, it is the elemental thing to do.

### ***Industrial Unionism As the Revolutionary Force***

Among the many strange contentions that are brought out against our strenuous Industrial Union agitation is the one that since the time is so short, it will be impossible to organize Industrial Unions in time for the Revolution, and then these persons argue—who claim nevertheless to believe in the Industrial Government—we shall have to rely on the Marxian position that the workers will be drilled, willy-nilly, in running the industries.

The National Secretary of the Socialist Labor Party some time ago answered such a contention with a rather amusing illustration:

“It is as if one were to say that we have invented umbrellas as protection against rain, but because of this fact our chief reliance in the case of rain must, after all, be umbrellas. The very Marxian position referred to is the one that the Socialist Labor Party invokes in arguing for Industrial Unionism. Without the workers’ having been drilled, etc., Industrial Unionism, and therefore Socialism, would be out of the question.”

But that is just exactly our salvation. The drilling period is here. It has been with us for decades already. The human machine in industry is being organized by

the capitalists for their own purpose—the production of commodities in an efficient manner with the least possible expenditure of human energy. In the first place, work is concentrated into gigantic production plants and institutions. Small, isolated industry is obsolete, has been rendered obsolete by competition, and, since it has refused to die a graceful death, is being swept out “legally” by such political innovations as those instituted under Roosevelt’s “New Deal.” The gigantic plants are, in turn, divided into workshops and departments, in accord with the work performed and the tool used. Such a plant constitutes a perfect model for the Integral Industrial Union—the local Industrial Union with its shop and trade branches.

Let the pressure for industrial organization once assert itself and the perfect form not only suggests itself from the human machine in industry, but it is almost impossible that it could go wrong. The necessary pressure to call forth eventually such an organization is now being applied by capital itself. We need not worry on that score.

The job of the Socialist Labor Party, in the meantime, is to propagate the tactics and the goal. *All Power to the Socialist Industrial Union* is the revolutionary slogan of the working class. The goal, the broad aim, is to overthrow capitalism and wage slavery and establish in its place industrial and social freedom under a Workers’ Industrial Commonwealth, conducted for the common benefit of all by the Industrial Union Government of Labor.

But between this hour and that lie the social revolution and the social reconstruction of society. That period is concerned with the important subject of the tactics of the Industrial Union. Social revolution implies a complete social change from one form or system of wealth production and distribution to another. How this change is brought about does not in itself affect the revolution. Violence and bloodshed are not revolution, though often enough they have proved an inevitable aid to revolution—“the midwife of revolution,” as Marx puts it. But the thing for the workers to keep their eyes on is the revolution itself, the great social change, and the system it is to engender; and self-evidently every worker a million times prefers to *live* for the revolution and the Socialist Industrial Republic than to die for it. The workers have died for a million causes in the past and small benefits they have indeed got from their sacrifices when the disturbance was all over. During the World War there was enough workers’ blood shed to wipe out the sins of the world

many times over, and yet the “sins” are still with us, multiplied. Our business, therefore, is to see to it that the cleaning up job is done and thoroughly done, however it is done. And we believe that if the Industrial Union is in good, or even fair, working order by the time of the total collapse of capitalism and the outbreak of the revolution, the job can be done with a minimum of bloodshed and even without it.

It takes *power* to carry a revolution to a successful issue. An armed power is a strong force but sometimes it is weakness itself. Let’s look back to the Civil War in America. No one will dispute that the Secessionists were the better fighters, the infinitely better military strategists. In the field the campaign of the North consisted of one blunder after another, one defeat falling into the pit dug by a previous defeat. Yet at that time, in London, Karl Marx, conceding every military superiority to the South, confidently predicted the eventual victory of the North. The contest, said Marx, was bound to be won by the superior industrial resources and powers of the North.

And similarly in the last war. Lord Kitchener said at the very beginning that it was a war of industry—it would take seven men in the shops to keep one in the trenches. Who can dispute that Germany had the best drilled and most efficient fighting force? But the day when it had to extend its draft age downward to schoolboys and upward to old men, it shot a hole in its own army by depleting the workshops. As soon as the Allies, on the other hand, were guaranteed the workshop called America their eventual victory was certain.

The Industrial Union philosophy declares that the *workshop* can, by the workers, be made into as powerful an engine for peace as it is for war. That belongs to the matter of tactics. If the workshop can supply the means of bloodshed it can also withhold them. An army, said Napoleon, marches on its stomach. It requires food, clothing and ammunition, in these days, in order to march; it requires transportation and communication as well. All this can be furnished by the workers alone. All this can also be withheld by the workers.

With an Industrial Union in shop and factory with its councils on the job, ready to act and quick to decide, the entire national power will lie in the hands of the workers.

Through the Socialist Labor Party we march, under the Constitution and

revolutionary Declaration of independence, on the Political State, the robberburg of capital, in order to abolish it. That is our right and our privilege as citizens of the United States. In the Industrial Union we organize the power necessary to enforce the fiat of the ballot.

The Industrial Union must precede the revolution, if we are to conquer and not run the risk of being wiped out in blood.

*All Power to the Socialist Industrial Union!*

### ***Industrial Feudalism***

Closely connected with the question of organizing the Industrial Union is that of Industrial Feudalism. Lightheads in the movement have gone astray on this subject. The Socialist Labor Party contends that if the collapse comes, finding the workers unorganized, Industrial Feudalism will be the next phase of capitalist society, that is, society is bound to register a period of social retrogression. The contenders hold that this is mere fancy, that such a social organism cannot maintain itself, because, since it is evident that capitalism cannot feed the slaves now, there is no reason to expect Industrial Feudalism to do so sufficiently to keep the workers from revolting.

However, unless one takes the position that humanity, and all its works, will literally perish when capitalism has collapsed completely, and if Socialism has not been established, it is obvious that some sort of system must supersede competitive capitalism. Industrial Feudalism would be the Industrial Republic standing on its head. That is, it would be planned production, with the industrial lords doing the planning, and with the workers in the position of “feudal” serfs belonging to the industry instead of the land. How long such a state of affairs might last is pure speculation. But since nothing lasts forever, it may be assumed that after a period, which might conceivably run into decades, perhaps even centuries, the thing might be turned right side up. But it is easy to understand how, under such a regulated system, the workers could be fed much as horses or cattle would be fed. That such a system would be body and soul degrading goes without saying, and things being as they are it is difficult to visualize a working class deliberately choosing industrial serfdom for’ industrial freedom and well-being.

The notion that capitalism could not possibly feed the slaves is childish. With

the present near-automatic machines, a small portion of the workers, steadily at work and slaving as intensely as they are obliged to slave with millions on the outside looking for work, will be able to produce more than sufficient to keep the small capitalist class in luxury, its large body of hangers-on in plenty, and still leave an ample surplus for crumbs to be thrown to the beast-men that capitalism has degraded. Look back to Ancient Rome: Production was simple, agriculture stood on a low basis and was still in a stage where droughts and pests would play havoc and cause famines. Yet Rome for centuries could feed, sufficiently to keep alive, a tremendous slum proletariat. When it could no longer manage the situation it plunged the world into centuries of dark ages. A beastly parallel to modern decaying capitalism for us to contemplate.

But we need not go so far as to Ancient Rome for a demonstration. Europe has been drifting either flamboyantly, as in Italy and Germany, or silently and almost imperceptibly as in England, into the decadent system of Industrial Feudalism ever since the close of the war. The English proletariat—a tremendous mass of it—has been on the dole—the crumb system—for more than a decade, England has been turned into a gigantic slum already. The dole creatures are already degenerated below the working class. It is admitted that they never hope to work again, and in fact have become unfit for work, and don't even care if they see work—preferring, not unnaturally, to decay in idleness than to be driven in the slave pens for next to nothing, as the workers are now being driven.

Italy's Fascism has now lasted for a decade. There may be those who stubbornly close their eyes to fact, who refuse to admit that this is Industrial Feudalism. Nevertheless, it is, as nearly as historic and social conditions allow for a parallel, the system of regimented industry that the Socialist Labor Party has pointed out to be capitalism's only hope of saving itself—with the Political State in decay playing the ruler, or dictator.

And what about the United States? If a year ago, there were those who still could close their eyes to the inevitable tendencies to centralized power at the one pole and total social decay at the other, all eyes certainly ought to be opened by this time. Law after law has been rushed through, under the guise of economic pressure and social reconstruction, which places power in the hands of the executive. An industrial dictator now sits installed at Washington. The regimentation of labor has started—at one dollar per day—in the reforestation camps. The dole for the totally

unemployed bids fair to become permanent. Millions are in decay. Birth control and “race suicide” are not only tolerated, but made part of the modern gospel to limit the army of the proletariat. Industrial Feudalism can no longer be said to be a theory, not even is it “knocking on the door” of society. It has opened the social portal and entered.

The Socialist Labor Party does not dream social phenomena. It reaches its conclusions by careful study of history, of conditions and facts, and from this as surely and as safely as if figuring by a logarithm it can prepare its conclusions. As De Leon put it:

“With malice toward none, with charity for all, the Socialist Labor Party is moving by chart, its path lighted from above by a firmament where the North Star shines distinctly in its place, and is for never an instant confused with a rushlight, or the fitful phosphorescence of a lightning-bug.”

### ***“Industrial Unionism” Serving Reaction***

Caution must be observed lest one attach to the term Industrial Unionism more than there is in it. Industrial Unionism does not of itself mean the economic body necessary for the revolutionary act. The form of Industrialism may subserve the most reactionary of schemes. It is with Industrialism as with the alphabet—Without the alphabet there can be no good literature; but the alphabet may also furnish vulgar words.—*DANIEL DE LEON*.

The above quotation is taken from a Letter Box answer written by Daniel De Leon in 1910. What De Leon could perceive in 1910 was obviously only a mere shadow of a false Industrial Unionism, and yet his genius was able to penetrate the future and point out to the worker the foul reactionary uses to which Industrial Unionism might be put and at the same time to issue a warning to the working class of America not to be taken in by unions which adopt the form of Industrial Unionism without its essence, for such are absolutely certain to “be turned into the most effective capitalist weapon to bridle the working class.”

It is now 1934 in the pages of history and much water has run over the millrace of the class struggle since those lines were written. Capitalist nations tore each other to pieces in a grand and glorious World War, and at its conclusion the capitalist governments and the capitalist class found themselves face to face with a

more or less revolutionary working class everywhere. In one great nation, Russia, the workers marched to triumph. The breakdown of 1929, and since, has made the continuation of capitalist rule ever more precarious. It is openly acknowledged that the world struggle for supremacy lies now between the capitalist class and the working class—or, to put it differently, between capitalist reaction and working class, that is, Socialist, progress.

What then?

Quoting De Leon:

*Without Industrialism the Social Revolution is not accomplishable in America; but Industrialism could also be turned into the most effective capitalist weapon to bridle the working class.*

For years, more particularly since the advent of the NRA, the term Industrial Unionism has been bandied about freely. Before that time the company union had been “industrial in form,” but as a “union” it had such an evil odor that the workers in general held their noses when it was mentioned; hence its “Industrial Union feature” was scarcely worth bragging about. But the National Recovery Act changed that. No worker, as we know, by rule of code can be compelled to belong to any union except one “of his own choice.” Munificently great industrial establishments, patrons of the company union, granted their workers an election to determine to what union they would belong. Knowing what was good for them, the workers chose the “union of the industry,” or, if no company union existed, a vertical union of the industry. This was, of course, partially due to “inspiration” by the company that wished to retain supervision of the union if union there must be, and partially because Industrial Unionism is “in the air.” The craft union structure, presented by the A.F. of L., has no longer any attraction for the workers, since it is at least five decades out of date, hence useless. But this anachronism still holds a certain grip on the workers of America, so that any union which appears instantly finds itself in conflict with the A.F. of L. Many of the “vertical” or so-called Industrial Unions, therefore, applied for A.F. of L. charters, upon which the A.F. of L. instantly proposed to “distribute” the workers into its craft unions, and so the fat is in the fire, as this distribution is strenuously opposed by the industrial magnates. To show the situation as it exists, it is worth while quoting in full a Washington despatch to the Scripps-Howard newspapers, appearing in the New York *World-Telegram*, January 8, 1934:

Formation of a national council of industrial unions is being discussed here by some of the leaders of now unions created under NRA, who complain that the American Federation of Labor has refused to let them in its organization.

Further formal applications for affiliation with the A.F. of L. will be filed, however, by two of the new groups, representing electrical manufacturing and rubber tire industrial unions, in time for action by the Federation's Executive Council meeting here, January 24.

Meanwhile the Electrical Manufacturing Union, claiming about 25,000 members exclusive of radio workers and the tire workers, who claim 15,000 in Akron and 20,000 organized elsewhere, are consolidating their groups.

An attempt also is being made to group together the numerous automobile workers' unions recently formed on an industrial basis and including all crafts. New unions formed among gasoline filling station workers also may line up together.

"We are going to form our internationals and insist upon citizenship in the recognized instrument of labor, the American Federation," Walter M. Cook, of Brooklyn, organizer for the electrical manufacturing workers, said today.

His colleagues who have been conferring here on the problem have discussed the formation of a rival federation as an alternative if A.F. of L. affiliation is denied, he said.

Their complaint against the Federation was put before NRA last week by Gail Smith, president of the Industrial Union at the Lynn (Mass.) plant of the General Electric Co., which is headed by Gerard Swope, of the National Labor Board.

Mr. Smith, prior to presenting demands for heavy wage increases as an amendment to the reopened electrical manufacturing code, said that the Federation had insisted upon splitting his union into craft unions as a requisite for a membership charter. He said the union was formerly a company union, but under NRA it divorced itself completely from company control.

Here we see the photograph of the old company union, baptized "Industrial Union," promoted by Gerard Swope and other leading industrial kings of "public utilities," coal, steel, oil, aluminum, automobiles, etc. The FORM of Industrial Union does not, of course, in any way save it from being the arch-reactionary of the day.

So long have the Socialists been in the habit of regarding the A.F. of L. and the labor fakers as the chief reactionaries, that it may be somewhat difficult to transfer the role to another group. But such is the case nevertheless. The A.F. of L. fakers

have gone stale on themselves. The craft union feature is so utterly out of keeping with modern conditions that the A.F. of L. has become—in most quarters at least—not only useless to the workers, but also useless to the capitalists as an instrument of reaction, that is, as a brake on the revolutionary impulses of the working class. The shrewder capitalist minds perceive this all too well. *Industrial Unionism is in the air*. The union instrument, to be able to bluff the workers today, is inevitably obliged to take on the FORM of Industrial Unionism. Unquestionably Mussolini of Italy has served as the inspiration for the would-be industrial feudal barons of America. Mussolini had his training in the revolutionary movement of Italy, and during the capitalist breakdown at the end of the War the unions of Italy moved directly toward the control of industry. Even though these unions were not widely enough organized throughout Italy, and even though they did not fully comprehend their revolutionary purpose of establishing a Workers' Industrial Republic, the movement, for the time being, was formidable enough to make the Italian owners of industry shiver and the repercussions traveled throughout the world. It was this revolutionary movement Mussolini—turning traitor to labor—had to squelch, and he did so by “fighting fire with fire,” fighting the workers' revolutionary unions with the Fascist unions, and finally substituting for the threatened workers' industrial government, the Fascist “corporate state.” A recent description of Mussolini's “corporate state” reads as follows:

One of the major tasks of the “corporazioni” or guilds into which the “syndicates” are banded is to harmonize the interests of capital and labor.

When the guild organization has been completed, there will be a guild of food industries, for example, into which all the “syndicates” of employes and employers having to do with the production and distribution of food will be grouped.

There will be a guild of the clothing industries; a guild of the building industries; a guild of the gas, light and water industries; a guild of the chemical and glass industries; a guild of the metal industries; a guild of credit and finance, another of insurance; a guild of railway and tram transportation, another for auto transportation; a guild of electrical communications (cable, radio, telephone, etc.); a guild of marine navigation, another of air transport.

In the category of professions and arts, four guilds are contemplated: the guild of sanitary professions (doctors, dentists, nurses, etc.); the guild of legal professions; the guild of technical professions (engineers, research experts, etc.); and the guild of arts (writers, painters, actors, etc.).

The guilds, in turn, are united under the “National Council of Corporations” which will soon supplant the chamber of deputies as Italy's

law-making and policy-shaping body in the realm of the nation's economic life.

As at present constituted, the "National Council of Corporations" is composed of 150 members—115 representatives of the individual guilds, 25 high Fascist political leaders, and 10 technical experts.

That is the structure of the "Corporative State"—employes and employers' "syndicates" banded into guilds and centralized into the "Council of Corporations."

In other words, here we have a complete "industrial government," with private ownership of the land and the means of production totally undisturbed, wage slavery flourishing, and the capitalists in complete control, dictating the terms to labor more completely than they ever could do or dared to do under the old-fashioned, uncontrolled, unregulated, competitive capitalism.

American capitalism, realizing that the crazy old capitalist system has dragged capitalism to the present status of utter collapse and decay, undoubtedly visualizes something of a "new" state similar to Mussolini's "corporate state." One essential for this goal is the control of labor, and the dissipating of any revolutionary aspirations. It is all too plain that the A.F. of L. to serve as such an instrument. The instrument must be modern—the A.F. of L. is completely outmoded. The *form* the new instrument will take must fit the industrial situation of today. Hence, the *form* must be industrial—i.e., an Industrial Union in form. And this makes it evident that we have reached the situation against which De Leon warned the American workers in 1910—when "the form of Industrialism may subserve the most reactionary of schemes"—"be turned into the most effective capitalist weapon to bridle the working class."

The true Industrial Union, as De Leon also so clearly pointed out, is a trefoil, consisting of form, tactics and goal. The form may easily be imitated. The tactics too may be imitated as Mussolini is doing by putting a fictitious voting power into the hands of the members of the corporate unions. But the GOAL cannot be imitated. The goal of the Industrial Union is the Socialist Revolution, the taking, holding and operating of the means of production by the working class for use and not for profit and for the sole benefit of the producers themselves.

Without the goal—which is its hallmark of genuineness—the Industrial Union is a fake and an illusion.

## ***Strikes—Manifestations of the Class Struggle***

Closely related to the various questions concerned with Industrial Union organization is the question of strikes. What position does the S.L.P. take in relation to strikes in general or any particular local strike? Since strikes inevitably concern only some petty improvement under capitalism, and the S.L.P. takes the position that reforms are useless and any improvement while capitalism lasts is but a sham and a delusion, does it not follow logically that the S.L.P. is irrevocably opposed to strikes and, so far from ever supporting the workers in their daily struggles, the Party is “duty bound” to place itself in opposition to these strikes and strifes? This sort of reasoning is, of course, utterly shallow. The S.L.P. is ever guided by conditions, events and situations as it finds them.

It is a maxim that capitalism is disease-ridden and rotten to the core. One of its chronic ailments is the class struggle caused by the exploitation of labor which is inherent in the capitalist system. Periodically this disease breaks out in ugly boils and blotches called strikes. There is never a time when there is absolute peace and harmony on the industrial field between capital and labor despite the brotherhood declarations of the A.F. of L., but it is only when the struggle becomes acute, when large bodies of workers rebel and go on strike against intolerable conditions, and their lords and masters undertake, with all the so-called law and order forces at their command, to quell such rebellions that the ever-present struggle draws any considerable attention or finds its way into the headlines and front pages of the papers. The scenes of these rebellions are ever shifting, and ugly chapters of class tyranny have been written into American history from year to year.

We have seen large railroad and street-car strikes quelled by injunctions, militia and regular army. We have seen the miners of Idaho, Colorado and Arizona crushed by injunctions, bull-pens, gunmen, militia and regular army. We have seen every constitutional guarantee of citizenship trampled upon in the name of law and order. We have seen repeated upheavals in the coal regions, anthracite and bituminous, as well as in the great lumber districts of the West, and we have witnessed sporadic outbreaks in the textile centers such as Lawrence, Paterson and Passaic.

With the launching of the NRA, with its supposed friendly attitude to labor—rather to the *commodity labor power* for convenient bargaining purposes—strikes became a running sore on the body of capitalism, and the

fierceness with which they have been conducted and suppressed demonstrates that the capitalists intend to withgo not one iota of their privileges—even for the lovely purpose of “recovery.” The peace in the mine fields is as much of a dream as ever and casualties in labor’s ranks are perpetual. Throughout the South, into which section of the country great aggregations of capital have taken flight for the clearly understood purpose of substituting *cheaper* labor for cheap labor, and more servile labor for only partially, servile labor, there has been convulsion after convulsion, suppressed by the heavy hands of combined industrial and political power. The truck drivers’ strike in Minneapolis, while demonstrating the workers’ potential power in a truly startling degree, also demonstrated the workers’ weakness within the capitalist system and with that system taken for granted. All the powers of wealth and State arose against the strike and combined to crush it with heavy casualties in the ranks of the workers. The Pacific Coast port strike was bitterly fought by the workers merely for the smallest concessions. When labor actually showed signs of rising in its might in a demonstration of sympathy and solidarity, all the forces of capitalist propaganda were set in motion to shout down the strike as a “rebellion against the government,” and every open and sinister power of oppression and suppression was set in motion to crush the spirit of resistance of labor. In the same California, in the great Imperial Valley, agricultural laborers, protesting against outright peon conditions, have for many months been subject to every crime in the calendar of tyranny.

These are to mention only a few of the most outstanding skirmishes that have taken place in recent years. In every such struggle we are treated to the same overbearing attitude of the feudal lords. They have no concessions to make and treat their workers in every respect as if they were actually their bounden slaves. Unless the leaders of the strike are the regulation A.F. of L. fakers with whom they know from experience that they can dicker for a final sell-out of the strikers, they absolutely refuse to deal with the leaders of the strike whom they usually succeed in branding as “agitators,” “reds,” “Socialists,” outsiders, and such other names from the code of working class industrial “criminology.” In every instance the forces of “law and order,” always at the beck and call of the ruling class, are set in motion to break the strike. Private detectives and provocateurs infest the disturbed area. The regular police forces are demanded for “the protection of property” even if no destruction of property is threatened. Deputy sheriffs by the hundreds are sworn in, usually from the thug class of the community, armed to the teeth, and if this does

not suffice, there are calls for militia and regular troops. Constantly the injunctions are set in motion to deprive the strikers and their sympathizers of every civil right, and the leaders are arrested and shut up in jail, excessive bail being demanded. Arrest of pickets takes place by the hundreds, all for the purpose of breaking the morale of the strikers and depleting their resources. All else failing, hoodlums in mobs, under such high-faluting names as vigilantes, citizens' committees and the like, are sicked on to the strikers, raid their headquarters, destroy property, beat up leaders, kidnap sympathizers, and, in general, cause riots which furnish new opportunities for the police to step in and finish the job, or for martial law to be declared for the ostensible purpose of "preserving the peace of the community." Even non-striking workers and other persons who show sympathy with the strike are molested and harassed, and against all these sinister forces these strikers must grapple with their slender resources, poorly organized, and, moreover, generally either openly or covertly the whole labor faker crew of the A.F. of L. is arrayed against them.

To the working class as a whole it will, of course, matter little in general how any particular strike ends except for the morale of the workers. Defeat crushes them further to earth and stands generally for discouragement; victory" at best will only give the workers a small concession, worthless in materially improving their condition. The class struggle will continue as long as capitalism lasts. Under this system the worker's power to labor is a commodity. For his work he is paid only just about enough to keep alive and raise a family of wage slaves to take the place of the present generation when that is used up. The workers, as long as capitalism lasts, will ever be up against these conditions and strikes will break out again and again, skirmishes of the class struggle which will increase its bitterness rather than abate it. All the powers of capitalist society are arrayed against the workers in this struggle.

As long as capitalism endures, this day-to-day struggle will continue, and to every bona fide struggle of the workers to improve their conditions or resist further encroachment the S.L.P. lends every aid in its power.

The strike problem is, however, not always a simple one. Every strike is no longer without question a bona fide strike. Evil forces have fastened on labor and are using it as a football for sinister interests. It is well known that strikes have repeatedly been fomented by one capitalist interest against another, to drive a

troublesome company out of the field, to force a merger, and what not. It is no secret that more than one great strike has been “pulled” by stock market manipulators to undermine the market of a certain stock which later perhaps was to be grabbed up by opposing interests. The labor fakers have ever been most valuable aids to the capitalist vultures in such manipulations.

Many of the strikes in the recent epidemic of strikes, since the NRA, for the stated purpose of “making the employer live up to the code,” or for the enforcement of the “famous” Section 7A, collective bargaining clause, decidedly are not free from the suspicion of being engineered by rival capitalist concerns to hasten the job which even the codes, written usually by the great concerns, are not quite able to finish—viz., to wipe out the less efficient rivals from the field of capitalist production. It is part of the jungle tactics of capitalism that labor should fight its battles, in domestic as well as in foreign wars.

The use of labor by one capitalist interest against another has been turned into an extensive “racket,” with “walking delegates” and other labor fakers as the prize racketeers. Strikes, labor troubles, soldiering on the job, destruction, incendiary fires, use of acids and dynamite have been developed into an actual science by the labor faker racketeer, serving one or the other of opposing and competing large capitalists or petty bourgeois interests. As in the beer racket, so in the labor racket, one set of gangsters could not forever be permitted to have the field by themselves. Rival gangs arose, usually out of the lunatic fringe of the Communist party. That these call themselves “revolutionary,” “progressive,” and other nice terms does not detract one iota from their vulture nature. Their pickings may be meaner and smaller, but they are none the less ugly and vicious. In late years the New York furriers, clothing workers and others have been pestered by these rival sets of labor gangsters. The bituminous mine fields for the present are the scene of the operations of the two sets in rival action, and the miners, miserable before by unemployment and wage cuts, are being fairly torn to pieces in the struggle. Between such “Progressives” and the old conservatives, there is only the “choice of rotten apples.”

The S.L.P. will never for a moment hesitate to expose situations such as described above. To do otherwise would not be to stand with and by the working class, but quite the contrary. On the other hand, we cannot fail to recognize that strikes, as long as capitalism lasts, are both justified and unavoidable. The moment

comes in almost any industry, when the pressure put upon the workers is too great to bear and then spontaneously or by organized action the workers will quit their jobs and sacrifice all they have in the hopes of some slight amelioration of their condition. These facts the S.L.P. must ever point out and clarify, but at the same time we must also make clear the fact that the workers, strike, strive and struggle as they may, cannot permanently improve the condition of the working class.

Therefore, the Party persistently calls to the attention of the workers the necessity of united action in class Industrial Unions, led by trained men among the workers and under the direction of the rank and file of the union. The workers must realize that whenever they go on strike in large numbers the strike will attract parasites who coin publicity and notoriety out of their misery which they later turn into political gain. It is therefore imperative that the workers realize that they must depend primarily on their own efforts in their never-ceasing struggle. No Moses is going to lead them out of the wilderness into the promised land.

He who would be free must himself strike the blow.

The Socialist Labor Party pledges its support to the workers, on strike or not. We place at the workers' disposal our press and speakers as far as possible. We pledge ourselves to an intensive educational campaign among the workers so that they may know what to do and how to do it when the need arises.

The Socialist Labor Party calls on the workers of all industries to unite into a classconscious industrial organization, and makes it plain that without such an organization all other efforts are in vain, and the workers doomed to defeat.

This industrial organization can be brought into being only through the education and agitation carried on by the true political party of American labor, viz., the Socialist Labor Party of America.

### ***The General Strike***

The French Socialist, Chauvin, at the Amsterdam Congress in 1904, said:

The general strike is an alluring notion. No doubt the chimera sticks in the heads of many a workingman. Quite possibly it is even popular in the shops. What of it? Is that a reason for us to yield to delusion? Quite possibly we may, if we did, ingratiate ourselves with workingmen, who now look upon us with disfavor, if not suspicion. But is "ingratiation" our

mission? Is our mission not rather “education”? A policy of “ingratiation” looks to the immediate present at the sacrifice of the future. The policy of “education” looks to the important future athwart the thorny present. By echoing the errors of the masses of the working class we may ingratiate ourselves with them TODAY. But what of the MORROW, when bitter experience will have taught them that we were no wiser than they? Aye, when they will learn that all the while we knew better, and yet acted contrary to our own better knowledge? They will then execrate us; and we would deserve their execration. Not the echoing of our fellow wage slaves’ errors is our task. Such a task is easy. Ours is the task of uprooting their errors. The more strongly rooted, all the more imperative is our duty to set our faces against such errors. That renders our task arduous, you will say. Yes, arduous indeed, for the present; easy later on. The opposite policy, on the contrary, renders our task easy for the present—aye, so very easy!—but how about the future? The crop of thorns that we would thus have ourselves raised would tear our flesh to pieces!

The “General Strike” has for decades been the fetish of every pseudo-revolutionist, and many another champion of labor who is able to see no farther than his own nose. The San Francisco general strike came almost as a “godsend” in this critical period of history to demonstrate that the general strike is “weaker than woman’s tears . . . skillless as unpracticed infancy,” as a weapon in the workers’ struggle for final emancipation.

When the port and marine workers’ strike was in its ninth week and professional scabs were assembled to break the strike, when violence was instigated and resorted to by the ship owners, and every agency was getting into swing, with martial law threatened to crush the strike, the sympathy and solidarity for the righteous cause of the port workers manifested itself ever more strongly among the workers at large and resulted in a general walk-out which not even the labor leader “lieutenants of the capitalist class” could prevent. The general strike lasted but a few days, but it was sufficient to demonstrate both the workers’ power and the weakness of a general walk-out.

In less than twenty-four hours after labor had ceased to function, San Francisco was destitute. The lesson was tremendous. Without labor the community is dead. Thugs, police, militia, federal army can beat down strikers and shoot down bystanders, but they cannot load or run ships, run transportation or communication, handle food distribution, run factories, stores or manage general or special utilities or services. When labor stops, all wheels stop. That is labor’s power;

but that power foolishly directed and used becomes labor's greatest weakness.

A modern city is removed by several laps from the soil and its direct sources of maintenance. When labor stops, the influx of food ceases. Supplies run short at once. The capitalists, large or small, are able to lay in stores, or as a last resort remove themselves to more "healthy" climes. The workers must remain, and the poorer they are the sooner they feel the pinch of starvation—hence the strikers whose income is totally cut off are the first to starve outright. A general strike places all—friends, neighbors, relatives—in the same plight. Hence the general strike, figuratively speaking, cuts the worker's own throat. That is its first and greatest weakness.

Moreover, with the first intimation of the use of this weapon, all the propaganda agencies of capitalism are set in motion. The capitalist system wastes humanity with impunity. The industrial battlefield, with its occupational diseases, its accidents, its nerve-, soul- and body-killing work continues to be the world's most bloody ground. And the instant a wage slave is superfluous or unable to keep up the pace set by the machine, out he goes—in the times of capitalism's periodical crises, men, women, children and infants by the millions are wasted. The agony suffered by half a hundred million of the American working class since the collapse of 1929 defies all description. To the capitalist system and its spokesmen and apologists, that is all part of the game, a bit unfortunate possibly, but inevitable for the greatest good of the few truly "worthy" citizens. But let the workers make one move that threatens the comfort and routine of the community and instantly the welkin rings with cries of attack on humanity, on government and on the State. What! Do these wicked workers make war on the sick! On women, babies and mewling infants! Horror, horror! And cold shivers of indignation run down society's spine.

The workers are humane; the useful elements of society always are. Concessions are made at once. Milk distribution to hospitals and families must go on—certain foods must pass through the lines, light and water supplies are not cut off, communication goes on, certain transportation is essential, etc., etc., etc. In short, in an hour or two the general strike is no longer general. The club swung by the workers is padded.

But the propaganda goes on unabated. The strike is a subversive movement, it tramples on the flag and the Constitution, it is hitting at organized government. There is never a hint, of course, that the capitalists, who stubbornly refuse living

conditions to their workers, are subversive, flag- and Constitution-trampling rebels against a government that supposedly guarantees to its humblest citizen the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. The strikers are howled down as rebels; police, militia and general army are called out against them, and mobs of ruffians out of the slums, who were ever the hangers-on to Dives's coat tails, are egged on to invade halls, headquarters and even the homes of strikers and sympathizers in order to spread terror and give the general atmosphere of lawlessness.

Then the labor fakers of the A.F. of L., who for the moment have quailed before the splendid show of solidarity by the workers, cry anathema on their heads. The general strike was illegal and unauthorized in the first place. The loyal labor lieutenant of the capitalist class never in the world would acquiesce to such an outrage against society, such a breach of the brotherhood of capital and labor, such, a show of rebellion against the State. And so the strikers, by their own union officials, are ordered to return to work, humbly, like whipped curs. That is the history of every so-called general strike and it was most emphatically so of the San Francisco general strike which did not last over two days.

But, cry the general strike enthusiasts, though all this is true, that does not condemn the general strike as a weapon of revolution, which they declare to be its true mission. Triumphantly they point out that in political battles the economic general strike has served as a first-class weapon. With pride they point to the general strike of Belgium in 1892, the general strike of Sweden in 1902, both of which were instrumental in winning universal manhood suffrage from ultra-conservative governments, and the great strikes of Russia in 1905 which scared the Czar and his henchmen into granting a constitution and the Duma. The enthusiasts forget, of course, that these were not strikes in any regular sense of the word. They were political demonstrations, lasting only for a set period of a day or two, for which the workers had thoroughly prepared beforehand, demonstrations of the tremendous economic power the workers actually are able to wield, a power which exerted such a pressure on the powers that be that they hastily loosened the political reins for fear of worse to come.

However, those who propose the general strike as a weapon of revolution have an entirely different picture in mind. They visualize the strike as the revolution itself; the mass action of the workers; "out of the factories and into the streets," as a certain Communist document once put it.

If the San Francisco strike has taught anything, it certainly should have taught the utter futility, the suicidal policy, of such tactics. First of all, a general strike would starve the revolution to death in less than a week. Secondly, with “the workers in the street” they are exactly where the forces of capitalism and their slum enforcements can easily wipe them out.

Not the general strike of labor but the GENERAL LOCK-OUT OF THE CAPITALIST CLASS from industry is the revolutionary tactic that must be pursued by the Revolution. The revolutionary act of the workers must be the act to *take* and *hold* and *operate* industry. To allow industry for an instant to fall into idleness and disorder would be to jeopardize the revolution. The workers walk into industry to carry out their useful labor to society—the capitalists are ousted from the ownership and control.

What does this imply?

Recent events may serve as illustrations. Some time ago the workers of the Hormel Meat Packing plant in Minnesota went on “strike” for better conditions. They did not leave the factory. They held it. The bosses alone were locked out. The Hormel capitalists were startled out of their wits. The state authorities were frantic. Not even the thug element could serve to break up that strike. To shoot down the workers would be to shoot down the company’s property, and, moreover, if the workers shut off the ice plant as they threatened to do, tons of foodstuffs would be ruined at the company’s loss. The company did not long declare that it had “nothing to arbitrate.” Here was a tiny proof of the ‘industrial power of the workers. Naturally, the workers under capitalist rule could not have held the fort for long. But they demonstrated a power which in a revolutionary situation, with the entire working class in control, would have been unconquerable.

The truck drivers’ strike in Minneapolis furnishes another example. A few thousand workers walked out. Instantly the city of 450,000 people felt distress. Milk, fruit and vegetables disappeared, canned goods and other staples lasted but a few days, motor transportation stopped for lack of fuel, building operations ended for want of materials. The power of 3,000 men over a great city made the nation tremble.

Such a power foolishly applied at the revolutionary moment would cause death to the revolution and destruction of the nation. Sensibly applied, it is unconquerable.

*Not the general strike but the general lock-out of the capitalist class will be the revolutionary act.*

Will the capitalists start their propaganda forces to vilify the revolution? Certainly! But how? The telegraph, the telephone, the radio are operated by workers, and workers write, set up, print and distribute the newspapers. With the Industrial Council in command, it will be the workers' news for once that is printed and distributed or the shops will be closed. Will the capitalists send their cohorts to wipe out the revolution? No doubt! But "an army marches on its stomach" and "it takes seven men in a factory to keep one in the trenches." Not a "strike," general or otherwise, but a little judicious *stop work* or *do work will* effectively end the counter-revolutionary activities of the class which so long has ruled the earth to the injury and destruction of mankind.

The workers' power lies in the Industrial Union.

All power to the Socialist Industrial Union!

### ***The Industrial Union Form***

Frequently questions are put which show that there is a great lack of clearness as to what the revolutionary Industrial Union really is, and there are even those who confound it with the "human machine" in industry. Perhaps Socialist Labor Party speakers are somewhat responsible for this confusion, by using, without a very clear distinction and explanation, the remark, "the workers are organized in industry now." While this is true, as far as the *production machine* is concerned, it is, of course, never meant to imply that the workers have an Industrial Union organization in the industries.

On the other hand, the organization that exists in industry today for production purposes is exactly what makes the integral Industrial Union possible. Take any large industry—steel, automobiles, shoes. In the first place, it is concentrated and localized. There is the unit of organization, the local Industrial Union. Secondly, each such localized industry is divided into trade and shop divisions. The Ford "shop" has miners, transportation workers, steel workers, glass makers, textile workers, machinists, production workers—to mention only a few—working in different shops and departments in the Ford plant. There are the shop or trade branches of the local Industrial Union. The lines along which the Industrial Union

movement must organize have been laid out by the capitalist production itself. In that sense, and in that sense only, the workers are organized industrially now.

Capitalism, moreover, foreshadows the larger and wider aspects of the Industrial Union organization, even to the Industrial Union Government itself. No industry today, no matter how great, is independent. In fact, the greater its ramifications, the greater its dependence on other branches. Steel must have coal and coke and acids and transportation and many other things; shoes must have leather, which means cattle, which means grass and hay, etc. All industries must have buildings and heat and light and cannot exist without roads, trucks, railroads, canals, trains steamboats, etc. In these divisions, we trace the various departments of the Industrial Union—independent and interdependent at the same time. And as all these go to make up the national industry as a whole, so they point to the General Executive Board of the nationwide Industrial Union, the great economic planning department of the nation.

Similarly the great human machine in industry points out very clearly the Industrial Government of the future. The industrial vote will take the place of the present totally outdated political vote. People vote today in the district where they live. This voting has become utterly meaningless. A worker's real interests are not where he sleeps and (sometimes) eats, but where he works. It is the production and distribution of the wealth he creates that most concern him. When a shoemaker votes in his home district, he votes with tailors and bricklayers and railroad workers and street peddlers and perhaps even with millionaires. There is no, unity of interest; nothing to unite upon. The shoemaker of the future Industrial Union Republic will vote in the shop; he will cast his vote as a shoemaker, side by side with other shoe workers, and their vote will count as the industrial vote of the shoe workers. As *shoe* workers they will vote for their foremen and directors, they will decide on conditions in the shop and all matters that concern the industry *internally*. As *industrial* workers they will vote on matters that concern the shoe industry in relation to other industries, they will elect their own local industrial councils, the councils of the general department of industry to which the trade belongs, and finally they will vote for the members of the General Executive Board of all industry, the Industrial Union Government of the Nation.

This "industrial organization," therefore, that already exists, the human machine in industry, is the basis of the Revolutionary Industrial Union. If the

human industrial machine had not been organized by capitalism, the very conception of industrial government would have been unthinkable. This organization of workers *industrially for production* does exist. The Revolutionary Socialist Industrial Union is bound to follow as surely as night follows day.

### ***Revolutionary Mission of Industrial Unionism***

The Socialist Revolutionary Industrial Union, then, is far more than anti-pure and simple trade union, more than an efficient, closely knit fighting machine to gain concessions in wages, hours and shop conditions, from the capitalists, It is, in the first place, the solid economic foundation of the political Socialist movement. Without this foundation there can be no widespread and effective Socialist Revolutionary movement. Political movements spring out of the economic soil. Our soil is the shop and factory. But as *property* this belongs to the capitalists; as an instrument of wealth production it is in the hands of the workers. It is from this soil, then, that the roots of the Socialist Revolution must draw their nourishment directly.

Unorganized or led by the pure and simple union, this labor mass is a smoke before the wind. It has neither power nor force. Organized *industrially* in the shop from top to bottom, it is able to wield a tremendous force. To use this force merely to fight a shop fight for petty wage increases would soon dissipate this force—it would be like starting a trip-hammer to kill a fly. The force inherent in the union is the revolutionary force. Its mission is to take and hold the means of production. As the revolutionary Socialist political organization moves on the political citadel of capitalism in order to dismantle it, the revolutionary union alone can furnish the power which gives the political movement its force to proceed. The real power is the economic power. The capitalist class possesses all the power that property ownership implies. Hence it can buy every agency in society today—the press, the radio, the pulpit, the schools clear through the university. It controls the Political State and all the law-making and law-enforcing agencies. It controls the strong arms of government—the police, the militia, the military. There is only one power which it now purchases, but of which it is not in possession the very instant that the workers call a halt, and that is the wealth-producing power. That power belongs to the workers entirely. The press, the radio, the telegraph, the telephone would stop the day the workers willed it—or be used to the workers' ends only. The military

and related forces of a nation march on their stomachs, and are useless without the material, transportation, etc., furnished by labor alone. In the industrial organization of labor there lies the only force capable of “fighting” and winning the Revolution.

But the mission of the Revolutionary Industrial Union is not finished when the revolution is won. The mission of the political party of Socialism is then finished. The greatest work of the union is just starting. In the union we see today the outlines of the coming Socialist Republic of Labor. When the Revolution is accomplished, the Industrial Union will be the government. The Political State, having fulfilled its mission in the evolution of man, will die and be buried. The political vote will be supplanted by the industrial vote. State demarcations, being obsolete and useless, will disappear, and give room to industrial demarcations. The transportation industry, the communication industry, the mining industry, the food industry, the clothing industry, the machine industry, the education industry, the health and recreation industries, etc., will form the “states” of the Socialist Industrial Commonwealth. The management will not, in accordance with the notions of the Technocrats, be from the top down, but will rise from the bottom upward. The industrial vote, in the first place, will determine the internal management of an industry. Foremen, managers, the technical staff—who will not be bosses but co-workers—will be elected by the working constituency. Self-evidently, for the good of the work the most capable men will be chosen, and as the work is simply co-work with the rest and carries no special remuneration, there can be no graft involved. Anyhow, no body grafts on itself, and the co-workers are co-owners.

The Industrial Union vote also selects the representatives to the industrial councils, local industrial and inter-industrial. The first regulates the shop output; the second the output and management of the entire industry. The third is the inter-industrial (national) clearing house. Its function will be mainly statistical and directive. Having ascertained through its delegates—naturally technical experts—of the various industries through statistics what the general needs are, its function will be to portion out the work to the different industrial departments, which, in turn, will place their orders with the shops and factories within their jurisdiction.

This is the Industrial Union Government, the government of the future, shaping itself today within the womb of capitalism.

All power to the Industrial Union.

### ***Industrial Union Organization***

Retrace your steps, ye who would overthrow capitalism, and impatiently seek for short cuts and bypaths. There is no short cut, there are no by-paths available. There is but one route. It is the broad and sunlit avenue cut and paved by the bourgeois himself, for the politically united and industrially organized proletariat.—*DE LEON*.

A tremendous lesson to the working class of America can be read in such strikes as the truck drivers' strike in Minneapolis in the spring of 1934. Has any considerable group of the workers been sufficiently inculcated with the sound Socialist Labor Party propaganda of Industrial Unionism to sit up, take notice and learn the lesson?

The City of Minneapolis has a population of some 450,000. Some 3,000 of this population consists of drivers and helpers. As a man they went out on strike on May 15, 1934. On the second day of the strike there were no vegetables to be had in the town. The bread supply vanished at the same time. In a few days canned goods and other staples were at a premium. The gas stations closed for lack of supplies, virtually ending all motor transportation in the city. All building operations came to a stop for lack of materials. Other large enterprises were instantly threatened. In order to prevent total famine and harm to children and the sick, as well as to prevent pestilence, milk, by strikers' orders, could come in and garbage be removed.

What a tremendous, truly staggering power wielded by a mere handful of men over a great population!

What did these workers do with this power?

Having been battered and abused, half-starved and overworked, until their long-worn patience came to an end, they went out on strike for a few pennies more a day and the "recognition" of the union which, by teaching in "peace time" the brotherhood of capital and labor, keeps the worker's nose steadily to the capitalist grindstone, and at best once in a lifetime secures a few pennies more a day after a battle, costly in every way to the workers.

In the meantime, during the strike and the demonstration of working class

power, the city was threatened with famine. In times of scarcity it is the workers who suffer most, not to say entirely. While there is a thing to buy, those who can afford to pay big prices will be supplied. If supplies give out entirely, the owners of pleasure cars will be able to get all they want from nearby towns. At a pinch the wealthy man can remove his family to any comfortable place he desires. The workers alone are compelled to remain and face the conditions which—though growing out of capitalism in general—are in their immediate acute state the effect of the strike action of the workers. Therefore, what should be a marvelous exhibition of strength and power of the workers turns into a boomerang that fells the workers themselves.

Quite evidently—though we cannot blame the workers for striking, not knowing what else to do or how to protest—a strike movement at this time is a wanton misuse and waste of power.

And yet the power is there! How to use it?

The first essential is for the workers to *know* what they want. What they want is certainly not a mere few cents more a day while the chains of wage slavery are welded ever firmer around their ankles.

What they want, if they only knew it, is to enjoy the fruits of their toil, and this can only be possible through the social ownership of the land on and the tools with which to work. This implies a social revolution, a change from private to common ownership—the end of capitalism and the institution of the Workers' Socialist Industrial Republic.

When the hour strikes for the workers to *take* and *hold* the means of production, and they know what they want and how to get it, how easily they will be able to enforce their order, using their power correctly!

The correct way decidedly is not a general strike. The Minneapolis strike, even on such a minor scale, proves that three thousand workers can starve out a great city in a few days. A general strike would produce instant chaos and the workers would defeat themselves. Instead of running away from the means of production, the workers must learn to look upon these means of production as *their own*, and stay on the job. Instead of a general strike, a general lockout of the capitalists from the ownership and the opportunity to exploit.

This is the workers' revolutionary fiat. But suppose the capitalists rebelled and,

refusing to obey, called on the military forces to put down the workers' revolution. What a superb lesson the Minneapolis strike teaches! An army must move; an army must be fed, clothed and housed. It would take but a handful of workers to prevent any military movement, to bottle up the ammunition supplies, to put the army on *no rations*, and leave it stranded without any necessities whatsoever.

The extreme restlessness of the workers at this time, the perpetual big strikes, despite the fact of millions of unemployed who might be expected to be looking for work at any price, all demonstrate that the discontent of the workers with the capitalist system is so tremendous that at any time it may break all bounds. A strike, such as that in Minneapolis, where thousands upon thousands of workers are forced into idleness, whether they directly join the strike or not, may easily be interpreted as or develop the proportions of an "insurrection."

"Never play with insurrection," said Marx, "unless you are fully prepared to face the consequences of your play." An insurrection is either successful, establishing the insurrectionists in full power, or it is a smashing failure and crushes the insurrectionists for good or for a long time to come. When the Communists screech strike today, general and otherwise, and attempt to urge, cajole or intimidate large groups of workers into "mass action" and riotous behavior, they are simply playing with insurrectionary tinder that may at any moment ignite on their hands. The ranks of the Communists, and the ranks of every strike of any proportion, are honeycombed with spies who urge on riotous actions in order to give the police and the hired ruffians of the industrial barons a chance to swoop down upon them and break the ranks of labor by sheer force. It has even come to a point where capitalist mouthpieces—such as the Los Angeles *Times-Mirror*—advocate outright the "firing squad" for strikers. It is dangerous indeed at this hour in history to play with forces over which we have no complete organized control.

It is not enough that the workers are discontented, to rebel against the conditions. If the workers start moving they must know where they are going and have the force to get there.

The first Industrial Workers of the World was organized prematurely and was a failure in everything except the valuable demonstrations it produced of *how not to do it*.

Since 1905, Socialist Labor Party industrial agitation has been spread all over

this continent. Decade after decade the country has been flooded with the literature of the Party; speakers and organizers have gone up and down the country, challenging, arguing, teaching and organizing. Rich “deposits” have been laid during these decades, but at best we can say that we have largely fertilized and plowed the soil and to some extent seeded it. Not yet is there any indication of a general crop growing; not yet can we view the field, and say: The harvest is plainly in view, its hour of arrival is fairly calculable. No, much more plowing, much more seeding, *and much more clearing away of grubs, larvae and other pests must be done.*

Industrial Unionism is, to be sure, much more the topic of conversation among the workers than in the past, but its precise meaning and implication are far from understood. One of the methods of frustrating revolutionary efforts on the part of the proletariat is to invest an accepted term of the movement with different meanings, thereby causing confusion. In a sense, it is the old trick of the Tower of Babel, applied to the labor movement. Industrial Unionism means one thing, and one thing only: the organizing of the working class in industrial units from the bottom up for the revolutionary purpose of overthrowing capitalism, demolishing the Political State, and establishing a National Industrial Union Administration, the same to take the place of the discarded Political State. Much of what passes for Industrial Unionism lacks one or the other, or all the conditions implied in this definition. Either they are not industrial, being mere amalgamations of crafts, or, if they are industrial in character, they lack the revolutionary objective. With respect to the former, we have the example of the so-called industrial unions of the Anarcho-Communists. Most of these are no more industrial in character than would be the joining together of heterogeneous elements within one organization and calling that a homogeneous body. Crafts remain crafts, whether “amalgamated” a la the Anarcho-Communists, or “federated” a la the A.F. of L. With regard to the latter, we had the illustration of the so-called industrial union formed out in Minnesota as a result of the strike which took place in the Hormel Meat Packing Plant. There, apparently, was a genuine attempt made at organizing on an industrial basis, but the union had absolutely no conception of the mission of the proletariat, i.e., its revolutionary objective. In either case, these efforts have resulted in frustrations, and will in a short time inevitably result in disillusionment, which in turn will make it still harder to organize these workers in Industrial Unions when the time and circumstances are really ripe. Industrial

Unions, any more than the Socialist Republic of Labor itself, cannot be made to order, nor erected as one erects a building of brick and mortar according to blueprints. The brick and mortar of the Industrial Union must be of the working class, and unless that working class is thoroughly disillusioned in the first place, and sufficiently educated and trained in the second place, that brick and mortar will not be fitted, even if willing, to constitute Industrial Unions which have for their revolutionary purpose the overthrow of the capitalist system. Just as the bricks to build a building must be hardened and rendered invulnerable by the fierce heat of the kilns, in order that the building may endure, so the workers must become hardened and seasoned through the fierce blaze of the revolutionary teachings and principles of Marxism, before they will be suitable material for an Industrial Union that must not only resist the onslaughts of the forces of capitalism, but which must also endure as the unshakable foundation for the Industrial Republic of Labor.

So far, however, the field of labor is still infested by fakers and confusionists. These have multiplied of late as, indeed, is to be expected almost up to the very hour when the organizing of the workers into the Industrial Union may become a fact. More and more, however, these fakers and confusionists are becoming discredited. It is not possible, however, for such fakers and confusionists to become thoroughly discredited until they have gathered around them substantial numbers of followers. In 1912 the so-called Socialist party was at the height of its triumph and numerical strength. With close to a hundred and fifty thousand members and more than a million votes (at a time when women did not vote) it seemed to be on the eve of success. The S.L.P. knew that at that very time it was doomed to crash, and crash it did. The Anarcho-Communist element apparently is gaining in strength and influence. It is bound to grow more during the next year or two until it, too, inevitably will crash as did the Socialist party. The A.F. of L. and kindred unions have received an artificial impetus through the NRA and other capitalist governmental support. Actually, the A.F. of L. is weaker and more discredited than ever before in its history. The field must be cleared. It is the task of the S.L.P. to intensify its propaganda and to increase activities more and more and on an ever wider field. The work of the Party is effective now as it never was before at any previous period in its history.

However, before the real work of *industrial organization* can be undertaken, a great deal more agitational work is required among the broad layers of the

American working class. The workers must learn to feel and appreciate the tremendous power that lies in their ranks. The Minneapolis example only furnishes a minor, though formidable, demonstration. Organized in shop and factory, from top to bottom, throughout at least the major industries of the nation, the workers wield a power that is unconquerable. To use this merely to demand a few pennies more a day is a disgrace and a crime against progress and evolution.

The workers are the producers of all social wealth. To them belongs the earth. For ages they have been exploited, robbed and disinherited. The day has arrived when the workers are able to come into their own. Only through an industrial organization, capable of taking, holding and operating the industries of the land, is this possible. The Political State is outworn and obsolete; it must yield to an Industrial Government originating in and rising out of the industries themselves, with the industrial vote taking the place of the political vote.

Only thus can democracy triumph—in a sound Industrial Democracy.

Workers of America, you have power, tremendous industrial power! Learn to use it for your own benefit and **YOU SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH.**

THE END