

The Road to Power

—OR—

The Constructive Elements of Socialism

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PREAMBLE

OF THE W. I. I. U.

THE working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of working people and the few who make up the employing class have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the toilers come together on the political field under the banner of a distinct revolutionary political party governed by the workers' class interests, and on the industrial field under the banner of One Great Industrial Union to take and hold all means of production and distribution, and to run them for the benefit of all wealth producers.

The rapid gathering of wealth and the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands make the trades union unable to cope with the evergrowing power of the employing class, because the trades unions foster a state of things which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. The trades unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These sad conditions must be changed, the interests of the working class upheld and while the capitalist rule still prevails all possible relief for the workers must be secured. That can only be done by an organization aiming steadily at the complete overthrow of the capitalist wage system, and formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry or in all industries, if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

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AT THE same time, and quite apart from the general servitude involved in the wages system, the working class ought not to exaggerate to themselves the ultimate working of these every-day struggles. They ought not to forget that they are fighting with effects, but not with the causes of those effects; that they are retarding the downward movement, but not changing its direction; that they are applying palliatives, not curing the malady. They ought, therefore, not to be exclusively absorbed in these unavoidable guerilla fights incessantly springing up from the never-ceasing encroachments of capital or changes of the market. They ought to understand, with all the miseries it imposes upon them, the present system simultaneously engenders the *material conditions* and the *social forms* necessary for an economical reconstruction of society. Instead of the *conservative* motto, "A fair day's wages for a fair day's work!" they ought to inscribe on their banner the *revolutionary* watchword, "Abolition of the wage system!"

—Karl Marx in "Value, Price and Profit."

One Great Union

STRUCTURE OF THE W. I. I. U.

LOCAL INDUSTRIAL UNION

Unites all the actual wage-workers in a certain industry of a given locality; subdivided into branches as the particular requirements of said industry may call for.

Branch 1 | Branch 2 | Branch 3

NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL UNION

Unites all Local Industrial Unions of the same industry in a country or on a continent.

DISTRICT INDUSTRIAL COUNCIL

For the purpose of establishing solidarity of action in a given district, a council is organized; composed of delegates from Local Unions of at least five or more, located in that district. Councils are chartered by the General Administration of the W. I. I. U.

DEPARTMENTS OF INDUSTRIES

Are organized of National Industrial Unions of kindred industries, in accordance with the provisions governing such body.

GENERAL ORGANIZATION

American Administration.

The General Executive Board is elected by Departments, and Referendum of Membership. The Gen. Sec. Treas., the Gen. Organizer, Editor of Official Paper and Literature Committee are elected by the Regular Convention of the Workers' International Industrial Union, composed of delegates from all subdivisions of the organization.

International Bureau of W.I.I.U.:

American Adm.	
Australian	"
British	"
.....	

MEMBERSHIP AT LARGE

Are wage-workers in a locality where no local is organized.

LOCAL RECRUITING UNIONS

Are organized by wage-workers employed in different industries wherein no Industrial Local Union has yet been organized.

THE ROAD TO POWER

— OR —

The Constructive Elements of Socialism

I.

Consequently, through the importance of their economic function, through their irreplaceability in the process of social production, the power of the working class is much greater than its numerical strength would have it appear.

However, mere numbers and economic significance can not alone give a class power, if it is not conscious of the same. If a class has not recognized its peculiar position in society, and the distinct interests interwoven therewith; if a class, thoughtless and enervated, submits to the domination of its oppressors, thinking this to be the eternal order of things, then all its numbers and economic significance will not carry any weight. Therefore, to these factors of working class power, clear conception and knowledge must be added. Only through class-consciousness will this large number of workers become a contingent of workers for its own class, only thereby will they become conscious of the might slumbering in their economic irreplaceability, and be able to apply the same in their own interests. Class-consciousness first infuses this gigantic, muscular but dead body with life, and makes it competent to engage in class activity.

—Anton Pannekoek.

IT is a recognized and accepted proposition amongst Socialists that Socialism derives its claim to a science from two branches of scientific investigation: The first, Marxian Economics, is a thorough dissection and profound critique of capitalist production; and the second, the Materialist Conception of History, provides the student with a theory for the understanding and appreciation of historical phenomena or social development.

Through the application of the Socialist method of historic investigation to social evolution, the various and ever changing stages in the complex development of mankind assume a more distinct form, and the driving forces and causes under-

lying this endless chain of struggles, transformations and revolutions are laid bare and exposed to the investigator. Through the proper utilization of the Materialist Conception of History in studying the past and present of human progress, history, with its many almost impenetrable mysteries and strange labyrinths, ceases to be a closed book to the student, and becomes a vital, interesting narrative, depicting the unceasing struggle of the classes through the ages; a struggle that finds its culmination in the furious class war raging between Capital and Labor today, and that will be definitely concluded with the abolition of class prerogatives in property, and the establishment of the Industrial Republic. As stated before, to shed light on the multifarious phases of historical development, and to thus enable the investigator to intelligently appreciate and appraise existing conditions by a sound knowledge of the past, also to enable him to vision and penetrate into the future with the aid of scientific spectacles, that is the domain of Historical Materialism, the groundwork of the Socialist philosophy.

Upon this massive and imposing foundation the system of Socialist or, to be more exact, Marxian Economics is erected. The Economics of Marx are nothing else but a key for the proper understanding of the origin, nature and culmination of the capitalist system of production. Marxian Economics furnish to the student a complete analysis of the laws underlying present day production; they point out the causes of the various industrial manifestations and also expose and formulate the tendencies inherent in these economic potentialities. Thus the genesis of profit, interest, rent, unemployment, panics, competition and wars is easily ascertained with the aid of the Marxian system of economic research. For a scientific conception of Capitalism,

therefore, the study of Socialist Economics is indispensable. And without a sound knowledge of capitalist production, no effective Socialist activity, economic or political, is possible.

The Materialist Conception of History and Marxian Economics, i. e., the Socialist conception of historic development plus the Socialist analysis of capitalist production, these two theoretical systems are the intellectual pillars upon which the Socialist movement rests—they symbolize the bedrock of the Socialist science. In proportion as the Socialist movement organizes and develops in accord with the dictates flowing from a proper assimilation of these principles, in that proportion will it become a Socialist movement and possess the revolutionary constructive vitalities so peculiar to a class-conscious movement, and vice versa. Therefore, the strength of the Socialist movement is necessarily to be found in a sound and comprehensive understanding of its principles and aims by the rank and file. Without this understanding no intelligent action is possible, and no responsible opinion can be rendered or decision arrived at. Consequently, familiarity with the fundamentals of the Socialist philosophy is an imperative prerequisite for a competent conception of party problems, and also for the proper understanding of Socialist tactics.

The question of Socialist tactics belongs to the Constructive Department of Socialism. It is a question which is generally raised unwillingly, and mostly considered not worthy of serious discussion. To many Socialists, and they are generally of the calibre who have not mastered the fundamental prerequisites underscored above, the tactics of the Socialist movement are not determined by the conscious efforts of the Socialists, but are more or less the product of chance. And when we study the

tactics employed by the different state and local organizations of the Socialist Party in this country, and notice the different conceptions responsible for the same—conceptions that, in many cases, go as far apart as day and night—then we must conclude: that this melting pot of tactics, this tactical hash, is only conceivable and possible in an organization whose members have as yet developed no unity of opinion as to the aim and historic mission of Socialism. A proper conception of the social significance of Capitalism, coupled with a knowledge of the economic structure of capitalist production, is bound to equip every worker with a proper understanding of the role played, or to be played, by the Socialist movement in present society. Such an understanding will necessarily and instinctively stimulate the imagination, and create a vision of the goal of the Socialist movement in the mind of every proletarian. The historic role and status, and the goal of the Socialist movement being given, the determination of the proper tactics and methods to be employed in the struggle for industrial liberty now becomes impèrative and a burning question.

II.

THE Constructive Department of Socialism is that branch of Socialist philosophy which occupies itself with the methods and form of organization to be employed by the workers in their struggle against the exploiters for the Industrial Republic. It is the logical supplement to the two theoretical systems touched upon above; Marxian Economics and Historical Materialism emphasizing the necessity for and historic basis of Socialism, and Constructive Socialism pointing out the method for its realization. This constructive phase of Socialism is in reality the most important element in the Socialist philosophy, because the development and success of the class-conscious proletariat actually

depends upon its proper organization and the correct tactical interpretation and application of Socialist principles. Without the proper appreciation of the Socialist goal and adoption of the tactics resulting therefrom, no decisive victory for the working class is possible—no victory for Socialism can be obtained. The tactics, nature and form of organization of the Socialist movement may, therefore, be defined as the tools of the working class absolutely essential to the erection of the Industrial Republic. To determine and define these methods and forms of proletarian organization is, consequently, synonymous with laying the theoretical foundation of the Socialist Commonwealth.

Marxian Economics clearly emphasize that the capitalist system will only disappear with the abolition of private ownership in the means of production. This proclaims the necessity for industrial revolution. The basis of Capitalism is private ownership, consequently, the basis of Socialism, its antithesis, can only be social ownership; as can readily be seen—one excludes the other, and the domination of one implies the subjugation of the other. Industrial revolution, or the movement for industrial revolution, can, therefore, project only one demand and that is the socialization of industry and all agencies of production. Such a demand, however, is not only in accord with the tendencies and dictates of social evolution, but also voices at the same time the specific class interests of the proletariat, and can, therefore, only emanate from that social layer. The demand of social evolution, whose obedient servant the working class is, is a demand at war with the basic interests of the capitalist class. The working class, as an agent of social evolution, and the capitalist class, as an obstacle in the path of economic progress, have, therefore, nothing in common. This fundamental

difference of interests, functions and historic destinies breeds the class antagonism and the struggle for power.

Today Capitalism is strongly fortified behind economic and political bulwarks. By virtue of its industrial powers, it has humanity the world over at the throat. To dislodge Capitalism from this powerful position, and to thus lay the cornerstone of the Socialist Commonwealth is the august mission of Constructive Socialism.

In this struggle between the capitalist class and the proletariat, the latter, being in the position of aggressor, is naturally at a disadvantage. It is a disadvantage, however, that compels a survey of the battlefield by the workers, the results of which contain the solution to the problem of how to overcome and eliminate this obstacle. This survey of the economic, political and social position of the capitalist class reveals, that the basic power or influence of this class resides not, as is often erroneously assumed, in its political domination or control of government, but in its economic rule over society. History teaches and profusely illustrates: that the class in control of the economic resources of society in a given period has also been the class to exercise practical control over political society, i. e.—over society itself. History vindicates the contention that the economic life of society, the form of ownership and methods of production and exchange existing at a certain stage of social development, is the compelling factor, the preponderant form, which determines, influences and shapes all other ethical, moral, intellectual and political, in short—cultural phases of life.

A casual study of the periods of Antique Slavery, Feudalism and Capitalism will serve to convincingly illustrate this contention. Such a study will reveal that the roots of Slavery rested in the absolute

domination of a people by another; that the enslavement and exploitation of a people by Rome was made possible only by the superior and well organized economic resources and the disciplined armies of the conquerors. The economic foundation of Rome was predicated on organized Slavery; and even the classic period of Letters and Art in Greece and Rome, that as yet uneclipsed period of splendour, was reared upon the backs of slaves. With the decay and fall of Slavery, the marvellous splendour and the political and military power of Rome also collapsed. The same tendencies are also detectable, when examining Feudalism. Here we note the unlimited power of social control vested in the same feudality, which through its ownership or tenure of the land—the then main agent of production—exerted practically an undivided influence over every detail in the life of its subjects. By virtue of this economic control—land ownership—the feudal lord was actually elevated to the position of arbitrator over the life, happiness and prosperity of his serfs. He held their destinies in the hollow of his hand, because he monopolized the wherewith of life—the land. And when we make an investigation of Capitalism, the by far preponderant role played by the economic element of the capitalists' power in present society is easily discernible. Here we are compelled to admit that the class divisions of today, similar to the ones of yore, are fundamentally economic or property divisions. Furthermore, that the influence of a class is not measured by the degree of its productivity, or the proportion of its work for the social welfare, etc., but mainly by the economic power in its control. To illustrate, in society today the high illimitable and colossal dimensions of the workers' productive faculties are easily recognized and acknowledged by everyone. At the same time, the relatively insignificant and

minor role played by the capitalists in this industrial process is well known. If social and political influence were apportioned in ratio to the economic use-value of a class, then the proletariat would certainly be the dominant class in society and the capitalists occupy a most insignificant position. The opposite being the case, proves conclusively that political and social influence is not the fruit of social service, but the product, as was the case in previous centuries, of economic power in some shape or form. The economic power of the capitalist class, a power to which the vast majority of the population is compelled to pay homage, is not only lodged in the private ownership of land, as in the case of Feudalism, but in the private ownership of all instruments and agencies of wealth production. The title of private ownership to the means necessary to the life and prosperity of a nation, vested in a numerically insignificant minority, gives this minority an unlimited control over the welfare and happiness of a people. Here we have the source of capitalist power—the genesis of the social and political significance of the capitalist class. The title of private ownership in the means of production is the cornerstone of the capitalists' social influence—the generator of every form of capitalist power.

To shatter this foundation of capitalist class might, to capture this stronghold of industrial despotism in the interest of the workers, must, therefore, be the one great object of Constructive Socialism. The destruction of the economic power of the capitalist class, of course, also spells the collapse of its political rule, together with the social position occupied by this class, and announces the inception of the social revolution and the elevation of all the producers in society to the rulership of society. The question how to organize the proletarian forces for

this momentous and gigantic object; how to create the so essential power in the working class; this question is now in order, and its proper solution forms the quintessence of Constructive Socialism—the basis for scientific Socialist tactics and effective action.

III.

IT IS a recognized truism that pressure begets pressure and that might breeds might. Furthermore, must the inexorable fact be recognized that the means and tactics of warfare of the aggressor, in this case the proletariat, are largely dependent on and determined by the strategical position and general methods employed by the enemy, the capitalist class. A study of the social position of the capitalist class has already revealed to us that the roots of the exploiters' power in society are to be found in their economic control of the socially necessary means of production. The holding of this economic citadel imparts a strength or power to the capitalist class phenomenal in scope and only explainable by the absolute indispensability of these economic resources to society. To capture this position from the capitalist class, to meet the economic power of the plutocrats with a superior economic power of the workers, that is the next logical step in this gigantic struggle.

Economic power, as has been sufficiently illustrated in the foregoing pages, is the source of all other forms of social influence. Therefore, economic power can be correctly defined as the basic element of social might. Consequently, if a class seeks to rise to political domination, seeks to capture the governmental institutions of a nation, in short, seeks to attain control of society, it must first predicate its ambitions and demands upon a solid structure of organized economic power. Demands and movements not so fortified are in the

outset doomed to ignominious failure and defeat. This deduction applies particularly to the struggle of the proletariat against the exploiting class.

In our investigation we have clearly defined the seat of the capitalists' economic power, and, therefore, fully appreciate the significance and source of the political and social influence exercised by this class in society. We know that the title of private ownership in the means of production, vested in the capitalist class, is at the bottom of it all. In the face of such a powerful force, what form of economic power can the working class organize with which to be able to overcome and obliterate the property prerogatives of Capitalism?

We are fully aware that all ruling classes in the past have based or established their social supremacy upon some form of ownership, i. e., upon some property prerogative. The patricians of Rome considered birth and the possession of land, cattle and a multitude of slaves a fitting recommendation to rule; the feudal lord pivoted his era of the mailed fist upon the absolute control of the land; and the capitalist is in undisputed possession of the ship of state, by virtue of his absolute control over all the agencies of production in society. The working class, mustering its forces to give battle to the advocates and upholders of the present system, finds itself the only class in the long chain of social development that seeks to acquire the economic and political supremacy in society without possessing or attempting to fortify this supremacy with some form of property prerogatives.

The working class, being toolless and stripped of every vestige of property, can not organize its economic forces along the lines of ownership. The economic power of the proletariat rests not, as it is and has been the case with all parasitic ruling classes, in the power of ownership, but in the

power of production: not in its problematical indispensability as a possessing class, but in its actual indispensability as a producing class. The physical and intellectual productive faculties of the working class form the groundwork of present day society and symbolize the pulsating blood of our social organism. Consequently, these faculties organized on a class-conscious basis and in line with the dictates of economic development, in other words, these physical and intellectual productive forces of the workers organized in the interest of the proletariat represent and form the structure of working class economic power. As can be readily seen, the seat of working class power, different from that of previous ruling classes, does not rest in the usurpation and possession of rights and property respectively, but in the consciousness of the proletariat's indispensability as a productive agent—in the consciousness of being the *working class*. This class-consciousness of the workers is the generator of the economic power of the proletariat. Recognizing the economic indispensability of the workers in the process of production, and thereby appreciating the role played by the proletariat in the maintenance of society, it is now a simple matter for the class-conscious worker to translate these conceptions into proper forms of organization.

Production being the origin of and maintaining element in social life; production also being solely carried on by the workers; furthermore, exploitation or the appropriation of surplus-value also taking place at the point of production; and, again, the point of production being also the seat of the capitalists' economic power, it logically follows that the class organizations of the workers will first marshal and organize their forces at this point. The organization of the workers along class-conscious lines at the point of production is synonymous to

rearing and developing the economic power in the proletariat. Consequently, this power increases as the class-consciousness increases amongst the workers, and their economic and political organizations will grow in the same proportion.

To sum up: The economic power of the workers rests not in some form of ownership or property prerogative, as is the case with the capitalists, but in the recognition of his status as a worker, in the recognition of his economic worth or indispensability—in his class-consciousness. In order to assert itself effectively, this class-consciousness must take on certain organized forms on the industrial as well as political field, i. e., must express itself in accord with the requirements of capitalist development in particular and social evolution in general. This phase of the problem will now be dealt with.

IV.

"The revolver then triumphs over the sword and it should be apparent even to the maker of childish axioms that superior force is no mere act of the will but requires very real preliminary conditions for the carrying out of its purposes, especially mechanical instruments, the more highly developed of which have the superiority over the less highly developed. Furthermore, these tools must be produced, whence it appears that the producer of the more highly developed tool of force, commonly called weapon, triumphs over the producer of the less highly developed tool. In a word, the triumph of force depends upon the production of weapons, therefore upon economic power, on economic conditions, on the ability to organize actual material instruments."

—Engel's *"Landmarks of Scientific Socialism,"* pp. 193-194.

IN the first three chapters of this article a detailed examination of the social and economic position or status of the two principal classes in present society was made. This investigation, we believe, has revealed to us clearly the economic functions performed by the different social classes; thereby also exposing the sources or seat of their

respective social power. We can at least venture to assert that it has brought home the so important truism that all political or social influence, exercised by a social category in a particular historic period, is but a reflex of its economic influence or might, i. e., that political power or governmental control does not conquer and cement the industrial supremacy and hegemony for a class, but, on the contrary, that the industrial supremacy of a class is also bound to ultimately insure political power and governmental domination to it. The proper recognition of this fact by the proletariat—a fact which can be amply substantiated by historic and sociological examples—will eventually compel this class to organize and conduct its struggle against Capitalism accordingly. This further implies that the proper appreciation of this fundamental proposition will henceforth actuate the class-conscious workers to concentrate their energies upon the *organization* of their economic power; and this attempt will again animate them to seek to establish the original source of this *potential* force in the working-class.

In the aforementioned chapters we emphasized that the economic power of the workers did not rest in some form of ownership or property prerogative, as is and was the case with all previous ruling classes, but in the recognition of their economic worth or indispensability—in *their class-consciousness*. From this deduction it follows that the economic and social influence or power of the proletariat is not, as it has been so often erroneously asserted, to be found in the form or particular function of an organization, but in its spirit and theoretical composition. Not the form or particular functions will affect and determine the principles of an organization, but the principles will determine the form and functions. Therefore, it can-

not be too emphatically underscored that the power of the proletariat does not in the last analysis rest in the form or structure, but the spirit of an organization. Consequently, when certain Socialists attribute revolutionary vitality and creative power to Industrial Unionism as Industrial Unionism, *without qualifying it with the word Socialist*, then they commit precisely the same error which certain pure and simple politicians fall into, when they seek to "organize the masses into a large political party," however, in their anxiety for success forgetting and ignoring entirely the *Socialist* character of the organization. Primarily, it is not the question whether the workers are organized on the economic field along craft or industrial lines, because we have both forms of organization in existence now (see Germany and America for classical examples); neither, whether the workers engage in independent politics, such politics having been carried on for years by so-called liberal reform movements and alleged "Socialist" parties; but whether the economic and political activity is a Socialist activity; whether the industrial union is a class-conscious union; and whether the Socialist political party is a truly working-class organization. The yardstick with which to establish the status of a workers' organization has been provided in our previous article, and is to be found in the organization's conception of Capitalism and the consequent interpretation of the class struggle resulting therefrom. To a revolutionary Socialist only such an organization is considered class-conscious which affirms unequivocally the inability of the workers to permanently improve their economic and social conditions under Capitalism, calling upon the workers to marshal their forces on the economic as well as political field under the banner of not palliation or reform, but revolution. Organ-

izations, therefore, that devote their main efforts to the palliation of effects and the propagation of reforms, even if "ultimately" affirming and "demanding" Socialism, can not be considered class-conscious organizations, and are in reality a greater obstacle to the formation of a genuine proletarian army of the revolution than all the chicanery, economic despotism and social and cultural prerogatives of the capitalist class combined. Class-conscious Socialist action can only be the product of a scientific conception of capitalist production, of a Marxian interpretation of economic and social phenomena, and can, in consequence, have only a certain meaning to the working-class. Therefore, it can not mean one thing to one worker, and something else to another. It will also be admitted, that certain scientific premises and a scientific mode of investigation will furnish certain deductions, which again will prescribe or determine a definite mode of action. The mode of action or tactics of a class-conscious movement, as it can be readily gleaned from the preceding, are, therefore, not the fruit of "expediency" or chance, but the product of theoretical clarity and scientific perception. Such being the case, the tactical department of the Socialist movement is, consequently, inseparably connected with the theoretical system of Socialism, being in reality a component part of this system. Therefore, tactical clarity and efficiency in a Socialist movement can only flow from theoretical clarity; intellectual consciousness and scientific profundity being the father to class-consciousness, and class-consciousness again giving birth to effective class action—the dynamo of all class movements.

Having established the original source of working-class power, and knowing that it rests in the consciousness of the worker appertaining to his

economic indispensability, it is now quite a simple proposition to formulate a tactical program for the organization of this industrial might. Before we proceed with this task, it is, however, imperative to re-state in short the basic objective or ultimate goal of the proletarian struggle. This objective, as emphasized before, is determined, first, by the Socialist analysis of capitalist production, and, secondly, by the proper appreciation, with the aid of the Materialistic Conception of History, of the historic role allotted to the working-class in the process of evolution. From the application of Historical Materialism and Marxian Economics to social development in general and Capitalism in particular, we are compelled to conclude that the basic cause of the workers' misery, and the original source of all class demarcations existing in present society, plus the innumerable effects resulting therefrom, are to be found in the capitalist or private ownership of the socially produced and operated instruments of wealth production; and that, in consequence, as long as the fundamental antithesis between social production and individual appropriation continues to exist, the multifarious other economic and political contradictions would naturally continue to thrive. The immediate and ultimate objective of the Socialist movement must, therefore, concentrate and organize around the demand for the abolition of private ownership in the socially necessary instruments of production (including all land), i. e., must marshal its forces for the shattering of the commodity status in labor-power and the inauguration of the Industrial Republic. Consequently, at this late date of capitalist development, in this period of social turmoil and full-fledged Capitalism, the only demand worthy of unstinted working-class support is the one which demands nothing less than the unconditional surrender of the capitalist class—the Socialist Com-

monwealth. With this demand as the only immediate and ultimate aim to struggle for, with the social revolution as the objective before it, the Socialist movement can not fail to be a truly revolutionary movement, and must by necessity formulate tactics just as revolutionary as the aim that gave birth to them.

We have seen from the foregoing that the economic power of the workers slumbers in their class-consciousness; furthermore, that this class-consciousness can only be effectively aroused and reared in the proletarians with the aid of *Socialist* education predicated upon a Socialist or revolutionary objective. Therefore, all so-called "Socialist propaganda" and "activity" not based upon such an aim, or advancing it as the "ultimate demand," advocating as "immediate demands" an endless string of palliatives or reforms, can not be considered Socialist activity, and the adherents and votes obtained thereby can not be considered class-conscious adherents or votes. The Socialist aim must, in consequence, be jealously guarded and kept intact by the Socialist movement, and can not be sacrificed to the aspirations of political quacks or charlatans. The question what organic form is this economic power, this proletarian class-consciousness, to take on in its battle against the economic power of the capitalist class is now in order, and will be treated in as detailed a form as the limited space at our disposal permits.

As an introduction to this phase of Constructive Socialism, we desire to affirm the importance and necessity of utilizing both wings at the disposal of the proletariat—of the workers practising political as well as industrial action in the conduction of the class war. Admitting the imperativeness of both, it now remains to establish the function of each

and to estimate their relative importance in preparing for and carrying out that act of emancipation.

We will first examine the function played by politics in the class struggle. It is now generally recognized that the existence of a political struggle presupposes the existence of an economic struggle: i.e., that political differences and antagonisms have their origin in economic differences, etc. Therefore, every political struggle is fundamentally an economic struggle; and the eradication of the industrial struggle of the classes spells, consequently, the eradication of politics. The existence of political parties and a political life in general is based upon the existence of classes which again have their roots in the peculiar property prerogatives and relations inherent in the economic system of a particular historical period. With the disappearance of economic classes, social and political classes will also disappear. Therefore, as stated before, the abolition of all property prerogatives in economic life by the Socialist workers also implies the abolition of all political differences and the automatic ceasing of the political struggle. The political struggle, as carried on by the class-conscious workers and pursuing but one objective, can, therefore, be utilized and exploited by the proletariat for only one purpose, namely: to abolish Capitalism. By using the political arm in this manner, the political victory of the workers will, naturally, be synonymous with the abolition of classes—the abolition of politics. Thus the political struggle is engaged in by the workers to carry on revolutionary Socialist propaganda. This struggle has, however, purely a destructive function, because a general political victory of Socialism spells the downfall of political government and the advent of the Industrial Republic, a society without classes and political antagonisms. The possibility of such a decisive Socialist victory

however, presupposes the existence of certain industrial organizations of the proletariat, necessary, first, to impart power to the political demand, and, secondly, to *perform the act of socialization*. This leads us to the function played by industrial action in the class struggle.

We know that the economic power of the workers rests in the consciousness of their economic indispensability as productive agents. To organize this economic indispensability at the point of production *along class-conscious lines and in accord with the dictates of modern economic evolution* is, as already stated before, an urgent requirement of the hour, and on par with generating and accumulating proletarian economic vitality. Class-conscious Socialist organization at the point of production, that is, in the industries, is, however, essential for a twofold reason, and must be accomplished in a definite way.

In the first place, such an organization or Socialist Industrial Union is an organized expression of proletarian class-consciousness in a certain industry. This organized expression announces to society that the productive facilities of this particular industry are not only socially operated, but also in control of Socialist workers, who are only waiting for the signal to supplement social production with social ownership. Of course, the form of such an organization must also be in accord with the requirements of economic evolution, and, being the product of *class-conscious workers*, is bound to be in line with a scientific conception of capitalist production. Such a conception clearly shows the insufficiency and antiquatedness of the craft form of unionism, a form absolutely out of joint with the highly centralized character of capitalist industry. The Historical Materialist, and every scientific Socialist is a Historical Materialist, constructs and adapts his organization to meet the demands of social requirements. He studies economic and

social conditions with a view of employing the knowledge gained therefrom to improve the position of the working-class in its fight for emancipation. Therefore, when the Historical Materialist emphasizes the necessity of organizing the workers along the lines of Socialist Industrial Unionism, his plea is pivoted upon certain sound perceptions. The reason for the distinct class character underlying and sharply distinguishing every truly revolutionary type of proletarian organization from all other types has been sufficiently underscored, and, therefore, need not be dwelled upon any more. What must now be shown is the necessity for this particular form of unionism: the necessity for Industrial Unionism.

Industrial Unionism, like all previous forms of economic organization which preceded it, is but a product of the particular stage in the development of the economic conditions or industries from which it emanated. The complex and centralized form of production, which gave birth to Industrial Unionism, can again, on the one hand, be attributed to the concentration of wealth into ever fewer hands, and, on the other, to an ever increasing social character inherent in the machines or instruments of production. The competitive struggle with its process of elimination, and the discoveries and inventions on the field of mechanical and economic endeavor are responsible for the highly corporate and at times monopolistic character of industries, and have given the death blow to small production and also every form of craft organization bound up therewith. Industrial Unionism is, therefore, but a reflex of industrialized (understand highly centralized) capitalist production, and as such only an obedient servant of economic evolution. Therefore, to expect proletarian class-consciousness to assume any other form of organic expression on the industrial field than that of Industrial Unionism

would be to expect the impossible to be possible, or the sharp observers to be blind.

The Socialist Industrial Union, as the organized expression of proletarian economic indispensability on the industrial field, fulfills two functions in the present struggle. Aside from waging the everyday struggle of the workers against exploitation, a struggle that is waged distinctly with the view of abolishing exploitation, and which is, similar to the Socialist political struggle, purely destructive, the Socialist Industrial Union also performs a constructive function of great importance. This constructive function consists in organizing the productive faculties of the workers not only in line with the requirements of highly socialized capitalist production, but also in line with the requirements of Socialist production in the making. It is an axiom of Historical Materialism that the shell of every new society develops within the womb of the old. We also know that the social elements in capitalist production symbolize the formative stages of a new economic order. However, a class-conscious organization along the lines of highly centralized social production, and truly manifesting the economic power of the workers, does more than give social expression to these formative stages—it really symbolizes the future structure of the Industrial Republic in the process of formation. Therefore, in the same proportion as the Socialist Industrial Union movement develops and gains in influence, the economic and political power of the capitalist class diminishes, and the economic and political power of the workers increases. The growth of the Socialist Industrial Union Movement signifies the ever earlier approaching destruction of capitalist production on the one hand, and the ever more efficient organization of Socialist production on the other. Upon the economic

power vested within the Socialist Industrial Union, historical evolution has, consequently, conferred two duties: the first, to stand as the organized economic might behind the revolutionary objective of the proletariat—to serve as the buckler and sword of the social revolution; the second, to insure and organize the fruits of the revolution—to take and hold the industries in the interests of the Industrial Republic. In the first capacity, it serves as the agent and executor of the Socialist political party, and in the second it functions as the organized productive administration of the Industrial Republic.

In concluding, we wish to again emphasize that the economic and social might of the proletariat does not rest in a certain *form of economic organization*, as for instance Industrial Unionism; furthermore, that the structural or organic phases can never impart power to an organization; but that this economic might is lodged in the class-consciousness of the workers; however, that this class-consciousness can only be derived from a Socialist conception of Capitalism which again imparts to the workers the Constructive Elements of Socialism, clearly outlining the functions of revolutionary Socialist political action and Socialist Industrial Unionism. In consequence, a worker can be an Industrial Unionist without being a Socialist, but not a Socialist without being an Industrial Unionist. Industrial Unionism to be effective, and to have the historic significance accorded to it above, must, therefore, be squarely planted upon Socialist principles, and be vitalized by the dynamic forces of class-consciousness.

The advocacy of uncompromising Socialist principles is, in consequence, a fundamental demand for all Socialist agitation. Such Socialist propaganda can only revolve around one demand—Socialism,

fighting and repudiating all other agitation and principles as reactionary or capitalistic.

In the following chapter we will endeavor to take up the organic phases of Socialist Industrial Unionism.

V.

The immediate goal of the trades unions is confined to the necessary daily struggles between capital and labor as a means of repulsing the increasing usurpations of capital, i. e., it is confined to the question of wages and hours. This activity of the unions is not only permissible, *but also indispensable as long as the present system exists.* Moreover, this activity must be generalized through the establishment and consolidation of economic organizations (Gewerkschaften) in all countries.

On the other side, the economic organizations have become, without being conscious of it, *the focus of organization for the working class*; performing the same function as the mediaeval municipalities and communities for the bourgeoisie. If the economic organizations are indispensable to the daily guerrilla war between capital and labor, *they are far more important as an organized means to advance the abolition of the system of wage-slavery itself.* (Underscoring ours.)

—From a Resolution prepared by Karl Marx and adopted at the Congress of the International Workmen's Association at Geneva, 1866.

AFTER having ascertained the seat of proletarian power in the organized class-consciousness at the point of production, and also after having defined the functions of the political and economic organizations of the proletariat in the so-called every-day struggle—a struggle which we only conceive as part of the great historical class conflict—we believe it is opportune to place an essay, dealing with the purely organic phase of Industrial Unionism, before the readers. How does the Socialist Industrial Union organize the workers; and in what manner does this form of organization differ from that of the Craft Unions and so-called bastard types of Industrial Unions? These questions will now instinctively crop up, and

their proper answer will furnish the material for the article just referred to.

The Industrial Unions, like all organizations in society, whether of capitalists or workers matters not, are a product of certain economic conditions. Just as the Guilds or Craft Unions emanated from a certain phase of capitalist development, and exhaled the spirit of a definite historic epoch, so the Industrial Union is also the child of a certain stage in capitalist production, and organizes in conformity with a definite class psychology and class-consciousness, elements which again are projected by a certain epoch in the development of Capitalism. Every historical epoch produces its social institutions absolutely in conformity or accord with the economic requirements of the times. This fundamental precept also applies to the organizations of the workers.

As we are aware, the Industrial Union is a fruit of full-fledged capitalist production—a production concentrated and centralized to its highest possible potentialities. The small semi-patriarchal production in the first stages of Capitalism, also created similar Guild organizations amongst journeymen, artisans, etc.; and the more or less developed craft establishments and associations of a later period amongst the masters, again gave birth to Craft Unions of the workers; the same as the centralization and trustification in the craft interests of Capital upon a national and international scale led to a similar centralization and amalgamation of the of the workers' craft organizations; and in a like manner will the welding of the innumerable craft interests of the bourgeoisie into gigantic industrial units, the consolidation and organization of the craft organizations amongst the capitalists into homogeneous industries, exercise an irresistible influence upon the workers, finally actuating and compelling them to follow suit. The Craft Unions

of the workers must and will amalgamate into compact Industrial Unions. This is a dictate flowing from social development, and the instinct of self-preservation slumbering in all human beings will see to it that it is recognized and executed.

In the period of, relatively considered, small production, when the craft psychology and craft interests still dominated the capitalists; when every productive function was performed independent of the other; in the good old times, when every capitalist manufactured a distinct product, and such colossal manifestations as a steel trust, food trust, transportation trust or an oligarchy of high finance were still unknown, the craft organization was in place; but now, in the period of a slowly developing international Capitalism, with an oligarchy of finance preparing to dominate the globe, craft organization on the part of the workers is not only inefficient, but also an abnormality—a remnant of a past phase in evolution.

To what extent the craft psychology still dominates the labor movement today, we can ascertain when contemplating upon the following: Productivity in present society can be divided into six large industries, or, in the sense of Industrial Unionism, classified into the following six departments.

1. The Department of Agriculture, Land, Fisheries and Water Products.

2. The Department of Mining.

3. The Department of Transportation and Communication.

4. The Department of Manufacture and General Production.

5. The Department of Construction.

6. The Department of Public Service.

These six divisions or departments, grouped together or organized into one great unit, form the basis of our whole economic life. Therefore, six

basic productive powers, or six general economic branches, unite in themselves all the economic functions of our so manifold and "complicated" industrial life. Of course, these departments are again divided into certain sub-divisions like, for instance, the Department of Manufacture and General Production, which contains seven of such subdivisions. However, all these varied subsidiary branches run into one of the six basic Industrial Departments, which again are only integral parts of one big organism. The revolutionary effects of this modern and competent principle of organization, effects which in their very nature are bound to be profound and far reaching, have, strange to say, seemingly left the American Federation of Labor absolutely immune. As we glean from the American Labor Year Book, the American Federation of Labor, in 1917, consisted of 111 national and international Craft Unions and five so-called departments. These departments, however, are not organized along the principles of Industrial Unionism, but represent nothing else than a higher developed form of the Craft Union principle, which has amalgamated certain Craft Unions into a department, not because they jointly produce the same product, but because they jointly work upon or consume the same raw material. However, we must not overlook, the A. F. of L., the largest labor organization in America, still consisted in 1917 of 111 national and international Craft Unions which were only loosely federated or organically consolidated with each other; and that the 111 craft interests were again split into 26,761 local craft organizations, with as many local craft interests. In other words: Here we perceive 111 autonomous, i.e., independent Craft Unions, eagerly guarding 111 craft interests, that probably enter into 111 different contracts, expiring at 111 different dates with the capitalists, and which again give birth and

inaugurate 111 different or separate strikes at 111 different periods against the six closely amalgamated basic economic interests of the exploiters; and these advocates of a fossilized Unionism are keenly surprised, when they are also thoroughly trounced or beaten on 111 different occasions. The A. F. of L., consequently, furnishes a classical example of a method of organization as it could not have been more efficiently conceived in the period of capitalist craft interests, which, however, appears antiquated and actually suicidal when compared with the highly developed and perfectly centralized industrial unity of modern Capitalism. When we compare the weapons of the A. F. of L. with the ones of the capitalist oligarchy, the tragic example of the wild tribes, which thought of vanquishing the modern equipped regiments of "civilization" with the bow and arrow, enters into our minds.

In contradistinction to the antiquated and unscientific principle of craft-simplicity, Industrial Unionism does not organize the workers along the lines of their specific craft, not according to the tool they happen to be using or the quality of material they are working upon, but according to the character of the products they are creating, i.e., according to the output of the industry in which they are engaged.

As an example let us compare the methods employed by Craft Unionism with those of Industrial Unionism in the organization of a printery. The A. F. of L. would organize a modern printing plant in the following manner: The linotype operators would be organized in the International Typographical Union; the printers and pressmen would become members of the International Printing Pressmen's and Assistant's Union of North America; the bookbinders would affiliate with the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders; the photographers would have to join the International Photo En-

gravers' Union of North America; the stereotypers would be claimed by the International Stereotypers and Electrotypers Union of North America, and the lithographers organized by the International Lithographers Protective and Beneficial Association of the United States and Canada. For the journalists and editors, the A. F. of L. has as yet provided no organization, however, they would have to establish an International Association of Editors and Journalists. The machinists employed in a printery would have to become members of the International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers; the firemen again would affiliate with the International Brotherhood of Stationary Firemen; the electricians would be organized into the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers of America; the bookkeepers and office workers will be claimed by the Bookkeepers and Accountants Unions; and the janitors would have to join the House Superintendents' and Janitors' Union. And thus we have represented in a printery, which through the co-operative production of the above mentioned crafts, turns out a certain product, namely—printed matter, luckily twelve different craft organizations, with twelve different trade agreements. And then certain Socialists are surprised, if no unified homogeneous feeling of solidarity and class-consciousness takes root and develops in the organizations affiliated with the A. F. of L. However, this reactionary form of organization is absolutely in accord with the still more reactionary principle of harmony between Capital and Labor, so strenuously advocated by this so-called labor union, and with which it seeks to stifle the class-consciousness awakened and reared in the workers by the inexorable effects of social conditions. The reactionary spirit of these advocates of Craft Unionism is most convincingly symbolized in their vigorous struggle against Socialism and the

Socialist movement; a struggle carried on in the face of the recognized and accepted tenet: That where no class solidarity is able to sprout out of Socialist class-consciousness, also no all-embracing class organization can make headway, flourish and develop.

The Industrial Union would organize a printery in the following manner: First, the printing industry is a sub-division of the Department for Manufacture and General Production. This sub-division or subsidiary department organizes and embraces all workers who are directly or indirectly engaged in the production of printed matter. Not to forget: **THE PRODUCT FURNISHES THE BASIS OF ORGANIZATION.** This sub-division is again constituted out of so-called Local Industrial Unions. In their respective Local Industrial Union all the workers employed in a printery are organized, forming an integral part of the local organization constituted of various Local Industrial Unions embracing all industries in a given locality. Consequently, the Local Industrial Union of workers employed in a printery would organize all of the above mentioned twelve crafts like typesetters, printers and pressmen, bookbinders, photographers, stereotypers, lithographers, journalists and editors, machinists, firemen, electricians, bookkeepers and clerks and janitors into **ONE** compact organization with one class interest and one method of warfare. This Local Industrial Union, embracing the whole printing industry of a locality, can of course, divide itself into as many local sub-divisions or branches as the demands or peculiar conditions of a specific industry may require. The organizations of these branches or sub-divisions in the Local Industrial Union are, as stated before, determined by craft peculiarities. For instance, in the Local Industrial Union of the printing industry, the twelve crafts

enumerated above could be organized as twelve separate branches of the Local Industrial Union, without being at all exposed to the disintegrating effects of the A. F. of L. pure and simple. As twelve craft branches, they are only organs or parts of a whole—the Local Industrial Union of Printing Workers; and this Local Industrial Union is a member of the National Industrial Union, which again is a sub-division of a certain industrial department, which joins, with the other industrial divisions, into One Big International Industrial Union comprising the class-conscious wage workers of the world.

In order to encourage harmonious and conscious organization amongst all the workers in a certain locality, and also in order to be in steady contact with all industries, Local District Councils, which consist of delegates from all the Local Industrial Unions, functioning in and embracing the most variegated industries of a locality, are organized and chartered and attached to General Headquarters.

As we will be able to perceive from the foregoing, Industrial Unionism in no way curbs the workers' craft independence. A typesetter can, as a member of the typesetters' branch of a Local Industrial Union of Printing Workers, confer with his colleagues over the details of the typographical industry as in the good old days. What, however, will no longer be tolerated is that the interests of a particular craft are placed above those of an industry. The interests of the Industrial Union, in this case the interests of all workers in a printery, are the dominating ones. Here the august maxim is applied: **ALL FOR ONE AND ONE FOR ALL.** The picayune and egotistical craft interests must here submit to the general interests of all industrial workers. That is the reason why it

would be an impossibility for a set of labor aristocrats in a printery, organized upon the principles of Industrial Unionism, to steadily reduce the work day and continually achieve higher wages and less work for themselves, but to calmly witness how workers in the editorial and business offices, machine rooms, etc., of the same industry are compelled to continue to labor under the old, if not deteriorated conditions. The Socialist Industrial Union is the greatest enemy of that small, mercenary spirit bred by craft egotism. The organic form of Socialist Industrial Unions fully dovetails with the Socialist conception of class ethics, which has its origin in the recognition of that truism that the emancipation of the working class must be the work of the workers themselves. That is why the Socialist Industrial Union has inscribed "An Injury to One is an Injury to All" upon its banner.

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