
Aims and Objects of the Social Democratic Party (November 3, 1899)

Los Angeles, Cal., Nov. 3, 1899.

Stated in a sentence, the aim of the Social Democracy is the collective ownership of the means of production and distribution, and the consequent economic equality of every human being on earth. Simple as this statement is, there are thousands of people of average intelligence who seem unable to grasp the import. They construe it to mean all kinds of silly and grotesque things, which no socialist dreams of, and which makes socialism seem supremely visionary, if not ridiculous to so many people. The trouble is not with socialism, but with what these people imagine to be socialism.

It is so self-evident as to require no elucidation that in the rapid march of centralization the day is near when private property in the means of production will be practically impossible so far as the great mass of the people are concerned. Within the next four years such property will inevitably gravitate into the hands of the few, the centralization will be complete, and then the change from private ownership to private profit, and public misery to collective ownership for the good of all, must speedily follow.

It is therefore not a matter of choice, but simply the stern logic of events. It is the new social order that is evolving from the present competitive chaos, and however much socialism may be resisted by the ignorant and unthinking, no power on earth can arrest its development or prevent its triumphant realization.

The Social Democracy, as a party, is simply preparing the way for the peaceful and orderly reception of the socialist commonwealth, and if the transition from capitalism to socialism is in any degree violent or sanguinary, it will be in spite of the efforts and desires of social democrats and because, unlike them, others were blind to the trend of economic evolution.

As an indication of widespread prevalence of socialist sentiment, the following editorial paragraphs, clipped from the *New York Journal*, are significant when it is borne in mind that the *Journal* is a capitalist

newspaper and that its enormous circulation is due largely to its radical editorial policy.

Says the *Journal*:

The trust, meaning cooperation of maximum production with minimum cost, is a most striking, permanent, and valuable feature of the world's progress.

The fight against it is as universal, foolish, and hopeless as was the battle against labor saving machinery. It will not and should not be won. It is the trust of the future.

But the trust of today, accurately described, is a conspiracy against the public welfare. It is a combination to monopolize production and strangle competition.

Against such trusts the law is helpless, dead. It exists to suppress the trust and the trust owns and controls it. * * *

There is no necessity of getting excited over it. Trusts perfectly impress on all the folly of the stupid competitive system, of the cutthroat scramble for a living, which decent management would assume to all on a decent basis.

The trusts will never be dissolved; industry will never go back to its primitive individual competitive condition. But the trusts will become national, the profits will become national, and the great saving of labor will mean leisure for the citizen to study, think, recreate, and be a man.

The nationalization of industry upon a cooperative basis is the aim of social democracy. Rent, interest, and profit in every form are to disappear and [with] them the thousands of parasites who have by such means been able to fasten themselves upon industrial society, sap its life currents, and sink it to fathomless depths of degradation.

Social democracy is the only possible cure for that social leprosy called poverty and its countless brood of festering ills. Wealth will be created for the use and enjoyment of those who create it. The badge of labor will be the only title of nobility. As if by magic, the industrial dungeon, now called a factory, will be transformed into a temple of science and art. Peace and plenty will abound. The soul will be liberated from the damnation of the stomach.

Every bit of machinery and every atom of surplus labor will be utilized in reducing the hours of labor.

Wealth creation and health creation will go hand in hand. Then there will be ample leisure for every human being and in such an invigorating mental and moral atmosphere, the human race will unfold and expand in heart and brain and soul.

The cooperation of all for the good of all will inspire the love of all, and for the first time since the planet rolled in space, the human race will be civilized.

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