
The Social Democracy

by Frederic Heath
(January 1900)

Social Democracy is but another term for democratic socialism. In this sketch of the development of the socialist movement in America, we have seen first the utopian forms of socialism, communistic socialism, and finally, in the Socialist Labor Party, a kind of socialism, or rather of socialistic propaganda, in which a hierarchy ruled, and which, besides heresy-hunting among its own members, instinctively stood for a Socialist state in which the administration of affairs would, to say the least, be bureaucratic. Such an administration would be quite apt to develop into a despotism. Presented in such a spirit. Socialism had little attraction for the Yankee lover of freedom, and so it had to make way historically for a truly democratic type — for a party standing for social democracy. The party which had this mission to perform was formed during 1897, reconstructed the following year, and is today the leading socialist party of the United States, while the Socialist Labor Party, autocratic and boss-ridden, is split in twain and poisoned unto death by its own virus. Its mission is past and its demise will not be mourned.

On January 2, 1897, Eugene V. Debs issued a card to the Associated Press, announcing his conversion to socialism, and his conviction that, apart from political action, trade unionism was inadequate to accomplish the emancipation of the working class. He showed the fallacy of free silver or mere money reform, and said that the issue was between capitalism and socialism, and that from thenceforth his labors would be in the socialist ranks. This practically commits the ARU to socialism. Mr. Debs, however, did not join the SLP, but was in correspondence with several independent Socialists who believed the SLP too hopelessly narrow and boss-ridden to ever achieve success in the United States, and who tried to enlist his sympathy toward starting a new clear-cut party, standing for democratic rather than autocratic Socialism. For the time being nothing came of these negotiations.

These independent Socialists were stronger and more active in Milwaukee than anywhere else, were locally organized into a *Social Demokratischer Verein*,¹ and had the added strength of a daily socialist newspaper in the German language, edited by Victor L. Berger. This

paper, the *Vorwärts*, had the distinction of being the oldest established socialist daily in the United States, but had in its earlier days weathered brief periods of suspended animation and on two occasions a change of name. The Milwaukee independents had kept up their organization for years, successfully standing the onslaught of the SLP and confidently expecting that the time must soon come when a national American party, having like aims, would make its appearance and crowd the unworthy SLP from the field. The *verein* was made up in part of old SLP men, and they were most of them not only trade unionists, but leaders in their respective unions. Among them were the editor of the *Vorwärts*, John Doerfler, Jacob Hunger, Joseph Roesch, who had been a personal convert of Weitling, George Moersch, Charles Dipple, Ernest Kuehnel, and others. Latterly they made up a wing of the local Peoples party, not as Populists, but as recognized Socialists. In this way they made propaganda and made some valuable converts.

At about this time a Brotherhood of the Cooperative Commonwealth was organized through *The Coming Nation* and Mr. Debs was made its organizer. It had a rather utopian scheme of planting colonies in some western state with a view to the political capture of the state. The members of the ARU finally decided to merge that organization into the B of the CC, and a convention of the two was called at Chicago, June 18, 1897.

The denouement was quite unexpected to the rank and file of both the ARU and the B of the CC, for it was nothing less than the launching of a national political, socialist party, with the colonization scheme relegated to the rear. This was the result of work on the part of several scientific socialists, headed by Victor L. Berger. The work of perfecting the organization was done in a committee which met evenings, during the convention, at McCoy's Hotel. In this committee, besides Messrs. Debs, Keliher and the ARU officers, were Victor L. Berger, Jesse Cox, Seymour Stedman, Charles R. Martin, and Frederic Heath. Messrs. Berger and Heath, owing to business demands, were forced to be at their home, Milwaukee, during the day time, and so made the trip to Chicago every evening during the week, and returning on an early train each morning — a round trip of some 170 miles.

A clearcut socialistic platform and constitution were adopted and these were promptly accepted by the convention. The national executive board chosen was composed of the old ARU officers: E.V. Debs, James Hogan, Sylvester Keliher, R.M. Goodwin and William E. Burns — “the five prisoners of Woodstock.”²² Headquarters were established at 504

Trude building in Chicago, and Mr. Debs' old *Railway Times* removed thither and rechristened *The Social Democrat*. The first issue appeared July 15th, in four-page form, six columns to the page. During this time the capitalist press had been rather friendly to the movement, mistaking its true significance. The colonization plan, which was supposed to be the main object, was looked on with favor; for capitalism, unable itself to deal with its most embarrassing class of victims, the unemployed, would be pleased, indeed, to have that class enticed away to some colony in the wilderness, thus being relieved of the burden of its support. But a concerted march to the polls by the proletariat was quite a different matter, and the newspapers soon changed their attitude to one of apprehension and attack.

The Social Democracy began at once a vigorous campaign, being badgered in various ways by the less orderly members of the SLP. Mr. Debs made his first speech for the new party at Milwaukee July 7. He had a monster audience, and a few evenings later the first Wisconsin branch was formed. But loud calls were now coming from the great miners' strike at West Virginia, and he hurried to the coalfields and gave the strikers the benefit of his counsel. While speaking bareheaded at noonday near a mining camp, he was overcome by the heat, the effects of his sunstroke being with him all summer, and obliging him to cancel various engagements. The other members of the executive board visited various parts of the country on organizing tours and made good headway.

The *Social Democrat* appeared promptly each week. The first issue contained congratulations from the veteran labor leader, John Swinton, from Laurence Gronlund, and also from a committee of St. Louis ministers headed by H. G. Vrooman. The second issue announced the formation of branches in sixteen states and also the conversion of the North Side Populist Club of New York City, which joined in a body. All over the country, well known socialists who had not been able to agree with the tactics and spirit of the SLP, took up the cause of the new party, and in New York an entire Jewish district organization of the SLP voted to join outright.

The third number announced the appointment of the colonization commission; the appointees being Richard J. Hinton, of Washington, DC, W.P. Borland of Michigan, and Cyrus F. Willard of Boston. The colonization scheme now became a bone of contention, a good many members being decidedly opposed to it. This feeling grew as the importance of the colonization feature increased in the party work and it was evident that it would sooner or later lead to almost open rupture. One

phase of it was peculiarly distressing. It gave Anarchists an opportunity to take active part in the party work and to voice their sentiments at meetings and in the party press. Thus, shortly after the party was established, Johann Most, in his *Freiheit* advised his readers to join, and other Anarchist papers also appeared friendly. And so the colonization scheme was approved by the utopian socialists and the communistic anarchists within the party, and opposed by the scientific Socialists. The colonization commission itself increased the feeling by ignoring the party's recorded intention and went about the country examining various properties. Among the places it visited were Tennessee, Colorado, New York, Washington, and Idaho. At one time it had even offered to undertake the building of a railroad in Kentucky [*sic.*].³

In its attitude toward the organized labor movement the party was at all times consistent. At a Labor conference, held at St. Louis, to discuss the miners' strike, in the latter part of August, members of the party took a leading part, Mr. Debs being one of the signers of the call, and the resolutions passed by the body being drafted by two members of the party, Victor L. Berger and G. C. Clemens, of Kansas. In the fall of the year Mr. Debs made a tour of the East, holding big meetings everywhere. In January he went through the South. In March Messrs. Debs and Keliher went together through the East and one of the results of the tour was the decision of two large sections at Haverhill, Massachusetts, to join the Social Democracy. With them came James F. Carey, whom they had previously elected to the city council.

In February the Social Democracy began its first political battle. At Milwaukee, which was one of its strongholds, a convention was held on February 1, and a complete city ticket nominated. It was headed by Robert Meister, a machinist, as candidate for mayor, and a strong local platform was adopted. The Milwaukee campaign, which was vigorously waged, was looked on with great interest by the members of the party, who helped in such ways as was possible. The labor unions assisted in the campaign and it was partially through their contributions that the local managers were able to bring Paul Grottkau from California to make addresses in German. His telling speeches were a feature of the canvass. Addresses in English were made by Mr. Debs, Jesse Cox, Seymour Stedman and others. When the votes were counted it was found that the Social Democracy had cast over 2,500 votes, while the long-established SLP only managed to get 423 into the ballot boxes.

At Sheboygan, Wisconsin, the Social Democracy elected two aldermen, Fred Haack in the fifth ward, on a vote of 171, and Oscar

Mohr in the seventh ward, on a vote of 106. In Richmond, Indiana, where a ticket was also put up, the candidate for mayor received 89 votes.

The elections over, attention was again attracted to the party's incubus, the colonization plan, and as the date of the June convention of the party approached, the feeling against it was more marked and outspoken. Utopian and fantastic, the colony idea drew support from gullible people from all classes and no trouble was experienced in getting contributions for it. It appealed to the romantic instinct and Robert Owen himself could not have enlisted people any more readily. By March the colony fund reached \$1,419.01. In April it was \$2,289.38. All this time the commission was moving about mysteriously. Finally, in May, it announced that the party would establish colonies in Tennessee, Washington, and Colorado, as a part of a gigantic plan to be announced in the future. Just before the convention, word was given out that the colony would be established in Colorado, in the Cripple Creek region. The commission had been caught by a gold-brick promoter! At about the same time it was announced in the *Social Democrat* that Secretary Willard had gone to Denver and closed a contract by which the party was to get 560 acres, on which was a gold mine of "the deeper you go, the richer the ore" variety! He had arranged to pay \$3,000 in 60 days, \$2,000 in 90 days, and to give the owners \$95,000 in 5 percent bonds, and for the balance to issue \$200,000 in first mortgage bonds, those of the owners to be a part thereof. "Then if we sold the entire amount of bonds," said the commission, "we would have \$100,00 after paying for the property, and could use, say \$25,000, to develop the mine, and the balance to establish the colony. Who will get bond no. 1?" (!)

The national convention was opened Tuesday morning, June 7th, at 9 o'clock, in Uhlich's hall on North Clark Street, Chicago. This is an historic hall, having been the birth place of the ARU, as well as the place in which the great railway strike of 1894 was declared. There were 70 delegates, representing 94 branches, present. Chairman Debs presided. Outwardly the meeting presented a picture of a pleasing and harmonious gathering, creditable to the Socialist movement. Under the surface, however, there was a hostility that meant almost certain rupture. The presence of such well-known Anarchists as Mrs Lucy Parsons, wife of one of the victims of the outrageous Haymarket trial, Emma Goldman, the common-law wife of Berkman, who shot Manager Frick at the time of the Homestead strike, and others, all enlisted under the colonization wing, the members of which were now using the phrases of the

Anarchists at sneering at political action, showed that a parting of the ways must come. It rapidly developed that the colonization forces had organized to get control of the convention and had even gone to the length of hastily organizing local "branches on paper" within three days before the convention, in order to increase its list of delegates and make its control a certainty. These branches had been organized by William Burns and the other members of the national board, with the exception of Messrs. Debs and Keliher. When the convention had come to order, and after a credential committee had been elected, consisting of J. Finn of Chicago, J. C. DeArmand of Colorado, and W.L. Johnson of Kansas, Secretary Keliher announced to the convention that eleven branches in Chicago had been organized under such suspicious circumstances that he had withheld charters from them, preferring' that the matter be dealt with by the convention itself. He was convinced, he said, that they were organized solely for the purpose of packing the convention, and that they had no existence in fact. This caused some turbulence and when the credential committee reported in favor of admitting the "fake" branches, the excitement increased, the debate lasting all day. In the evening the majority of the national board met and granted charters to the eight branches, the delegates of which were seated next morning.

A committee on rules was elected, consisting of C. F. Willard of Chicago, Isaiah Frank of New York and Frederic Heath of Milwaukee. The other committees were as follows: On resolutions — Frederic Heath of Milwaukee, A. S. Edwards of Ruskin, Tennessee, and J. S. Ingalls of Chicago.

On Constitution — Isaiah Frank of New York, L. L. Hopkins of New Jersey and W. P. Borland of Michigan. On Ways and Means — F.G.R. Gordon of New Hampshire, George Koop of Chicago and Jacob Hunger of Milwaukee. On Organized Labor — G. A. Hoehn of St. Louis, Hugo Miller of Indianapolis and Joseph Barondess of New York. On Officers' Reports — William Butscher of New York, T. Phillips of New York and Anna Ferry Smith of California. On Platform — John F. Lloyd, Victor L. Berger and Margaret Haile. Auditing — M. Winchevsky of New York, J. Grundy of Pittsburg and Seymour Stedman of Chicago. President Debs, Margaret Haile, and C. F. Willard were appointed to draft resolutions on the death of Edward Bellamy, to be telegraphed to a memorial meeting being held in Boston. The message sent was as follows:

The first national convention of the Social Democracy of America
pays tribute to the memory of Edward Bellamy, first to popularize the

ideas of Socialism among his countrymen and last to be forgotten by them.

At the close of the second day [June 8] when scarcely anything had been done, save talk, it became apparent that the “goldbrick” faction, as it was called, was trying to prolong discussion so that those from a distance would have to leave before the convention was concluded. This would give them a clear coast, as their strength was mainly local and made up in no small part by Chicago anarchists who had come in by means of the “fake” locals. More and more it dawned on the socialists that they were pitted against a conspiracy that would hesitate at no desperate move to maintain its supremacy. On the third day, Thursday [June 9], National Committeeman Hogan made sweeping charges against Secretary Keliher, evidently with the intention of prolonging the “do-nothing” tactics. The charges were afterward found to have no foundation in fact.

C.F. Willard read the report of the Colonization Commission and the facts it presented only increased the determination of the antis to sever all connection and responsibility with the affair. To put it mildly they felt that the party had been engaged in securing money on false pretenses. In the evening the antis held a caucus and resolved to fight colonization uncompromisingly.

During the early hours of Thursday Chairman Debs made his report. It showed that on his Eastern tours he had addressed 143 public meetings in 77 days. Secretary Keliher’s report showed that the total receipts for the year were \$8,965.88. Disbursements, \$8,894.44.

On Friday afternoon [June 10] the committee on platform reported, Committeeman Lloyd submitting a minority report in the interests of the “goldbrick” faction. A protracted and animated debate followed. The feeling ran high. The anti-colonization people were incensed at the way in which the time of the convention had been frittered away, and were, moreover, without hope of wresting the control from the hands of their opponents. It was finally decided to debate the platforms to a finish and then permit a vote upon them. Afterwards they would quietly abandon the convention and organize a new party. The debate lasted until 2:30 o’clock in the morning, and a vote was then taken on the minority report. It resulted in 53 for and 37 against. There was an exultant yell from the “goldbrick” faction, but their joy turned to uneasiness when those of the opposition were seen quietly leaving the hall after a motion to adjourn had been carried.

Across North Clark Street was the Revere House, where most of the delegates stayed, and where the anti-colonization faction had held its caucus the evening before. Thither they went and soon assembled in Parlor A. A strange coincidence it was, but it was in this very room that the jury that hung the anarchists came to their bloodthirsty decision! It was a sort of retribution which made that room also the birthplace of the coming great national party of revolutionary socialism. Everyone present was alive to the importance of the step, and the proceedings were carried on with despatch and in as subdued voices as possible, so as not to disturb the guests of the hotel. Frederic Heath was made chairman and F.G.R. Gordon secretary. The platform reported by the majority of the committee in the Uhlich Hall convention was adopted, the name "Social Democratic Party of America" chosen, a temporary National Committee, composed of those present, constituted, and an address to the membership of the Social Democracy ordered prepared. The meeting adjourned at 4 o'clock [June 11], just as the rays of a bright sunrise began to bathe the window panes.

Later in the day the delegates reconvened at Hull House, on South Halsted Street. Jesse Cox presided and William Mailly acted as secretary. The following National Executive Board was elected: Jesse Cox, Seymour Stedman, Eugene V. Debs, Victor L. Berger, and Frederic Heath. Resolutions on the death of Edward Bellamy and Paul Grottkau were passed and the resolutions on organized labor, drafted by Messrs. Hoehn, Miller, and Barondess, reenacted. A.S. Edwards was made national organizer and Jacob Winnen made a tender of the affiliation of the Social Democratic Federation, which was favorably listened to and the members received into full membership.

Shortly after the convention, the National Board met in Chicago and revised the platform. A constitution was prepared and an address drawn up. This latter, which stated the facts regarding the split, was mailed to all members of the old Social Democracy. The circular also announced the opening of headquarters in Chicago and the appointment of Theodore Debs as national secretary and treasurer. The motto of the party was stated as: Pure Socialism and No Compromise.

Meantime those left in the Uhlich Hall convention adopted the Lloyd platform and elected the following National committee: James Hogan, W.P. Borland, R.M. Goodwin, John F. Lloyd, L.L. Hopkins, I. Frank, C.F. Willard, R.J. Hinton, and G.C. Clemens. They became a colonization party, pure and simple. Being in possession of the national headquarters and the official organ they were able to make a showing for

a few weeks, but the fact that their strength was local soon began to tell, and with the third issue under their charge the *Social Democrat* succumbed. A fourth issue was in type, but the printer demanded cash in advance. Their only hope was to actually colonize. In August Messrs. Willard and Ingalls went prospecting and finally found a location at the head of Henderson Bay in the state of Washington. A number of members began the pioneer work and in time a colony was in full swing, nourished and cheered by money paid in by non-resident members for the purchase of shares. The colony is still in existence, with 110 members, and a little paper, *The Cooperator*, is published each week.

In the state of Washington, also, is the Equality colony of the old Brotherhood of the Cooperative Commonwealth. It is located at Edison, and has had a hard time of it. N.W. Lermond, its leading spirit, is no longer with it. Its members live in log houses, and have not had time thus far to even think of the old dream of capturing the state of Washington through the ballot.

On July 9, the Social Democratic Party issued the first number of *The Social Democratic Herald*. It was of four pages, four columns to the page. A.S. Edwards was editor. The third issue announced the selection of a national headquarters at Room 66, 126 Washington Street, Chicago, directly opposite the city hall. The paper was issued under the most trying circumstances, the split having disheartened many socialists, so that the party grew very slowly. It was not until fully a year after that real headway began to be made, outside of a few party strongholds like Massachusetts, Milwaukee, and St. Louis. In November the place of publication of the paper was changed to Belleville, Illinois, as a measure of economy. It remained there until June of the following year (1899), when it was brought back to Chicago and issued in larger page form — five columns instead of four.

In spite of the setback the movement had received, the party went into the fall campaign at several points. In Wisconsin a full state ticket, headed by Howard Tuttle of Milwaukee, for Governor, was nominated. The Massachusetts members nominated Winfield P. Porter of Newburyport. In New Hampshire, Sumner F. Claflin was at the head of the ticket. Nominations were made in five assembly districts in New York. Missouri nominated Albert E. Sanderson for judge of the Supreme Court and made several congressional nominations, and a local ticket was put up at Terre Haute, Indiana.

In its issue of Saturday, November 12, the *Herald* brought the glad tidings of victory in Massachusetts — the election of two members of the

state legislature from the Haverhill district: James F. Carey and Lewis M. Scates. Mr. Debs had helped in the campaign there and had had a record-breaking meeting, with an overflow. The party made a good showing in the other states where there were candidates. In Wisconsin it had more than twice as many votes as the SLP, and the same was the case in St. Louis, a former SLP stronghold.

Scarcely had the joy over the Massachusetts victory died away than that state presented the party with another surprise. On December 6th the Social Democrats of Haverhill succeeded in electing John C. Chase, mayor; Charles H. Bradley and J. W. Bean, aldermen; Joseph Bellefeuille, James W. Hillsgrove, and Albert L. Gillen, councilmen; Newman W. Wasson, school commissioner; and Frank S. Reed, assistant assessor.

In December, members of the Social Democratic Party created quite a stir by making socialism an issue at the convention at Kansas City of the American Federation of Labor. The trades unions of England had come out for socialism as the wage workers' only hope, and while there was no reason to believe that success could be had all at once in the AF of L owing to the old party predilections of certain of its most influential leaders, yet a beginning could be made — in fact a beginning had been made in former of the federation conventions. Among those who went to Kansas City were James P. Carey of Haverhill, William Mahon of Detroit, John Tobin of Boston, Victor L. Berger, and Seymour Stedman. The SLP was represented among others by editor Max Hayes of Cleveland. The result was that an interesting debate was precipitated which was duly telegraphed to the daily papers all over the country and which caused a good deal of talk in union circles. The vote taken showed more strength than the socialists were supposed to have in the body — 493 for the Socialistic resolution to 1,971 against.

In the spring election of 1899, a local ticket was put up in Chicago, with Thomas G. Kerwin at the head. At Spring Valley, Illinois, the socialist miners also put up a local ticket. Their candidate for mayor was James Beattie. At Pacific, Wisconsin, a local ticket was nominated, and nominations were also made at St. Louis and Baltimore. And out of this came a victory, too, the party ticket at Pacific making a clean sweep.

In June 1899 the Socialist Party of America, an independent organization having headquarters in Texas, officially joined the Social Democratic party, as the result of a conference held between its president, W.E. Farmer of Bonham, Texas, the members of its executive board, and Mr. Debs, who was in the South on a lecture tour.

During June the SLP, which had long been filled with internal dissension, experienced a split of the most disintegrating sort. Two factions were warring for the mastery in New York City, where the National Executive Committee was located. One was led by DeLeon, [Lucien] Sanial, and Hugo Vogt, and the other by the proprietors of the New York *Volkszeitung*. The despotic sway of DeLeon had not been relished and bad feeling existed all over the country. Some were jealous of it, others were disgusted by it. Of these latter was Eugene Dietzgen of Chicago, whose father, Joseph Deitzgen had been a compatriot with Karl Marx. Dietzgen saw how DeLeonism was perverting the movement and rebelled against it. He had been friendly to the Social Democratic Party, and this was made a pretext by some of DeLeon's henchmen in Chicago to prefer charges and to ultimately expel him. He issued a pamphlet in March against DeLeonism under the title *Leze Majesty and Treason to the "Fakirs" in the Socialist Labor Party*, and sent it to every section of the party in the country. This, in conjunction with a weekly onslaught on DeLeonism which Wayland's *Appeal to Reason* was making in the interests of a united socialist movement, had some effect.

At a meeting of the general committee of Section Greater New York, at the Labor Lyceum on East Fourth street, held on the evening of July 8, a pitched battle took place. It was the first meeting after the semi-annual election of new delegates, and the DeLeon faction had discovered that a majority of the new committeemen were hostile to it. It was therefore on its guard. The DeLeonites controlled the National Executive Committee of the party, a committee which the other side intended to depose in a summary manner. The meeting had scarcely begun before the two factions came to blows. The following from the account of one of the eyewitnesses will give some idea of the scene that followed :

This act of violence on the part of Keep was the signal for an outburst of passion seldom witnessed in any political meeting, much less in a meeting of Socialists. The delegates pummeled each other until blood was seen flowing from many wounds. Men were sprawling upon the floor, others were fighting in the corners, upon the tables, chairs, and upon the piano, Hugo Vogt having climbed upon the latter, yelling and fairly foaming from the mouth...

Finally the DeLeon contingent withdrew. On Monday evening, July 10, another fight took place. The *Volkszeitung* faction had held a meeting, deposed the National Committee and elected one in its stead. A

committee was sent to the office of *The People* to demand the party property. They attempted to force their way in and were repulsed by DeLeon and others, who were in possession, with clubs, bottles, and other weapons. The police were called in and obliged the intruders to retire. In the morning, still under police protection, the DeLeon people removed the office effects to another location which they had rented. As a result of the split, two SLPs took the place of one. Each faction issued a weekly *People*, and printed many columns of denunciation of the other side. Throughout the country the small party bosses in the main took sides with DeLeon, while the strength of the *Volkszeitung* faction came from San Francisco, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Many sections, disgusted with the turn affairs had taken, joined the Social Democratic Party outright. The quarrel in New York soon got into the courts, where the DeLeon party was given official recognition. The same was true in Massachusetts and other states, and the other faction was thus left in a bad plight. In their dilemma the rank and file turned to the Social Democratic Party, making overtures, which at the present time, seem to indicate a coming together of the two bodies under the SDP banner within a few months, provided the leaders still hold out.

During the Spring of 1899 the so-called "farmers' program" in the platform of the Social Democratic Party, was the subject of considerable debate. Socialists whose socialism was static rather than dynamic, charged that this part of the platform was reactionary. Those who supported it held that concentration was not taking place in the rural districts as the early fathers of the socialist movement had predicted and that this fact had to be reckoned with if the party wished to show itself scientific. The fact that the SLP singled out that part of the platform for attack and ridicule had its effect, however, and finally at a party conference held in Chicago July 6, it was decided to eliminate the farmer demands subject to referendum vote of the party. This vote, which was afterward taken, sustained the action of the conference. This conference, which was called by the National Executive Board, also fixed on the first Tuesday in March 1900, as the time for the party convention for the choosing of nominees for the national campaign, and Indianapolis was chosen as the convention seat. The National Board held monthly meetings in Chicago during the year. One of its notable acts was the appointment of Eugene Dietzgen (who had meantime become a member of the party) as the party delegate to the International Socialist Congress to be held at Paris in 1900. Mr. Dietzgen left for Europe soon after with the intention of remaining until the congress. In October the National

Board passed adversely upon the action of the branches of the party in New York City in affiliating with a newly organized Independent Labor Party, which grew out of the Brooklyn trolley strike. It was found that the ILP was not only not a class-conscious party, but also that it was being controlled by capitalistic politicians. The branches were reminded of the constitutional provision against fusion with any other party and ordered to withdraw from the compact, which was done, the party candidates being also withdrawn. For this reason the party was not represented in the Fall election in New York.

New courage came to the party in 1899 in the November and December elections. There was an increased vote at all points where tickets were put up, and in Massachusetts James F. Carey was reelected to the legislature from the Haverhill district and Frederic O. McCartney from the Plymouth district. In the local elections in December John C. Chase was reelected Mayor of Haverhill over a combination of Republicans and Democrats — in short, the battle was between socialism and capitalism — and the party maintained its position in the city council. At Brockton, C.H. Coulter, one of the hardest working Social Democrats in Massachusetts, was defeated mayor with 1,500 plurality, two aldermen being also elected.

We have traced the history of socialism in America from its earlier phases, down through the years until we now see it clarified and resolute and ready for the great political battle of 1900. It is already in the first flush of victory, it being only in recent years that the socialists have been able to elect any of their candidates. The times are changing, the need of Socialism is every day more and more apparent and the people themselves are beginning to understand it as it really is, and therefore to want it. The movement is now entirely native to the soil. Nothing can prevent it from “making history” in the years that are just before us.

Published as Chapter 7 in *Social Democracy Red Book*. Terre Haute, IN: Debs Publishing Co., Jan. 1900.

¹ *Social Democratic Society*.

² Note that there were two other ARU leaders sentenced on contempt of court charges, Vice President George W. Howard, who broke with his compatriots in January 1895, and Railway Times editor Louis W. Rogers, who chose not to continue with the ARU into the new organization.

³ During the first half of October 1897 the SDA's Colonization Commission spent four days in Nashville, Tennessee, attempting to win support for a proposal to use the Social Democracy of America as a contractor for the construction of 75 miles of railway connecting the city with another existing line. Although news of the proposition made national news, ultimately nothing came of the scheme and it died with a whisper.