Are There Classes in America?

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"The whole history of mankind (since the dissolution of primitive tribal society, holding land in common ownership) has been a history of class struggles, contests between exploiters and exploited, ruling and oppressed classes. The history of these class struggles forms a series of evolution in which, nowadays, a stage has been reached where the exploited and oppressed class—the proletariat—cannot attain its emancipation from the sway of the exploiting and ruling class—the bourgeoisie—without, at the same time, and once and for all, emancipating society at large from all exploitation, oppression, class distinctions and class struggles."—Communist Manifesto.

"The struggle of the working class against capitalist exploitation must of necessity be a political struggle. The working class cannot fight its economic battles nor develop its economic organization unless it possesses political rights. It cannot bring about the transference of the instruments of production into the hands of society unless it has obtained political power."—Erfurter Program.
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I. A REVIEW OF PAST CLASS STRUGGLES.

PRIMITIVE SOCIETY.

When in the childhood of the race people lived by hunting and by fishing, there were no classes, and consequently no class struggles. There existed almost complete social and economic equality. Prisoners taken in battle were never enslaved—they were either adopted into the tribe, or killed. When food was scarce they were sometimes eaten.

The reason is obvious. As long as hunting and fishing were the only means of making a livelihood, slavery was economically impossible. The jungles were not policed, and a slave sent out hunting would more than likely not have returned.

SLAVERY.

In the course of time man—or to be exact, woman—learned to cultivate the soil and to domesticate animals. Slavery now became not only possible, but also profitable. Instead of merely making a meal out of a prisoner by putting him to death, the captors proceeded to make a meal ticket out of him by putting him to work. A slave, if he worked hard enough, could keep himself, and still contribute to the support of his master and his master’s family. If one possessed a sufficient number of slaves, he could give up work—or at least unpleasant and burdensome work—altogether, and devote himself to the pursuits he liked, or live a wholly parasitical existence.

The keeping of slaves became, therefore, exceedingly popular in ancient society. In Greece at a certain period there is said to have been thirteen slaves to every free man; in Rome, in the days of Lucullus, slaves became so numerous that they sold for about seventy-five cents a head.

SLAVERY AND PHILOSOPHY.

The Greek philosophers, Plato and Aristotle, regarded slavery as necessary to the progress of society. Plato in his “Republic,” a picture of an ideal society, made slavery a part of the scheme of that society. Both these philosophers took the
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view-point that without slavery progress would cease, inasmuch as all men would have to devote themselves to the production of the necessities of life and no one would have leisure to practice the arts and sciences. The overwork of the many made possible the expansion of the few. Aristotle, however, foresaw the time when mechanical devices would take the place of bone and muscle, making it possible for all to enjoy life and leisure.

CLASS DIVISIONS.

No argument is required to show that the introduction of slavery meant the introduction of caste and class. The slave and the slave owner did not belong to the same class. They were not social equals. They did not pass their time in each others' society; they did not live in the same kind of houses; they did not eat the same kind of food; they did not wear the same kind of clothing; the daughter of the slave owner did not marry the son of the slave; nor did the daughter of the slave marry the son of the slave owner. The slave and the slave owner did not have equal rights; neither did they possess equal opportunities.

The interests of the slave and the slave owner were not identical, except in a very limited sense. A certain amount of prosperity enjoyed by the slave owner might perhaps have meant a somewhat better existence for the slave—although even that is doubtful. Essentially, however, their interests were strictly antagonistic. The prime interest of such slaves as had awakened to the injustice and ignominy of their position was to break the shackles of their slavery; the prime interest of the slave owning class was to keep the slaves in subjection.

EARLY CLASS STRUGGLES.

The slaves—who were the real proletariat of the Roman empire—did not possess any peaceful and legal means of bettering their condition. The only way open to them was violent rebellion. Several such rebellions are recorded in Roman history. During one of these, under the leadership of Eunus, twenty thousand slaves are said to have been nailed upon crosses planted along the highways of Rome, and subsequently set fire to.

These blazing human torches, together with millions of other torn and bleeding bodies of the workers, mark the progress of mankind along the road to freedom, which is the road of the class struggle.
Feudalism.

Out of the chaos following the fall of the Roman empire emerged another system known as Feudalism. The chiefs selected by the peasantry, at first vested with very limited power, gradually arrogated to themselves greater and greater mastery over their fellows, until at last they reduced the peasantry to serfs and vassals, who were compelled to pay them tribute. These chiefs, together with conquering invaders, formed a new exploiting class—the feudal nobility.

The tribute paid to the chief had at first been small and voluntary. Its purpose was to enable the chief to make proper preparation for the defense of the peasantry. When the tribute became compulsory its amount increased, until at last it stripped the peasantry of everything except a bare existence. The tribute was usually in the form of labor; the free peasant as well as the serf was compelled to work a certain number of days for the lord. In the beginning this was sometimes as low as three days a year; later on three days a week was not uncommon.

If we compare feudalism with slavery we see that essentially they are very similar, i.e., they are similar in their effect upon the workers and in the benefits they bring to the masters. The slave was compelled to work all the time for the master; the master, however, was compelled to return to the slave part of the slave's product in the form of food, clothing and shelter. If the master had neglected to do so he would have killed the goose that laid the golden eggs—the slave would have perished. The serf or vassal was allowed to work part of the time for himself, but that part barely sufficed to keep himself and his family from starving. In both cases all that was produced over and above a bare existence went to the masters.

The Bourgeoisie.

When Europe became pacified the feudal nobility, no longer being needed for the constant defense of the peasants, lost its usefulness. At this time, between the serfs and peasants on one side, and the feudal nobility on the other side, there sprang up a new class—the bourgeoisie, or capitalist class. This class, at first largely composed of merchants and money-lenders, afterwards of manufacturers and machine owners, began to contend for mastery with the nobility. For centuries war was waged between these two classes.
In its struggles against the nobility the bourgeoisie was aided by the workers. In order to secure the help of the workers the bourgeoisie made golden promises of a paradise on earth that would be inaugurated under its reign. Words like liberty, equality, fraternity, were freely bandied about by the bourgeoisie of all countries. How these promises have been carried out, the workers of today can judge for themselves.

It is impossible to take up in detail the class war between the bourgeoisie and the nobility. It would lead us to a review of the entire history of that period. For our present purpose, which is principally to make plain the present day class struggle between the workers and the capitalists, it will suffice to say that in nearly every case the bourgeoisie was victorious. In France the nobility was completely routed and almost exterminated during the so-called Great Revolution. In Germany the nobility was finally overthrown during the middle of the nineteenth century. In England the bourgeoisie assumed power more gradually by a series of compromises. In the United States the Revolutionary War freed the hands of the capitalists. In Russia the nobility, although deprived of many of its former prerogatives, is still in the saddle.

**The Wage System.**

The wage system, the system under which we are living today, has its roots in feudal society.* It flourished side by side with serfdom, and even slavery, but received its great impetus in the second half of the eighteenth century when the invention of machinery revolutionized industry.

The wage system as we find it in the middle ages, except during the time when the guilds were strongest, is free from many of the objectionable features which characterize it today. A master-craftsman would employ a few men to help him at his work, of course expecting to make a profit from their labor; yet the master-craftsman and his apprentices can hardly be said to have belonged to different social classes. The men who worked for wages in those days were as a rule young men who hired out mainly for the purpose of learning a trade. They generally owned their own tools, which were simple and inexpensive, and often traveled from town to town to learn the fine points of the trade as practiced in different localities. After a certain number of years the apprentice would become a master. 

*The soldier is said to have been the first wage worker.*
workman and a member of the guild. He would then start in business for himself and become in his turn an employer.

**The Industrial Revolution.**

The invention of machinery changed all this. Machinery was costly and could be bought only by a few. The owners of machinery were soon able to crowd the hand workers out of the market for the simple reason that they could produce more cheaply. There remained nothing for the hand workers to do except discard their tools and hire out to machine owners.

This transformation was not brought about without a violent protest and a great deal of suffering. Attempts were made to prohibit legally the use of machinery. In some cases the workers took the law into their own hands and started to burn the factories. In the end, however, the machine won and the modern proletariat was born.

**The Proletariat.**

The proletarian of today differs from the wage worker of the feudal system in that while the former in almost every case looked forward to the time when he himself would become an independent producer, the worker of today has little or no chance ever to achieve independence. What little chance still remains is constantly diminishing as machinery becomes more costly and industry is run upon an ever larger scale.

The wage worker of today is also more exploited than was his predecessor, and that in spite of the fact that his standard of living is probably higher. This at first glance may seem contradictory, but it should be remembered that the wage worker of the past, working with simple hand tools, produced but little in comparison with the output of the modern wage worker using up-to-date machinery. So while labor's wage may be larger in the absolute, it is a smaller part of labor's product than the worker ever received. "The rate of exploitation" is, therefore, greater, and the chasm between the working class and the exploiting class deeper and wider. As one writer puts it, "Wages have increased on foot, profits have increased by limited express."

The wages of the American worker are somewhat higher than those of his European brother, but are not commensurate with the greater value of the American worker's product. In fact, American labor receives a smaller part of the value of its product than even Chinese labor receives. The Chinese laborer,
working with the simple hand tools, still commonly used in that
country, produces about twenty-five cents' worth of things a
day; his wages are about ten cents a day. The American work-
ingman produces about ten dollars' worth of things a day; his
wages are about two dollars a day. Out of every twenty-five
cents' worth of things that the Chinese workingman produces he,
therefore, receives a DIME; out of every twenty-five cents' 
worth of things that the American workingman produces he 
receives a NICKEL! Viewed in relation to its product Amer-
ican labor is about the cheapest and most exploited labor on 
esth.

II. THE CLASS STRUGGLE OF TODAY.

Are There Classes In America?

In spite of what has just been said, the average defender of 
capitalism in America will deny that there are classes in the 
United States. He will contend that in this country there is 
still plenty of opportunity for the industrious and ambitious 
worker to become a capitalist. In proof of this he will "point 
with pride" to men like Schwab, Archbold or Carnegie, who have 
risen from the ranks of the workers into the upper strata of 
the capitalist class.

This misconception has its foundation in the swift and al-
most miraculous development of the United States from a back-
woods country into the first industrial nation on earth. This 
development has been so rapid that human thought has not been 
able to keep up with it, and the average American seems in-
capable of realizing that conditions which existed a generation 
or two ago have long since ceased to exist.

Changed Conditions.

We do not have to go back very far in American history 
before we come upon a time when men of pluck and energy, 
who were not too scrupulous about the means employed, could 
make an easy fortune. Even those who lacked the peculiar ability 
necessary to make money, could withdraw from exploitation by 
moving West and taking up fertile government land, or, if 
they were more venturesome, try their luck at prospecting in the 
almost unexplored mountains.
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How different are conditions today! The land still open to the homesteader is of such character as to justify the remark of the Irishman who, when asked what a homestead was, answered that it was a bet in which Uncle Sam bet the homesteader one hundred and sixty acres of land against fourteen dollars registration fee that he, the homesteader, could not live six months on it without starving to death. Nor is prospecting more remunerative. The hills and mountains have been crossed and recrossed; bored and sounded; explored and analyzed by engineers employed by vast corporations or by the United States government. Wherever such land has shown promise of yielding up treasure it has usually been pre-empted by corporations, or the mineral rights have been reserved by the government.

The outlook for the "shrewd" man, who might perhaps have held his own against the original "captains of industry" had he had the good luck to be born at the right time, is hardly more favorable. The vast fortunes in the United States have been made, as even a superficial student might easily ascertain for himself, by robbing the public domain, or by obtaining control of some important public necessity. The valuable timber has nearly all been stolen, and the government will not allow any further encroachments upon the timber reserves—except by those who control the government. The same is true of water power, and the rich coal, oil, gas and ore deposits. Millions of acres of land, together with sufficient money to build the railroads, were given to railroad promoters to enable them to build the railroads for us, and they use the power thus acquired to keep others from obtaining like privileges. Big trusts control every necessity of life as well as the sources of credit, and it would be utterly impossible for anyone, no matter how shrewd, to compete successfully against them. To sum up the situation: There is but one world, and if some one else owns it you can't get another one no matter how you hustle. The "shrewd" man of today must content himself with becoming a common criminal instead of a "captain of industry."

The American workingman had better make up his mind that being a member of the wage earning class, there is practically no hope for him ever to rise out of that class individually, either by fair means or foul. If the workers rise, they will rise together.
It is, of course, to the interest of the capitalist class to make the worker believe that the door of opportunity is not closed to him, and that he still has as good a chance as ever to become a capitalist and employer.

Napoleon, in order to insure the faithfulness of his soldiers, used to tell them that every soldier had a marshal's baton in his knapsack, and occasionally promoted a soldier to some high rank in order to keep the illusion alive. Although probably not one in a hundred thousand soldiers ever reached the rank of marshal, yet because of that illusion no army was ever more faithful.

A similar illusion is responsible for the docility of the working class of America. The average workingman who talks, votes, and even fights for the maintenance of the capitalist system, does not in reality like that system any better than do we of the Socialist party. He no more enjoys being fleeced than does the Socialist. But he reasons somewhat along these lines: “I am being fleeced, of course, but perhaps if the system lasts a while longer, I may get a chance some day to fleece other working people, for in this glorious country of ours every man has a right to fleece every other man provided he sees a chance to do so within the limits of the law—unless he’s big enough and powerful enough to break the law.”

To this we of the Socialist party reply: *What is the use of watching and hoping for a chance to ride on each others' backs, while the capitalists ride on our backs in the meantime? We propose to abolish the back riding system altogether, and although in that case some of us will miss the luxury of riding yet at the same time the rest of us will escape the misery of being ridden.*

**The Classes.**

Having established the fact that it is almost impossible for a wage worker to become a capitalist, we have at the same time established the fact that there are classes in America. The workingman and the capitalist do not belong to the same social class. There is no social intercourse between them except at Civic Federation banquets. Capitalists and workingmen do not live in the same kind of houses; they do not wear the same kind of clothes; they do not eat the same kind of food; the daughter of the workingman does not as a rule marry the son of a capitalist,
or vice versa. When such a mesalliance does take place the occurrence is so unusual as to furnish material for front page articles in the newspapers for days. Workingmen and capitalists do not have equal opportunities, and while they are supposed to have equal rights, they do not possess equal resources to maintain these rights.

**THE DIVIDING LINE.**

But, I am asked, where is the dividing line to be drawn between the workers and the capitalists? In many instances the capitalist is also a worker, while the worker may be the owner of a small amount of capital, as, for example, a bank account, I admit that the line cannot be definitely drawn; but this by no means excludes the existence of classes, no more than the impossibility of stating the exact hour and minute when day ends and night begins does away with the fact that there is a day and that there is a night.

The classes may be said to shade into each other. There are workingmen who have a little capital, just as there are capitalists who do a little work, but there is a capitalist class and a working class whose condition and mode of life are as different as if they belonged to different planets. As a general rule it may be said that a man belongs to the working class when he lives *largely* or *entirely* on the income derived from the sale of his labor power, while a man belongs to the capitalist class when he lives *largely* or *entirely* on the income derived from his capital. The workingman with a few hundred dollars in the bank would hardly be able to stop working and live off the income from his capital; the capitalist, however, who is in the habit of spending a few hours in his office, could in most cases quit work altogether and yet live in luxury. It is, as a matter of fact, more and more becoming the custom, especially among the younger generation of capitalists, to delegate all work to employes and spend their own lives in the mad pursuit of pleasure.

**MANUAL AND BRAIN WORKERS.**

It is, of course, understood that by *working class* I do not mean manual laborers only, but all those who live by the sale of their labor power, be it mental or manual. It would be extremely hard to determine which labor is mental and which is manual. I know that it requires considerably more ingenuity to lay bricks or build a sewer than to add up figures on an adding machine,
yet the latter kind of labor is usually considered among the mental employments.

Store clerks and office help, as well as the intellectual proletariat, such as teachers, doctors, lawyers, artists, etc., often resent being classed with such rude fellows as miners and factory workers. They seem to imagine that their clothes, or their education, or both, entitle them to some higher classification, make them in fact "little brothers" of the capitalists. It is no doubt because of this idle conceit that teachers, and store and office help, especially in the smaller towns and cities, have shown little tendency towards organization, and as a result their wages have dropped lower than those of the average skilled mechanic.

THE MIDDLE CLASS.

We must give some attention to the middle class. To this class belong small merchants, manufacturers, farmers, store-keepers, etc. Many of the individuals belonging to this class are purely parasitical, and although they work, their work is often unnecessary and may even be distinctly detrimental to society. The Socialists contend that the greater part of this class is bound to disappear even before the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth.

That the small farmer is doomed has recently been established by an extensive survey made by Cornell University, which survey conclusively proved that the small farmer cannot hold his own in competition with the modern factory farm, and that the larger the farm the cheaper it is to operate. The plight of the small manufacturer is too well known to need comment, and of the store-keepers about 90 per cent fail in business. These latter have already lost nearly all independent existence, and have been reduced to the position of piece workers for the trusts, who set the prices of commodities and allow the store-keeper a few cents on every sale. Of late years the trusts have themselves entered the retail field—witness the chains of stores belonging to the American Tobacco Company, the Woolworth five and ten cent stores, the Childs' stores and restaurants, and numerous others, who, together with the big mail order houses, make the life of the store-keeper miserable. The middle class will be put out of existence, and that not by the Socialists, whom so many of that class ignorantly fear, but by the capitalists, upon whose side this class, organized into Citizens' Alliances, has so often ranged itself in the class war.
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Is There A Class Struggle?

The contention that there are classes in America needs, I think, no further argument. The question now arises whether there is a struggle taking place between the two principal classes—the working class and the capitalist class.

To prove that such a struggle exists, especially to a member of the working class, is about as necessary as to prove to a prize fighter in the ring that he is participating in a fight, or to a soldier in the heat of battle that he is engaged in warfare. There is not a day that the newspapers do not chronicle some phase of the class struggle—some terrible strike broken out in some part of the world or nation; the calling out of militia to suppress strikers; the jailing of labor leaders; the issuing of injunctions against labor unions, and all the other evidences of industrial strife.

We of the Socialist party do not share the pessimistic view of many would-be reformers in regard to this struggle. In fact we consider it one of the most hopeful signs in capitalist society. The most pitiful of all human beings is a slave satisfied to remain a slave. May the day never dawn when the working class will cease to struggle and will supinely submit to the exploitation of the masters! We fully agree with the sentiment of Wendell Phillips, “A slave I pity; a rebellious slave I respect!” The hope of Socialism is in the fact that the rebellious slaves are getting more and more numerous, and that they are becoming more and more rebellious.

Why Is There A Class Struggle?

While it is easy enough to perceive that there is a class struggle, yet but a small part of the working people really understand the cause of that struggle. I shall endeavor to explain this cause with a homely illustration.

Let us suppose that Mrs. Smith is an excellent cook, but that unfortunately she does not possess a cook stove. Mrs. Jones, who lives across the street, knows nothing whatsoever about cooking, but she is the proud owner of an excellent kitchen range. Mrs. Smith goes to Mrs. Jones and says, “My dear Mrs. Jones, may I use your kitchen range?” Whereupon Mrs. Jones, being a nice and charitable person, answers, “Certainly, my dear Mrs. Smith, provided you will give me four-fifths of all you cook.” I venture to predict that Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Jones will cease to be on speaking terms, and that the neighborhood war will wax fast and furious.
Perhaps the mayor of the town, being somewhat of a re-
former, and wishing to have the best possible understanding
among the citizens, might say to Mrs. Jones, "My dear woman,
be satisfied with one-half of Mrs. Smith's cooking." Again he
might say to Mrs. Smith, "Give Mrs. Jones one-half of all you
cook for the use of her valuable kitchen range, and be at peace
with each other." I have my doubts, however, whether this
would permanently solve the problem. Mrs. Jones, being admit-
tedly prejudiced in favor of her husband and children, will want
to obtain all she can for them; Mrs. Smith, being but human, will
begrudge every morsel taken from her children's mouths in order
to satisfy the demands of Mrs. Jones.

The war between the working class and the capitalist class
is due to similar causes. The workers know how to work, but
they do not possess the means wherewith to labor. The capital-
ists, being nice and charitable, allow the workers to use these
means on condition that the workers turn over to them by far
the greater part of their product. This is all the more galling
to the enlightened worker inasmuch as he knows that the means
of production have been produced by the workers, and have be-
come the property of the capitalists only by unjust and frequently
unlawful methods.

It is in vain that one tries to arbitrate the differences be-
tween labor and capital. Such arbitration can be at best but
a temporary makeshift. Just as the neighborhood war between
Mrs. Jones and Mrs. Smith will never cease until Mrs. Smith
can cook her dinner on her own kitchen range, so the war be-
tween labor and capital will never cease until labor, through
society, employs itself in its own factories, mines and workshops.

IDENTITY OF INTERESTS.

There are labor leaders like Messrs. Gompers and Mitchell
who continue to assure us that the interests of labor and capital
are identical. A very small amount of reasoning will convince
one of the absurdity of this position.

Supposing one were to ask a crowd of working people
which they would prefer—a five dollar daily wage, or a dollar
one; a sixteen-hour work day, or an eight-hour one. How
many would be in favor of the low wages and the long hours?
Not one! On the other hand, if one were to put the same ques-
tion to a crowd of capitalists, how many would vote for five
dollars and an eight-hour work day? Only a philanthropically
inclined few, who think their profits would be big enough, even then.

A short time ago the directors of the United States Steel Corporation called the attention of the stockholders to the low wages and long hours of the steel trust employes, and asked if they were willing to grant better conditions. Out of fifteen thousand stockholders circularized, less than ninety declared themselves in favor of a change!

Here then is the situation in a nut shell: The workers, whether they call themselves Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, Progressives, or Prohibitionists, all want the same thing—as high wages and as short hours as they can possibly obtain. On the other hand the capitalists all, or nearly all, want as high dividends as possible. Whatever the workmen gain in improved conditions, the capitalists lose in dividends; whatever the capitalists gain in dividends, the workers lose in wages.

THE BURGLAR AND THE VICTIM.

Yet Mr. Gompers is not altogether wrong. Let us see:

A burglar once broke into a house and confronted the owner. He pointed a revolver at the man's head and said, "My dear sir, you ought to recognize the fact that there is an identity of interests between us. I am looking for your money, you know where it is, and it is just as much to your interest as it is to mine to have me find it." The householder asked for an explanation, which was immediately forthcoming. "You see," said the suave burglar, "our identity of interests consists in the fact that if I do not find money you will get your brains blown out. You need brains; I need money—Why not co-operate?"

The identity of interests between labor and capital is of a similar character. The capitalists say to the workers, "Unless you are tractable, and permit us to exploit you in a quiet and orderly manner, we will close up shop altogether, and you will have to starve. It is, therefore, to our mutual interest that you allow yourselves to be exploited without offering resistance."

CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS.

There are many people who admit the existence of classes and the struggle between the classes, but who assail the Socialists for trying to make the working people class conscious, and—as these critics claim—for advocating class hatred. In
their opinion every well-wisher of mankind should do his best to obliterate class lines instead of emphasizing them.

We do not deny that we are trying to make the workers class conscious; we are proud of our activity in this direction. We, too, desire to obliterate class lines, but only by abolishing class distinctions and class privileges, not by trying to make the workers forget that they are an exploited class. Our critics do not wish to abolish class privilege, but merely to allay the discontent of the workers which class privilege engenders. Instead of curing the disease they offer a narcotic to the sufferer.

What then is class consciousness? To be class conscious means to be conscious of the fact that there are classes; that one belongs to one of these classes; that in certain fundamental things the interests of all the individuals in each class are identical; that, furthermore, these interests can be best advanced by the concerted action of the members of each particular class.

Not to be class conscious means to be ignorant of the existence of class lines, or to betray the interests of one's own class for the sake of some individual gain.

The "scab" is not class conscious. This may be due to the fact that he is too ignorant to be aware of the existence of the class struggle and his own relation to that struggle, or so weak and selfish as to put his own immediate gain above the interest of his class.

The same is true of the worker who fails to support his class in its struggle to obtain control of the powers of government. This may be due—and in this case is nearly always due—to ignorance, but in some few cases it may be the deliberate treason to one's own class for the sake of some personal gain or aggrandizement.

Why the Capitalist Class Opposes Class Consciousness.

Of course, the capitalists and their friends do not wish the workers to become class conscious, and that with good reason. Eugene V. Debs once stated that there is only one power on earth that can defeat the working class—that power is the working class itself. The capitalists know this. They know that as long as they can hire workingmen and women to take the place of other workingmen and women who are struggling for better conditions, as long as they can hire workingmen to shoot down other workingmen, as long as they can persuade or bribe working people to put the candidates of the capitalist class into office,
their interests are entirely safe, but that the moment the workers become class conscious and act unitedly on the political and economic field, and neither threats, cajolery or bribe can persuade them to work against the interest of their class—that moment the capitalist system is doomed, and nothing can hold back the Co-operative Commonwealth.

**The Class Conscious Capitalist.**

The capitalists themselves have developed a very high degree of class consciousness. This is especially true of the big capitalists who have graduated from the industrial anarchy called competition.

When in 1905 the teamsters in Chicago struck in sympathy with the employes of the big mail order houses and department stores, the bankers' association of that city appropriated fifty thousand dollars to aid the employers. The newspapers of Chicago had a great deal to say at the time in condemnation of the class consciousness shown by the teamsters, but seemed to regard the class consciousness exhibited by the bankers as an act of patriotism.

When former Senator Patterson of Colorado in 1904 had the temerity to object in his paper, the Rocky Mountain News, to some of the atrocities perpetrated against the striking miners in that state, all the important business establishments in the city of Denver boycotted him by taking out their advertising and very nearly ruined his paper.

What would be the fate of your own local banker if during an industrial disturbance in your community he were to take the side of the workingmen? A "scab" pursued by indignant strike sympathizers would be a lucky individual indeed compared with that man, who would be hounded financially, socially, and otherwise by his class conscious fellow capitalists.

**International Class Consciousness.**

The class consciousness preached by the Socialists is international in character. We point out to the workers of all nations that their interests are common interests. Organization of industry on an international scale, and production for the world market, make international co-operation of the workers necessary if capital is to be successfully resisted. The international spirit is growing day by day, as is witnessed by the moral and financial
aid given to striking workers by workers of nations other than their own, the holding of international congresses, etc.

Thus we see that if class consciousness is, in a sense, schismatic in that it points out and emphasizes existing class differences between the workers and the capitalists, it is in a far greater sense unifying in that it points out and emphasizes the existing identity of interest between the workers of all nations.

It is interesting in this connection to compare class consciousness with national consciousness, so often degenerating into jingoism, and so warmly applauded by the defenders of capitalism.

Class consciousness emphasizes class differences, but at the same time it minimizes national differences. If it creates greater hostility between the classes, it certainly draws the nations together. National consciousness does the very opposite. It aims to obscure and blur over the real differences between class and class, but raises barriers between nation and nation. Class consciousness, therefore, divides the world into two great hostile camps, that of the workers and that of the capitalists. National consciousness divides the world into as many hostile camps as there are nations on the globe. Yet the first is condemned by our moral teachers as "vile," and "evil," the second is applauded as worthy and noble!

The reason for this is not far to seek. Class consciousness which points out to the worker his real enemy, the capitalist, and draws the workers together for the common struggle, is dangerous to capitalism and those who profit by it; national consciousness, which divides the workers and sets them to fighting each other while the capitalists reap the profits of war, is extremely advantageous to the capitalist class.

**Class Hatred.**

Class consciousness and class hatred are by no means synonymous. I can say without hesitation that a class conscious Socialist is far less likely to hate the capitalists as individuals than is the workingman who does not understand Socialism, and is consequently not class conscious.

The class conscious Socialist knowing, as he does, something of the philosophy of Socialism, understands that the capitalist system has developed out of Feudalism as a result of the constant and inevitable evolution of machinery and industry. Inasmuch as the capitalist system is a necessary stage of that evolution, the
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individual capitalist cannot be held responsible for the evils of that system.

The Socialist does not contend that the capitalists are all exceptionally bad and wicked men, while the workingmen are all kind and generous. The capitalists, partly through accident, partly because of the possession of certain characteristics which enabled them to win out under certain given conditions, have become the beneficiaries of the system instead of its victims. In all other respects capitalists and workingmen are very much alike. It is probably true that there are few workingmen who, if given a chance, and the peculiar ability necessary, would not make themselves masters over other men as the capitalists have done. I have often been confronted with the shallow criticism, "You would do the same as Rockefeller if you only knew how!" The point, however, is that we of the Socialist Party propose to change conditions so that no man will have a chance to become the economic master of other men. No man is good enough, noble enough, or great enough to be entrusted with the power which the capitalists possess as a result of their ownership of the means of production and distribution.

It has been frequently said that human nature would have to be changed in order to make Socialism possible. We, on the other hand, maintain that just because human nature is what it is, mankind needs Socialism. If Rockefeller were an angel, Carnegie an archangel, Hill a demigod, it might perhaps be reasonably safe to leave them in possession of their almost unheard of power, but just because they are fallible men, perhaps no more, but certainly no less selfish than the rest of us, their power must be taken from them just as the absolute power of kings was taken away for the same reason.

The class conscious Socialist furthermore realizes that labor can free itself whenever it learns to act unitedly. We have no reason to hate the capitalists for taking advantage of a system which the workers themselves believe in and help to maintain. We would not wish the capitalists to give us Socialism even if they felt inclined to do so. "The emancipation of labor must be the act of labor itself." We do not hate the capitalists for being our masters; we blame ourselves for remaining their slaves.
III. WEAPONS OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE.

There is a remarkable unity among Socialists in regard to the Socialist philosophy. It is concerning the weapons which it is desirable to use in the class war, and the relative importance of these weapons, that the opinions of Socialists differ. The views presented here are those of the vast majority of the Socialists of America and, I may say, of the International Socialist movement.

CLASS STRUGGLE PRIMARILY POLITICAL.

Every class struggle is primarily a political struggle; it is a struggle for the control of the political government of the nation, which is the fortress defending established institutions—in the present case principally the capitalistic ownership of industry. The history of the world, according to Marx, is the history of a long series of class struggles. All these class struggles aimed at the conquest of political power, not as an end in itself, but as a means to the acquisition of industrial power. So for many years the rising capitalist class of Europe waged war against the land owning feudal nobility, not so much because they wished to possess the land, which, by the way, is still mostly owned by the nobles, but because they wished to possess the law making and law enforcing power of the nation, which would enable them to exploit the workers to their hearts' content, and make use of the army and navy to secure foreign markets.

CLASS GOVERNMENT.

The policies of every civilized nation are today shaped in accordance with the interests of the capitalist class. To this the United States is by no means an exception. It is rather hard for the average American to believe that his government is a class government, representing the capitalists, and on the whole inimical to the interests of the workers. He has been taught to believe that the American government represents the whole people—the workingmen as well as the capitalists, the poor as well as the rich, without fear or favor. This is a sad illusion. If we once recognize the fact that there are class interests, and that there is a class struggle, it is absurd to believe that at least one of these classes should not have had the good sense to possess itself of so formidable a weapon as political government, with its control over the law making, law enforcing, and law interpreting power of the nation. The capitalist class has not neglected this oppor-
tunity. It is using the political power which the workers have allowed it to acquire, as a club with which to hold labor in subjection.

Examples of Class Government.

In San Diego, California, a group of workingmen desired to hold street meetings. Free speech is guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States. The business men of the city did not like to have these men air their grievances upon the street, so they constituted themselves into an organization called the "Vigilantes" and proceeded to beat the speakers and drive them out of town. Many were severely injured. At least one died of his wounds. One man who did not participate in the free speech fight at all, but merely was known to hold certain unpopular opinions about government, was dragged from his hotel, put in an automobile and taken twenty miles into the desert. Here his clothes were stripped and with the ends of lighted cigars the initials I. W. W. were printed on his back. He was then left to shift for himself.

For these brutal and unlawful acts not a single business man was convicted or even prosecuted. The district attorney refused to prosecute, and the governor of the state, who, by the way, afterward became the Progressive candidate for vice-president, aside from sending an "investigator" did not interfere.

Now let us suppose that instead of business men doing these things to workingmen, workingmen had done them to business men. Suppose that the union men of San Diego, dissatisfied with some of the utterances of members of the Merchants' Association, had proceeded to inaugurate a reign of terror by beating members of that organization, killing them, and driving them out of town. Suppose they had seized the president of the First National Bank of that city, taken him twenty miles into the desert, stripped him of his clothes, branded the initials of his organization on his back, and left him to shift for himself. What would have happened? We all know what would have happened. From one end of the country to the other the newspapers would have appeared with headlines—"Anarchy in San Diego!"—"Reign of Terror in San Diego!" The Associated Press would be sending out column after column of special correspondence. The California militia would be on its way to San Diego, the governor would be giving out interviews, while the president of the United States would have the federal soldiers ready in case the governor failed to do his duty.
But it was merely workingmen abused and insulted by business men; therefore nothing happened. The Associated Press was not interested; the militia did not march. The governor's investigator came, made his report, which was duly filed, and the business men proceeded with their brutal actions.

Another example. In 1904 when the great Cripple Creek strike broke out in Colorado it so happened that the officials of the county were in sympathy with the miners. This did not suit the members of the Citizens' Alliance. They went to the county building, surprised the sheriff and the other county officials, put a noose around their necks and a revolver at their breasts and told them to sign their resignations. They did. Did the governor of the state immediately send the militia to reinstate the county officials and arrest the anarchistic members of the Citizens' Alliance? He did not. He sent the militia to work in harmony with the Citizens' Alliance and wipe out the organization of the men. The commander of the militia, General Bell, openly boasted that he came for that and no other purpose.

There is at present a great strike being waged in the upper peninsula of Michigan. Cruse, the sheriff of the county, is an open and avowed tool of the mine owners. Suppose that the miners were to march to the court house, put a noose around the sheriff's neck, force him to resign, and put one of their own men in his place. What would happen? The offenders would be denounced as anarchists in the public press. They would be arrested and sentenced to long terms in prison, while the sheriff would be reinstated. If the governor of Michigan would fail to act, the president of the United States would step in. Is there any doubt about that? None whatsoever. Yet, please remember that the friend of labor, Theodore Roosevelt, was president of the United States when the Citizens' Alliance ruled with a high hand in Cripple Creek.

Another example. In West Virginia the miners could no longer endure the treatment they received from the mine owners. They struck, and were driven out of the company houses. The United Mine Workers sent tents in order that the women and children might be sheltered from the weather. In these tents the miners determined to stick it out. The mine owners wanted either of two things: they wanted the miners to get back to work or to get out of the district. The miners would do neither. So the mine owners hired thugs who would skulk around the camps at night and harrass the miners by shooting through the tents,
not caring that women and children were within. The mine owners even hired a special train, which they armed with a machine gun, and from this train, which was under the personal command of one of the principal coal barons of West Virginia, a hail of bullets was sent into the miners' camp. Did the governor of the state interfere? Not at all. The governor of the state, one of the seven governors who asked Roosevelt to run for president, was of the opinion that law and order was being enforced. Thereupon the miners proceeded to protect themselves. They armed themselves and met the hired thugs of the mine owners with rifles in their hands. They proved to be as good shots as the thugs, and better. As long as the thugs were shooting the miners there was, of course, no reason for the governor to interfere. That was law and order. But when the miners started to shoot back rather successfully it was law and order no longer. It was anarchy. So the militia was sent and martial law was declared. When it was all over the Senate of the United States held a post mortem investigation.

Another example. There was a strike in Paterson, New Jersey. A labor leader, Pat Quinlan, addressed the strikers, and in the course of his remarks said something to the effect that the men who were still at work must be gotten out at any cost. He was arrested and five thousand dollars cash bond was demanded before he could be released on bail. The reason for his arrest was that talk such as that indulged in by Pat Quinlan MIGHT produce a riot. Now as a matter of fact there was no riot, nor even the suggestion of one. But the mere possibility of a riot was deemed sufficient for the arrest and the high bail demanded.

A few weeks later Secretary Daniels of the Navy made a speech in Seattle, during which he made the incendiary statement that "all believers in the red flag should be driven out of the country." There was no question here at all that a riot MIGHT be produced—the riot was immediately forthcoming. A lot of half drunken sailors, encouraged by the lawless talk of their superior officer, started on a looting and burning expedition the like of which has seldom been seen in times of peace. Secretary Daniels was not arrested, nor was he even censured. He is still Secretary of the Navy.

I could multiply these examples ad infinitum. Nor does it make one particle of difference whether it is the Republican, Democratic or Progressive Party which happens to be in power in a particular locality or in the nation. These parties represent
merely competing capitalist interests. They stand all united in their antagonism to labor whenever the supremacy of the capitalist class is threatened.

The sooner the illusion that this government represents the whole people, or that either of the capitalist parties represents the workers, is abandoned by labor, the sooner will labor solve the problems which confront it.

**The Socialist Party—Its Organization and Methods.**

It is, I believe, plain from the foregoing that in order to be victorious in the class struggle, labor must possess itself of political power. This can be done only by means of a political party controlled, managed and financed by labor. Such a party is the Socialist party. Its aim is the abolition of the capitalist system; its immediate purpose is to wrench from the capitalist class every possible advantage for the workers; its organization is such as to make it peculiarly adapted to achieve these ends.

The organization of the Socialist party is similar to that of the large labor unions. The control of the organization is vested in the membership by means of the initiative, referendum and recall, and every possible safeguard is taken to make the organization democratic. The organization proper is composed of some sixty-five hundred locals with a total membership of about one hundred and twenty-five thousand. These locals are scattered over every state in the Union. Each member of the organization pays twenty-five cents monthly dues, save in a few states where dues are somewhat higher. This twenty-five cents is usually divided as follows: ten cents remains in the local treasury; five cents goes to the county organization; five cents to the state and five cents to the national organization. In the absence of a county organization the state office receives ten cents.

Each state has a state secretary, elected by a referendum of the members of that state, and as a rule, a state committee and a state executive committee, similarly elected. In proportion to its membership every state elects a number of national committeemen, who in their turn elect an executive committee of five members, and an executive secretary. The executive committee transacts most of the current business of the national party, but its acts are reviewed, and may be nullified, by the vote of the national committee. If any dissatisfaction exists with the acts of the national committee or the national executive committee, a final appeal may be taken to the party membership. A national
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Party referendum may be proposed by the state committee or state executive committee of any state and the membership of any state may order its committee by a referendum to take such action. Of course, this procedure changes somewhat from time to time when the membership decides to change or amend the party constitution.

The national office of the Socialist party publishes a weekly bulletin, "The Party Builder," in which an accurate account is given of all funds received and expended, and of all important developments in the party. Each state office is supposed to keep its membership informed of developments in the state and from time to time give a financial account. Anyone over eighteen years of age declaring himself a Socialist and subscribing to the platform and constitution of the party may become a member of the organization. Women are eligible to any party office.

The Socialist parties of the various nations are united into an international organization with headquarters in Brussels, Belgium. An international congress of the Socialist parties of the world is held every three years. This insures unity in all important matters.

We see from the foregoing that the Socialist party does not merely ask the workers to vote for the party, but rather to step in and be the party. The Socialist party does not merely come with the promise to do something for the working people; it tries to teach the working people to make use of its organization to do something for themselves.

UNORGANIZED SOCIALISTS.

There are many calling themselves Socialists who do not belong to the Socialist party organization. They commit a serious blunder. Their attitude, though they may not know it, is essentially un-Socialistic. Socialism teaches self-government. No true Socialist, therefore, should be satisfied to have others run his organization for him. Socialism teaches co-operation, and what is more important than that we should co-operate in order to gain Socialism? It is unfair to allow others to bear all the burdens of organization and propaganda and content one's self with voting the ticket on election day. The work of propaganda, which would be easy if carried on by the many, becomes burdensome and expensive when carried on by a few.

The unorganized Socialist not only does an injustice to his organized comrades; he does an injustice to himself. One hun-
dred and twenty-five thousand organized Socialists by their tireless work rolled up a vote of over nine hundred thousand at the last presidential election. What would be the voting strength of Socialism at the next election if all these voters were to join the organization and work for the coming of the Co-operative Commonwealth!

One should not consider it merely a duty, but count it an actual privilege to be a part of this world embracing movement of the working class, which in spite of its faults—of which no doubt it has many—is yet the noblest and most inspiring movement which has animated the human race for centuries. As the veteran Socialist Ben Hanford used to say, "If there is one thing better than to live under the Co-operative Commonwealth, it is to work for the Co-operative Commonwealth."

CRITICISM OF POLITICAL ACTION.

There are some supposedly ultra-radical, but in reality ultra-reactionary labor leaders, who tell the working people not to bother about political action, but to use "direct action" only. We are told by these gentlemen that the source of the capitalists' power is the ownership of the industries, and that, therefore, we must strike at the root of the evil—take from the capitalists their industrial power.

Let us see. Suppose a man holds in one hand a bag of money, and in the other a revolver. Let us suppose that I have a right to the money and propose to take it from him. There are two things I might do. I might disregard the revolver and use "direct action," i. e., make a grab for the money, reasoning that it is the money I am after, and not the revolver. In that case, however, I stand a very good chance of not getting the money, but of getting my brains blown out. Then again, I might use indirect action, and although it is the money I am after, use my best energy to secure the revolver. After I secure that I do not think there would be much trouble about securing the money. Some might reason that in the second case I might perhaps get my brains blown out anyway. While such a thing is not impossible, my chances for success are, I am sure, incomparably better than they would be in the first case.

WILL CAPITAL SURRENDER?

It has been argued that if the majority of the people were to declare for Socialism at the ballot box, the capitalist class
might violently resist the accession to power on the part of the workers. To do this the capitalist class would have to rely on the army and navy.

In continental Europe, where military service is compulsory, the ideas held by the people are certain to be reflected in the army and navy. When the majority of the people are Socialists, the majority of the soldiers and sailors will undoubtedly be Socialists also, and the capitalist class will hardly be able to keep itself in power by means of violence.

Whatever the advantages of our own military system when compared with that of continental Europe may be to the workers, it has one serious disadvantage: the soldiers being either professionals or volunteers, are far less likely to be imbued with radical ideas and could, therefore, be better relied upon to do the bidding of the capitalists. On this account the Socialist party of America should strain every nerve to have our present military system abolished, substituting for it a citizens' militia somewhat on the plan of the Swiss National Guard. As long as capitalism lasts it is better that all of us should be soldiers than that only a few of us should be, and these few chosen by the capitalist class. The demand for such a change is embodied in the Socialist program. At the same time we should do our best to permeate the army and the navy with Socialist ideas. After all, these men are recruited from the working class, and if we teach them instead of abusing them, we may gain their sympathy.

Some four years ago when I was speaking at Vallejo, California, I had the pleasure of meeting a marine who addressed me as "comrade," and who told me that there were no less than seventy-eight Socialist papers coming to the battleship on which he was serving. If this is at all indicative of the progress of Socialism in the army and navy I would advise the capitalist class to be careful.

It should also not be forgotten that in the event of an attempted violation by the capitalists of the will of the people, the Socialist cause would gain thousands of supporters from those who, while not Socialists, are not vitally interested in the maintenance of the capitalist system, and have unbounded respect for some of the ideals for which the fathers of this republic are supposed to have fought, and of which majority rule is one.
Immediate Uses of Political Action.

The class struggle, as the modern Socialist sees it, is the constant struggle for every possible improvement in the condition of the workers, until the final goal, Socialism, is reached. Political action plays an important part in this everyday struggle of the workers. It would be impossible to describe within the confines of this book all the practical achievements of the Socialist parties of the world—the aid given to the workers in their economic struggles, the favorable laws forced from the capitalist governments by the mere menace of the irresistible growth of the Socialist vote; the management of cities and towns which have fallen into the hands of the workers; the ceaseless activity and fermentation carried on in behalf of the proletariat.

Labor Unions.

The limited time I am able to give to the labor unions as a class weapon should in no wise leave the impression that I consider them of secondary or minor importance. Conditions may arise where the labor movement may, for a time, become of greater importance than the political movement, or vice versa. As a general rule, however, these movements are indispensable to each other, and equally important to the working class.

The labor unions are necessary to insure to the working class some independence of action, and to uphold the standard of living. As an organizer of the Socialist party, I have had plenty of opportunity to observe that it is almost impossible to reach the unorganized workers with the teachings of Socialism; they are in such fear of the boss that they are afraid to come near a Socialist organizer or buy a Socialist paper. At the same time the standard of living of the unorganized workers and their hours of labor are such that often they do not have the opportunity and the energy to study Socialism when they feel inclined to do so.

It is true that the labor unions have of late years been unable to keep the American standard of living from deteriorating. This, however, should be no cause to abandon the labor movement, but should be a reason for strengthening it. If the standard of living has deteriorated in spite of all the resistance that the labor unions have been able to offer, it is well worth considering what the standard of living would be at the present time if there were no labor unions to offer resistance. The labor union man should not merely ask what has the labor union done for me,
but also what has the labor union kept the capitalists from doing to me.

The labor unions in the United States have been handicapped because of the "pure and simple" policy of the principal labor leaders, which left the unions unprotected against the political assaults of the capitalist class. More and more, labor union men are beginning to understand that while the unions might leave politics alone, politics will not leave the unions alone, and that independent political action on the part of the working class is absolutely necessary to preserve the very life of unionism. On the other hand circumstances may arise under which the labor unions might have to be called upon to help maintain the political rights of the workers. That the labor unions are capable of doing this has been demonstrated in recent strikes in Austria and in Belgium where extension of the franchise was secured by means of the general strike.

The charge has been made, and that not unjustly, that the labor union movement in the United States has not kept step with the progress of industry, and that in these days of great capitalist enterprises and combinations it is nothing less than suicidal for workingmen laboring in one industry, and often in one shop and for one employer, to be divided into numerous craft unions. The craft union is of the past; of the days of small capital and small industry; to meet modern industrial conditions a much closer unity of the workers is needed. A strong tendency towards "industrial" unionism can, however, be marked in nearly all of the international unions.

The Co-operative Movement.

I can barely touch upon the co-operative phase of the working class struggle, and again must ask that this be not regarded as an indication that I consider this phase of the struggle unimportant. I believe that more and more the view is gaining ground among Socialists that the political, the labor union, and the co-operative movements are of equal importance in the struggle for emancipation. Wherever one of these is neglected for a time—as has been the case with the co-operative movement in the United States—the neglect will have to be made up for later on, by a correspondingly greater zeal.

The co-operative movement can be useful to the workers in various ways. It can help to maintain or to advance the standard of living by keeping down the price of commodities, while the
unions strive for an increase in wages. It can help to carry the workers through strikes and unemployment. It can contribute funds for the carrying on of Socialist and labor union propaganda. It can furnish employment to blacklisted workers. The buildings erected by the co-operatives can serve as social and educational centers. All these things are actually being done by European co-operative societies.

What seems to me, however, the greatest value of the movement is that it trains the workers in the democratic management of business and industry, thus preparing them for their functions in the Co-operative Commonwealth.

The co-operative movement had its birth in England in 1844. Starting out with a capital of $140, and a weekly turnover of some ten dollars, it has now grown to immense proportions. The English co-operatives do a yearly business of some $250,000,000. The co-operative factories manufacture goods to the value of $50,000,000. Some two million people are connected with the movement.

In Belgium there are no less than two hundred and five co-operative societies which in 1911 did a business of $9,500,000. The members and their families form about ten per cent of the total population of the kingdom.

In Germany the co-operative societies do a yearly business of about $15,000,000. The societies have a combined membership of over a million.

France, Italy, Holland, Austria and especially Denmark, have well developed co-operative movements. In the United States a few isolated attempts at co-operation have been made without, however, achieving much success. A genuine working class co-operative movement must yet have its birth.

**The General Strike.**

Among the weapons of the class struggle the general strike merits special discussion. I think it is generally conceded that the general strike can be, and already has been, an extremely useful weapon of the working class when used with forethought and caution. The reason many Socialists discredit it is because this weapon has been seized upon by the old time enemies of Socialism, the anarchists, who with their usual hysteria have made injudicious use of it.

There are some who look to the general strike as the weapon *par excellence* of the proletariat, and tell us that only by means
of the general strike the capitalist system can be overthrown. The capitalists, we are told, would be compelled to hand the industries over to the working people or starve.

I fail to see the logic of this. The losses of the capitalist class during a general strike are very great, and the capitalists may often concede a great deal to the workers rather than endure such losses for any length of time, but let it be distinctly understood that no general strike, or any other strike, has ever been won because the capitalists were starving, and that a general strike which aims at the total expropriation of the capitalist class would have to bring the capitalists to actual starvation in order to compel their surrender. It requires but little thought, however, to understand that in the course of such a strike, the workers would be much sooner brought to the verge of starvation than would the capitalists and their immediate hirelings.

We do not condemn the general strike, but we object to its being made a fetish and a panacea.

**Sabotage.**

A discussion of the weapons of the class struggle would hardly be complete without some mention of sabotage, which has been hailed by some as a desirable weapon.

John Spargo, in his excellent book "Syndicalism, Industrial Unionism and Socialism," defines sabotage as "an essentially furtive and stealthy policy practiced by individual workers, having for its aim the obstruction of industry and business to such an extent that the employers will suffer a loss of profits so great as to compel them to grant the workers' demands. . . . It may involve violence, or it may be peaceful. It may involve destruction of property, or it may not. It may be based on illegal acts, or it may not. It may consist of telling lies, or of telling the simple truth."

This is probably as inclusive a definition as can be framed of so elusive a doctrine. Because of this very elusiveness it is impossible for anyone to say that he is opposed to all acts that go under the name of sabotage. Surely no one can be opposed to "telling the simple truth." The advocates of sabotage are as a rule shrewd enough to bring out in their discussions of the subject only such inoffensive forms of sabotage as no one can object to, and which by right should not be branded with the name at all.

Mr. Arturo M. Giovannitti, translator of Pouget's book "Sabotage," defines it as "A—Any conscious and wilful act on the
part of one or more workers intended to slacken and reduce the output of production in the industrial field in order to secure from their employer better conditions or to enforce those promised, or to maintain those already prevailing, when no other way of redress is open. B—Any skillful operation on the machinery of production intended not to destroy it or permanently render it defective, but only to temporarily disable it and put it out of running condition, in order to make impossible the work of scabs, and thus secure the complete and real stoppage of work during a strike."

While Mr. Giovannitti's definition is sufficient to damn sabotage as a working class weapon, yet it by no means defines the doctrine, but merely gives the bounds to which Mr. Giovannitti, seeing danger ahead, would like the believers in sabotage to confine themselves. In practice, sabotage means what a member of the Industrial Workers of the World, a firm believer in sabotage, told me that it means to him and his fellow workers—"ANYTHING OR EVERYTHING THAT WE THINK IS GOING TO HELP US WIN."

I have tested this simple definition repeatedly in my association with believers in the doctrine, and I have found that this is what sabotage means to the men on the firing line who become imbued with the doctrine.

The Socialist party is opposed to sabotage and has repudiated it in convention, by referendum vote, and by vote of its national committee. One who practices or advocates sabotage can no longer be a member of the Socialist party. In this the Socialist party of America has taken a stand in harmony with the stand taken by the Socialist parties of other nations.

The Socialist party does not take this position because of any pharisaical moral scruples. The reasons for our opposition are many, but all of them have to do with the demoralizing effect sabotage has upon the working class movement and upon the workers themselves.

The effect of sabotage upon the working class movement is disastrous because it tends to substitute individual action for class action. It takes the emancipation of the working class out of the hands of that class and entrusts it to the bravado of individuals. The doctrine, therefore, is essentially individualistic and delights the heart of the anarchist. As in nearly every case the practice of sabotage requires stealth and secrecy, the unions would be honeycombed with spies and provocators, suspicion would be
sown, and working class solidarity destroyed; the labor movement would be outlawed and conspiracies would take the place of labor union meetings.

The average working man believes in the rule of the majority. He believes that laws, even those affecting capitalist property, should be obeyed as long as they are on the statute books, and a labor movement which dedicates its best efforts to the systematic and secret breaking of the law would lose the ear of the working class. Sabotage, therefore, while it may injure the individual capitalist, would help to perpetuate the capitalist system by estranging the workers from the Socialist and labor union movements. The capitalists know this, and for this reason often are willing to pay to have acts of sabotage committed, in order to be able to thrust the blame upon the Socialist and labor union movements. There is, of course, the further danger of having the working class movement become the pawn in the struggle of rival capitalists who would offer bribes to labor union men to put competitors out of business. In the same manner the terrorist movement in Russia unwittingly became the weapon of one court faction against another.

Still more disastrous is the influence of sabotage upon the individual who practices it. THE STRONGEST ARGUMENT AGAINST SABOTAGE IS THE SABOTER. The Jesuitical doctrine that the end justifies the means, with which the believer in sabotage becomes impregnated, renders him untrustworthy, not merely as a workman, but as a comrade in the battle for freedom.

To believe that a working class which sneers at truth and common honesty as "capitalistic notions" can bring about a society which would be an improvement on what we have to-day, is to believe the impossible. Honesty and dependability in the workers, while benefiting the capitalist class today, are indispensable for the society of the future. We dare not corrupt ourselves—not even to spite the capitalists!

THE OUTCOME OF THE CLASS STRUGGLE.

What then will be the outcome of the class struggle? Who will be the victors, and what will be the fate of the vanquished? I do not think there can be any doubt that the working class will carry off the victory. The working class is becoming more numerous every day. Small land holders and small business men, expropriated by the capitalist system, are joining its ranks. Not
only are the workers becoming more numerous, they are becoming better educated, better organized and more class conscious.

The capitalist class, on the other hand, is becoming constantly smaller. The concentration of wealth goes on at a rapid pace; fewer and fewer are becoming the individuals who have the controlling power over our industries. The capitalist class has, furthermore, lost all reason for existence. As Chesterton said, "the typical capitalist of today not only knows nothing about the managing of industry, but he knows nothing about the owning of industry." Not only the management of industries, but the management of the capitalists' fortunes and the investment of their dividends is now also becoming more and more a delegated function, and the capitalist has nothing to do except amuse himself and by his excesses hasten the day of his downfall. In the struggle for the survival of the fittest the working class is surely the fitter to survive.

**The New Society.**

A victory of the workers does not spell the subjugation of the capitalist class or of any other class. It will mean the abolition of all classes and an equal opportunity for all to shape their destinies in the new commonwealth. We can give the capitalists the assurance that the workers in the day of their victory will be far more merciful to them than they have been to the workers.

There is no doubt that the progress of mankind under Socialism will be far greater than it has ever been before, for while under previous systems only a few were given the opportunity to escape the grind of everyday existence sufficiently to devote themselves to the higher culture, all men will be given that opportunity under the new commonwealth. A million minds will be working at problems which hitherto remained for but a few to solve. What is more, mechanical progress and the creations of art and science will not, as under previous systems, benefit and delight the few, but will be the common heritage of all.