SOCIALISM
THE ONLY REMEDY

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BRANCH 1, SOCIALIST PARTY, LOCAL NEW YORK
AND NOW, comrades and friends, how about this campaign? Here is something entirely new. Here is a situation in this country we have never confronted before. Here, for the first time, the dull brains of the master class have been opened to essential facts, for the first time we have succeeded in driving into their minds the outlines of the cause we have been contending for all these years. We have compelled them at last to admit that fundamental conditions in this country are not good but bad; we have compelled them at last to admit something of the vast extent of poverty, and at last we have compelled them to turn some attention to the great issue of the condition of the working class. We have done all that—we of the Socialist party. (Applause)

It makes not a particle of difference who is elected in November. We have won the only real victory in this campaign (Applause.) Because we have forced them at last to concede the foundation of our faith. The only issue now left in this campaign is one of remedies; there is no longer any issue as to foundation facts, they are conceded; the things we have worked so many years to establish in this country at
last are admitted. The only issue is one of remedies, that is all. And when you come to the issue of remedies you will notice that it is not true as often said, that there are four great parties contending. There are not four great parties; there are only two. Here on one side is one party, with one name, the Socialist Party, and opposed to it is one with three names, Republican, Democratic and Progressive. Because, on the matter of remedies, the only difference is between the Socialist Party on the one hand, and this party with three names on the other. Among the three divisions of the party with three names there is no difference; all agree. The Socialists propose as a remedy for existing and admitted social evils a new system of society. The other three propose to maintain the existing system but to trim it a little and tinker it a little, if there is anything wrong. The only difference lies right there. Run down the list of the social evils that now affect this country and see if I am not perfectly right. I was going to suggest that you read the platforms of the Republican, Democratic and Progressive parties, but looking over this audience I see few who are likely to live more than a thousand years and I know you have not the time to waste. (Laughter.) Let me give you instead a brief summary of these proposals.

First—the increase in the cost of living. Here is something that comes straight home to all of us; three times a day it comes and collects its increasing tribute. Year by year and month by month the prices of all the necessaries of life are rising higher and higher. There is no corresponding increase in wages or salaries. What is the true significance of this? In the last seventeen years the cost of living in this country has increased more than 70 per cent. The average of wages and salaries has increased but 20 per cent. The cost of living, therefore, has been increasing about four times as fast as wages, the most tremendous fact in the history of our country. Nothing like it has ever confronted us. What does it mean?

It means this:
Here is this vast working class of America, constituting the overwhelming majority of the population, and all the time the cost of living is increasing upon it four times as fast as its wages increase. In the United States we have between 28,000,000 and 30,000,000 wage workers and their average wages are a trifle over $400 a year—$400 upon which to support a human being in a country where the cost of living is always abnormally high, and is now steadily increasing. What in turn does that mean? It means that this vast overwhelming majority, the working class, must be all the time sinking to a lower level of life; it must be all the time living worse. No question of theory is involved, no question of doctrine; it is simply a matter of mathematical fact. It must be so. If upon this vast working class the cost of living is increasing four times as fast as wages, necessarily it is descending all the time in its standard of living. Year after year it is worse fed, worse housed, worse clothed. Year after year its children are walled in by a stronger barrier against every opportunity. Every year it must live worse, it must be worse supported. And what in turn does that mean?

Take first the lowest possible view of it. Take this matter of national defence about which we hear so much. Year after year we go on building these vast battle ships which are ultimate consigned to the junk heap, spending hundreds of millions of dollars for armament, fortifications, armies, great guns to defend ourselves against mythical foreign enemies, and all the time we have within the nation, an enemy a thousand times worse than all foes without. (Prolonged Applause.)

They tell us, these members of the master class, that we must have wars, that there will be more wars, that wars are inevitable. For the sake of the argument admit this to be so. But if we are to have more wars where shall we get our soldiers? The only defenders of any nation must come from the working class which alone furnishes the soldiers. If we are to have more wars every man that will be shot upon the battlefield will be a member of the working class.
Every woman that will be widowed will be a woman of the working class. Every child that will be orphaned will be a child of the working class. It will be only from the working class that the recruits will come. There issue no warriors from the palaces of Fifth Avenue, nor from the money marts of Wall Street. Only the working class furnishes armies. (Very prolonged applause.)

Then, on the basis of this necessity of national defense here we are steadily depriving ourselves of our sole source of strength. We are maintaining a system in this country under which the cost of living is increasing four times as fast as wages increase; all the time we are steadily undermining the physical strength and vigor of that class that alone must defend us if we are ever thrust into a war.

But take another and higher view of it. Every idea that has been of any value to mankind has sprung from the working class. Every invention that has benefited the race sprung from the working class. Every impulse of progress has sprung from the working class. There is no such thing as progress in this world except the progress of the working class. (Applause.)

And here is this labor that has made this world habitable, that has provided us with every kind of wealth we have; that has levelled the hills, filled the valleys, built the houses; that has made earth endurable to its children, and this great element of labor, the only thing in society that is of importance, we are steadily bringing to lower levels; steadily therefore we are committing national suicide. Because science tells us that unless the human body is well nourished, unless it is supplied with a sufficient quantity of rich blood, unless it is sustained by a certain quantity of nutriment, the brain in the body will not do its normal work, the man ceases to be efficient, he ceases to supply society with its normal service. The United States, therefore, with its vast working class steadily declining in its economic condition and steadily allowing its workers
to be insufficiently nourished, will be deprived the efficiency of its 30,000,000 workers, and thereby of its great asset, at once, and its greatest impetus to progress. There is not a country under the sun rich enough to afford a monstrous waste like that.

At the end of that road is national bankruptcy and we are walking down to it as surely as you are sitting in those seats.

At last we have succeeded in driving some of these facts also into the heads of those members of the master class that write the political platforms. Year after year we have been telling them these things but they would not heed us. Now the time has come when they begin to realize that we spoke the truth, these complacent well-fed gentlemen, these Old Doc Swindles of politics. And when they admit it we come to them and say:

"At last you admit this is terrible evil; at last you are ready to concede that never in the history of the country has there been such an alarming condition. The Civil War compared to this was but an incident. Out of the Civil War men knew we should emerge in some shape, one nation or two. No man can predict how we shall emerge from a crisis like this. At last 'Old Docs' you admit it. (Laughter.) What is your remedy? How do you propose to deal with it, this terrible overshadowing evil?"

And they say, "Leave it to us; we know." And they go cheerfully to the national drug closet and take down a bottle from which they have been dosing the national patient, without any result whatever, for forty-five years, and say, "We will give him a teaspoonful of the same old mixture." And what is that? Tariff reform! (Prolonged laughter and applause).

The three old "Docs" are practically agreed about this; look at their platforms and see. For this evil of the increasing cost of living they propose the remedy of tariff reform. Juggle the tariff; juggle it up or juggle it down, it does not make a particle of difference which. If they were to juggle it up and
juggle it down both at once that would not make any difference.

Juggle the tariff! That means this: Has the cost of living been increasing upon you? Never mind. We will reduce the tariff on India rubber from thirty-eight to thirty-seven per cent and then watch the price of round steak decline. (Applause). Or have your rents been mounting upon you year after year? Forget it. We will put ipecac on the free list, and then see how lovely everything will be. Or is the American housewife perplexed with steadily increasing problems of domestic economy? Is it becoming more and more difficult for you to make your wages stretch over your household expenditures? Cut it out. The duty on sugar is three cents and the duty on salt two cents; we will make the duty on sugar two cents and the duty on salt three cents, and then watch the blessings descend on our broad fair land. (Prolonged laughter and applause).

Juggle the tariff! Bless my soul, they have been juggling the tariff for forty-five years, and sometimes they juggled it up and sometimes they juggled it down and all the time the cost of living has been mounting higher and higher upon you. So at last confronted with this national crisis, conceded to be so menacing, we ask them what they are to do about it and they say the same identical futile, foolish thing—reform the tariff.

Second, the trust problem. Here again is something that comes home to every American household. Every staple that you consume is now supplied to you by a trust. All the necessaries of life have been trustified. Every one of these trusts is enormously over-capitalized; every trust is increasing its capitalization. Capitalization consists of stocks and bonds on which must be paid dividends and interest. The more capitalization, the more stocks and bonds; the more stocks and bonds the more dividends and interest. Where is the money coming from except from your pockets? In no possible way can they obtain the revenue to
meet these increasing interest charges except by push-
ing up year after year the prices for you to pay.

Let me give you an illustration. Take the necessity of transportation. You must have it. Ninety-five per cent. of all you consume has been transported over a railroad, affected in its price by railroad rates. Practically all of your railroads are now controlled by a few small groups of capitalists. These railroads are now capitalized at nineteen billion dollars, that capitalization is increasing at the rate of one billion dol-

lars a year. That is a rate four times as great as the rate of increase of the total wealth of the country. It is therefore evident that this process of over-capita-
lization of the railroads alone is one gigantic pump that reaches out into every household draws thence the national wealth and piles it up on the coffers of the capitalists that own the pump. Since the capitalization of the railroads is increasing four times as fast as the total wealth of the country, it is also most obvious that if this process continues it will absorb all the wealth of your land. Yet what is true of trans-
portation is true of the other trustified industries. You cannot have a trust without over-capitalization; upon no other basis can trusts be formed. With every trust at work to increase this over-capitalization the only result is a colossal machine that enriches the trust owners and necessarily impoverishes you.

This is an evil with two heads. There is first the point I have just given you of the influence these trusts have upon the rising cost of living. Here are two groups of capitalists in the United States, the Morgan group and the Standard Oil group and they own or control between them thirty billion dollars of the national wealth. The total wealth of the coun-

try is one hundred and eight billion dollars. These men therefore already own or control, almost one-third of the national wealth, and their great accumulations increase not merely day by day but moment by moment. Every dollar in these stupendous collections of dollars is not merely a unit of purchasing power; it is also a unit of power upon your government and your af-
fairs. There never was a government in this world that could withstand a power like that, thirty billion dollars owned or controlled by two small groups of men working together for their own gain. The result has been that these capitalists have practically abolished the republic. It is now not enough to say that your government is controlled by these capitalists; it is OWNED by the capitalists. They are your government. (Shouting and applause).

Instead of a republic with free institutions we have now an autocracy of wealth and these groups are the autocrats, self-chosen, irresponsible and steadily increasing their power. Then if you care for free institutions, if you think this republic that was established at such an expense of blood and treasure is worth preserving, what have you to say to a condition wherein you are ruled absolutely by an aristocracy of wealth?

At last we have begun to bore these facts into the heads of the master class and the Old Dots that write the platforms. At last they admit this situation also to be serious. Once more they say, “Leave it to us; we know what to do,” and once more they wend their way to the national drug closet and issue thence with a bottle from which they have dosed the national patient for twenty-two years and they say, “In view of the rapid increase and growing power of the trusts in the United States we will administer a teaspoonful of the same old mixture” and they bring out Dr. Sherman’s Celebrated Golden Specific for Trusts. They propose as a remedy for the growing menace of the trusts the regulation of corporations and the enforcement of the anti-trust laws.

We have been regulating corporations and enforcing the anti-trust laws for twenty-two years and all that time the trusts have done nothing but increase in power, arrogance, impudence and greed. There are now ten times as many trusts as there were when we began; they are a thousand times more powerful. Suppose there was a doctor who for forty-five years had had a patient with one disease and all that time
he had done nothing for his patient except to admin-ister to him every day three teaspoonfuls of jalap and at the end of forty-five years the patient is very ill and his friends go to the doctor and say, “This man is deadly sick; what are you going to do about it?” Then suppose that doctor to say, “I know; I will give him three teaspoonfuls of jalap every day.” You wouldn’t think that man was a master of the medical profession, would you? You would not want him to care for a case of yours, would you? Or suppose a carpenter for more than twenty-two years had been building a house, and he built it so badly that every time he got it to the first floor it fell to the ground, and at the end of twenty-two years he was still building that house up to the first floor and watching it fall to the ground. You wouldn’t think he was a master builder, would you? You would not want him to build a house for you, would you? But here comes a gang of political chumps and incompetents, and being confronted with a grave national crisis they are asked, “What are you going to do about it?” and they can think of nothing to do except what they have been doing for forty-five years and twenty-two years. And you American voters with a program like that presented before you a hundred times more idiotic and imbecile than the case of the imaginary doctor or the imaginary carpenter, are expected to go out in the streets and cheer your heads off with delight. (Applause).

But suppose these people could enforce the anti-trust laws. Suppose they could do to the trusts everything they think they can do. Suppose their wildest dreams could be realized. What good would that do? Who would be benefited? Who would pay the bills?

You would pay the bills every time; the penalty would fall upon you; nobody else.

There never has been a fine levied upon a railroad company for rebating that you have not paid. There never has been a fine imposed upon the Standard Oil Company for a violation of the act of the sacred Sherman that you have not paid. If they could proceed
now to enforce these laws that would mean only more bills for you to pay, more tribute collected from your pockets.

If you doubt that, let me give you by way of illustration a chapter from your recent history. Seven years ago I had the honor to write, in a cursory way, a series of magazine articles about that popular and favorite institution known as the "Beef Trust." As a result of those articles the United States Government began to prosecute the magnates of the "Beef Trust." Civil proceedings and criminal proceedings and criminal proceedings and civil proceedings followed one another year in and year out, and all the time the "Beef Trust" did nothing but push up the prices for you to pay. At last the government got an indictment that it thought would stick and seven months ago they brought these malefactors of great wealth to trial in the city of Chicago. At last Justice reared her awful front and shook her terrible sword and these malefactors of great wealth were brought to the bar for their misdeeds.

The trial lasted nine weeks. At the end of that time the jury brought in a verdict of "not guilty." The magnates had been put to a heavy expense, more than five hundred thousand dollars, to defend themselves, lawyers' fees, witnesses and so on. The jury brought in the verdict of "not guilty" at ten o'clock in the morning. Merrily from the courtroom went forth the gentlemen thus found innocent by a jury of their peers. Merrily they went to their offices and at eleven o'clock they put up the prices of beef, mutton and lamb from one-quarter of a cent to two cents a pound. At six o'clock they had gotten back three hundred and sixty thousand dollars of their legal expenses. They got back the rest the next day and they have been continuing to get it back every day since. (Prolonged applause and laughter.) Reform, Oh, blessed word, how it illuminates the whole country!

Let me give you another illustration. Take that pet bugaboo of American life, that awful monster, Jack-in-
the-box, the Standard Oil Company. Mothers used to scare their children with it. "Now, you be good or I'll set the Standard Oil Company on you." Four or five years ago the American Government got on the trail of this terrible octopus, pursued to its lair, and got the Supreme Court after it. And at last the Supreme Court, the highest authority in the land, handed down a decision in which it upheld every contention of the government and found that the Standard Oil Company had been guilty of violating the sacred Sherman Anti-Trust Law and must be dissolved. So here at last was a trust that was busted. Come on all you Old Docs, Old Doc Bryan and Old Doc Wilson, and Old Doc Taft and the rest, come and look at this. You say that what the nation needs is to bust the trusts and return to competition. Well, here is a trust that was busted. Come and look at the result. It was busted by the highest authority in the United States, the holy of holies, busted to beat the band. They had one company with a certain set of stockholders and they formed of it thirty-two companies with the same stockholders. You cannot bust a thing much more than to bust it into thirty-two pieces. So look at this, here is a trust busted to flinders. And twelve months after the Supreme Court had busted it the value of securities of the Standard Oil had increased one hundred and sixty-five million dollars and the prices of gasoline and kerosene had been steadily pushed up for you to pay. (Prolonged laughter and applause.)

So here is the situation. It is just a case of vicarious atonement. Your representatives pass laws forbidding these corporations to do certain things. The corporations dance on your laws and kick them full of holes. Then the United States Government rises in its wrath and finds these desperate law-breakers guilty, and then the American people bare their breasts and say, "Let the penalty fall on us alone; let it not fall upon that dear Mr. Rockefeller!"

But what do they want to bust the trusts for? What for? Suppose they could do it, why should they want to do it? None of the Old Docs has ever answered
that question. Not a word. They merely keep on tell-
ing you to bust the trusts. They are like a row of par-
rots hanging in cages in the sunshine. One parrot says,
“Bust the trusts; bust the trusts; bust the trusts,” and
the next says, “Return to competition; return to com-
petition.” But not one ever tells you what for. No
“Doc” ever tells you that. It’s one of the strangest
provisions of Nature that a man should be sent into
the world with vocal organs but without a thinker; to
be a mere noise in the world. It is as old Vergil
says, “A voice and nothing more.” Here is a great
invention and machine that might be for the benefit
and welfare of mankind: here is something that repre-
sents progress and evolution through the centuries;
here is a thing admirably designed and perfectly articu-
lated, calculated to be of service to the race; and these
gentlemen come along and want to smash it to pieces.
They are the intellectual descendants of the men that in
old years wanted to destroy the first printing press and
the first spinning machine.

Granted that this trust machine has been misused; no
doubt about it. Granted that this misuse has amounted
to a most serious menace to political freedom; no
doubt about it. Granted that its misuse has drawn
wealth from your pockets and deposited it in the cof-
fers of a few, no doubt about it. But because it has
been misused do you want to destroy it? The only
trouble with the trust is that so far it has been privately
owned and operated for private greed. Now let it be
owned by the community and operated for the common
good and the trust becomes the greatest blessing of the
age. (Applause.)

But there is one of these three parties toward which
it is difficult to preserve the attitude of philosophic
calm with which we may regard the others. Guff and
stuff in the Republican and Democratic platforms we
are accustomed to, having been familiar with them
for years and years. But to write a platform composed
of guff and stuff, and to launch a political party that is
a deliberate swindle and fraud are entirely different
things. This Progressive Party is a purpose swindle;
it is Hungry Joe in politics; Grand Central Pete come to life again. It is a political confidence game and there is no honesty in it.

There are to all of your affairs two aspects. First there is the superficial aspect that the newspapers graciously allow you to have and then there is the real facts which are usually very different. I purpose now to give you the real facts about this Progressive Party.

For years upon years you have been misgoverned, preyed upon and robbed by these groups of capitalists; for years and years their supremacy and graft were never once seriously threatened. They knew perfectly well that they had nothing to fear from the Republican party or the Democratic party. In God's name why should they when they owned both? They also knew they had nothing to fear from reform. But here at last arose a new social and political force in the land and they read in it a serious menace. They saw this Socialist Party mounting up higher and higher year after year, its vote always increasing, and they knew that Socialism was the only thing that threatened their graft because Socialism purposed to destroy the system that ensured their monstrous profits.

Then they began to hear from the cities. They heard from Milwaukee, Schenectady and New Castle. They saw that the Socialists were carrying city after city; they were becoming an actual power in the land. What shall the capitalists do? Most of these masters of finance and captains of industry have minds developed only on one side. They have unusual faculties in aggrandizement and acquisition, but they have no synthetic power, they cannot put things together, they cannot gauge the trend of public thought in their land. So all they could think to do in this emergency was the same old things they had done before. Appeal to party loyalty, for instance. If your grandfather was a Republican you must be. They didn't tell you that if one of your ancestors went naked in the forest and ate snakes for breakfast you must do the same thing, but they might as well. Or bring out the old Punch and Judy show and let the voters watch Republican Punch
swat Democratic Judy—with a stuffed club. Or have
out the tariff bogy and pull that to and fro. (Laughter).

But there was one man among them that had a
master mind and he knew well enough that these de-
vices were worn out. He knew that the workers were
beginning to think and beginning to perceive the
frauds practiced upon them. He had studied history
and knew that in the declining days of Rome when
the people became too restless and too rebellious
against their wrongs the emperor found that the most
effective way to divert their thoughts from their con-
dition was to give them some new kind of exhibition. A
new kind of gladiatorial combat or furnish the Coliseum
a new animal from the wilds of Africa. So knowing
all this Mr. George W. Perkins goes down to the caves
of Lobster Bay and issues thence with the great Bull
Moose.

The significance of that is: has the cost of living
been mounting higher and higher upon you? Never
mind. Fix your eyes upon the great big Bull Moose; see
him go around and around in circles, contradicting
himself every minute; watch him tie his moral con-
victions in a bow knot around his neck and then
crawl through the hoop. (Laughter and applause).

They have selected as the emblem of their new
party, this Bull Moose. That shows they know as
little about zoology as they know about sociology.
The true emblem of their party is not a bull moose.
It is not a mammal at all. It is a fish. (Laughter and
applause). It's a red herring. (Laughter). You
know in England the aristocrats and the better classes
have a refined and intellectual sport that is called fox
hunting. The object is to chase the fox but not to
catch him. (Laughter). They want to chase him
again to-morrow and foxes are scarce. So whenever
the hounds get too close upon the trail of the fox they
draw a red herring across the trail and then the
hounds cease to chase the fox and turn to chase the
red herring. (Laughter). That is the function of the
Progressive party; it has no other.
No one knows better than George W. Perkins that this party of his has not one chance to win anything in this election, and yet he is willing to put his millions into it. Have you so known trust magnates that you think one of them would make an investment without the certainty of a return? What return then does Mr. Perkins expect from his present venture? Only this, that it may discourage the workingmen of America from thinking about Socialism; that is all. (Prolonged applause). He knows perfectly well that the hounds are getting too close to the fox.

Here is this working class steadily becoming more and more restless and here is this growth of Socialism, the only sane and logical remedy for the workers' wrongs. “What are we going to do about it?” say the frightened capitalists. “Bring out the red herring,” says George. (Laughter and applause).

He has furnished his herring with specious proposals of reforms to cope with the social evils that at last all admit. Let me give you one or two examples of the spurious nature of these reforms and from this showing you can judge of the rest.

They say much in their platform about better working conditions for employed women and children. Let me assure you that every Socialist in this world rejoices wherever any member of the working class secures any advantage, rejoices and gives thanks, but we know perfectly well that none of these reforms can ever affect the heart and source of existing evils, and we stand for the proposition that the working class should have not merely a part of what belongs to it, but that it should have all. (Applause).

But they want better working conditions and shorter hours of labor for employed women and children, and there is not one honest word in that declaration; there is not one straight hair in the head of the man that wrote it. I will show you how I know.

I was reading the other day the report of the committee of the New York Legislature appointed to investigate factory conditions in this state, and I
found there that the committee had been investigating conditions in a factory at Auburn, of which the chief owner was Mr. George W. Perkins. And this committee found that the working conditions and hours of employment of women and children in that factory were among the very worst in the state. Now, if Mr. Perkins were sincere, if he really wanted better conditions for women and children he would start in his own factory in Auburn. That is the place for him to begin. (Applause).

Let me give you another illustration.

One of the bright and shining lights of this so-called Progressive Party is a man that occupies the second place on the ticket. Among his acquaintances he is known variously as Hiram Johnson and Howl 'em Johnson. He is governor of California. One of the great achievements for which he is praised is that he got the legislature of his state to pass a law reducing the hours of labor in certain factories to no more than eight a day. The Perkins followers point to this triumph and say, "Look at that! That's what we are going to do. Reduce the hours of labor for women and children."

Yes. That law went into effect July 1, 1911. I was in California about that time. The manufacturers had about three months in which to prepare for the operation of the law. They prepared for it. Six weeks before it went into operation they began to bring in Greeks from the outside to take the places of the girls. You can work Greeks sixteen hours a day or twenty hours a day, or all the time. So many of the girls were told that they must instruct the Greeks in the work in hand. And on the first day of July out went the girls and in came the Greeks. Now here were suddenly thousands of girls thrown upon the labor market. What shall they do? Never do you get a reformer to answer such a question. What shall the unemployed man do? What shall the working woman do when she has lost her employment and can find no other? Not a word of answer to these ques-
tions, from the oracles of reform. Well, what did these girls do?

I know what one of them did. There was a girl in a factory in San Francisco. By hard labor she earned between five and six dollars a week. Her father and mother were dead; except for a little sister she was alone in the world. This little sister she kept in a children’s asylum and every week she sent her something from the scanty earnings. And in order to do that she herself dwelt in a miserable attic at the top of an old house, a place you could hardly say was furnished at all. And all of those years, in spite of all temptation she walked one straight path; she was good.

Now the time came when the manufacturer told her she must give her place to a Greek. She went forth and joined the great army of the unemployed. Persistently she went from employment agency to employment agency, from factory to factory begging for her birthright of work. Everywhere she met with the same answer. “The labor market is glutted; there is no work for you.” Under the best conditions she had had between her and starvation but the thin plank of one week’s wage and now that was gone. Her money was all spent. The landlady was demanding the rent. For three days she had eaten nothing. Frantically she walked the streets begging for work and was everywhere refused. She came home one night with black despair in her heart, and she sat down and wrote this letter to her little sister:

“My dearest sister: You will never see me again. They will tell you after this that I am bad, and that you must forget me, but I beg you to keep a corner in your heart for me as I have kept you in my heart always. You will never see me again. I am going to commit suicide—not suicide of the body but suicide of the soul.”

And then she went forth upon the streets that night and deliberately sold herself to the devil. And that is what comes of your reforms, you good reformers.
You change the aspect of an evil from this to that, and from that to this. You change the name by which an evil is known. You never will change the substance of the evil as long as you maintain the seventy times accursed wage system out of which flows one black cataract of wrong. (Prolonged applause).

And I object again to this Perkins platform because all through it assumes an attitude of condescension to the people and pretended friendliness to labor. From a lofty height they look down upon the working class, and purpose in the goodness of their hearts to hand down benefits to you. They know what is good for you. You don't know what is good for yourselves. In the national convention of the Perkins party at Chicago there sat lawyers, bankers, merchants, office holders, officers seekers, politicians, parasites and vermin, but there sat not one representative of the working class and they have not nominated a representative of the working class for office. I ought to know something about that convention. I was there. Three mortal days I sat there—doing penance for my sins. I was there to report it for the Socialist daily of Chicago, the great Daily World, and as I sat there in inexpressible agony I realized I had been a much worse man than I ever imagined myself to be. I must have been to deserve such punishment. There I sat under the edge of the platform within a few feet of the great bull moose himself. Over that platform poured one ceaseless cataract of piffle and guff, and there I sat smothered in it.

And there came the eulogists, one after another, up to that platform and laid their coronals of praise at the feet of the great bull moose. And one man said he was a very great man, and a wave of indignation swept over the audience—it was so pitifully inadequate merely to say that. And the next man said he was not only a very great man, but he was the greatest man alive. And the next man said he not only was a very great man and the greatest man alive, but he was the greatest man that ever lived. And then came Climax up to the platform bearing the
cap sheaf and neatly deposited it upon the pile by saying he was not only a very great man, and the greatest man alive, and the greatest man that ever lived, but he was the greatest man that ever would live. (Laughter).

And then they switched off and began to tell what a friend he was of labor, and the first man said Theodore Roosevelt was a great friend of labor. And the second man, "How far that falls short of the truth!" For he was not only a great friend of labor, he was the greatest friend of labor. And the third man said he was not only a great friend of labor and the greatest friend of labor, but he was the only friend the American working man ever had. And beyond that it did not seem to me to be humanly possible to go.

It was fortunate, indeed, that no one arose in that convention to exhibit this man's labor record as it really is.

When he became governor of the state of New York he declared, with his peculiar style of eloquence, that his purpose was to enforce the laws as he found them. On rich and poor, without fear or favor, he would enforce the laws. On the statute books of your state was a law that provided that on all contract work for public purposes there should be an eight-hour day. The great New York City Aqueduct was being repaired by contract. The contractors employed newly arrived labor that had just come to this country and was unaware of its rights. They worked such labor sixteen and eighteen hours a day. At last somebody came and told the workmen how they were being wronged. Then the Italians among them revolted, the old Italian spirit of revolt that has so often blazed forth and led Europe, awoke, and the Italians demanded their legal rights. The contractors laughed in their faces. Then the men struck. There was no disturbance; there was no rioting, but Theodore Roosevelt sent down two regiments of militia to the scene. Of course the militia began to taunt the strikers and goad them and trouble followed. Then the militia fired into the
strikers and killed some of them and wounded many. And when these facts were brought to the attention of Theodore Roosevelt, that great friend of labor clicked his teeth after his usual fashion and said, “Well, I guess I have taught them a salutary lesson this time.” But he never did a thing to enforce that law the contractors had broken. (Applause).

A great friend of labor! Who was it that as president stood for the open shop in the national printing office? Who was opposed to the closed shop, the only weapon of defense the workingman has?

Who was it that tried to condemn in advance Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone, accused falsely of a capital crime?

Who was it that strove to put a brand upon the man that is the apostle and soldier of the working class? Who was it tried to brand Eugene V. Debs? (Prolonged and enthusiastic applause).

A friend of labor? Listen. Look with the utmost suspicion upon any man that comes to you professing to be a friend of labor. Spot him instantly as a fakir and a fraud. There is no such thing as a friend of labor. Labor has no friend. In all this world there is no such thing. Because here it is—either one thing or the other. Either a man is of the working class and with the working class, feeling the proletarian spirit in his heart and in every fiber of his being, knowing the cause of labor, ready to march with it, to strive for it, if necessary to die for it—either that or his place is in the other camp, he is an enemy of labor. There is no room between. (Voice in audience, “You bet.” Prolonged applause).

For here we stand face to face with this tremendous conflict, this colossal and irrepressible conflict between labor and capital. And here is labor beginning to revolt and the basis of its revolt is an incalculable wrong and injustice; and here is capital that has no basis of existence except that wrong and injustice by which it gathers its profits. And will you tell me that in such a conflict, elemental and vast, there is
any place for any man who professes to be merely a friend of labor?

Of any man that makes such a profession ask this question: How do you stand on the only issue that is of any importance in this or any other campaign? Are you in favor of this system of fraud and wrong by which labor is robbed of the fruits of its toil or are you in favor of destroying it? One or the other. If you are in favor of maintaining it then it makes not one particle of difference what you may pretend, your place is in the ranks of the enemy. If you think that monstrous system ought to be destroyed then the only place on earth for you is in the ranks of the Socialist Party. For we have sworn that we will destroy that system root and branch, and clear this earth from a curse that has blighted and darkened human life too long. (Applause).

In this Perkin's platform they have much to say about the welfare of children. If there was nothing else to urge us onward but only the cry of the children, children that are born to be slaves, the millions of children in the tenements, children that from their birth are doomed to insufficiency, privation, ignorance and want, their cry alone would be inspiration enough to lead us on. Shall I give you now a glimpse of things as they really are? For many years I was a reporter in New York City, and you know it is the privilege of a reporter to see life as it is, swept bare of hypocrisy and pretense. In those days I learned what these cries of poverty mean. I remember a family I used to know that lived far over on the East Side, over in the old Second Ward near the river. And there was the father that had work sometimes and more often not, and the wife that struggled so hard against adverse conditions, and the little boy in whom the father's heart was all wrapped up. And when the father had work they lived, and when he had no work they did not entirely starve, and that was the difference in that household between light and darkness.

And this boy grew up without knowledge of the
child's birthright of joy—his—no less than any other child's upon this earth. And the years were passing over him and never once had he known even childhood's right to play. Christmas came and meant nothing to him. His mother might take him out and show him the toys in the shop windows, but there was no Christmas in that household. He was nearly six years old before he had even so much as a toy. Then his father made one for him at the Christmas season. He went to the corner grocery and got the side of an old fruit box. The cross pieces of narrow wood were still at the ends and with a knife he whittled them down until he could fit spools to them and so he made a crude kind of little cart. And little Danny Davis—that was the boy's name—tied a string to it and went on the street to play with it. And sometimes he played it was a delivery wagon with bits of stone to represent articles from the grocery, and sometimes he played it was a carriage with pieces of wood for people, and sometimes a fire engine going to a fire. And nothing on earth was quite so dear to him as that poor little cart, because his father had made it. And every night when he went to sleep that cart had to be placed on the bed with him. And one day Danny was out on the street playing with his little cart, and you know that in those days the city of New York provided for its children no playground but the streets and Danny had been running to and fro with the cart, and the people that kept stores there complained about the noise and the policeman on the beat chased him off the sidewalk. So he ran in the roadway. And crossing the street he dropped the string and there his precious cart lay in danger. He went back and stooped to pick up the string and then came a truck and ran over him.

So they took him home and for two or three days he lay between life and death. And he wanted that cart that his father had made and they put it in his hand, and his hand was on the cart when he died.

I went to the funeral, and there he lay in the poor little coffin and his white hand was still holding the
cart that his father had made. And the father looking
down upon him seemed to feel all at once the blank
and hopeless situation of the working class. He went
back in his mind over the days when he had walked
the streets looking for work, and he remembered how
he felt when he came home at night and thought that
he must face that little family empty-handed. And
there seemed to come to him a realization of the wall
that we have erected about his class, a wall no man
may scale or pierce. And as he was looking down upon
his boy I heard him say, "I did the best I could,
Danny."

And there was an epitome of the whole working class.
How many and many a father has beat with bare hands
against the iron wall of the monstrous system with which
we have cursed the toilers of the world. I ask you to go
back in your mind to but one moment of that father's
agony some night when, from a fruitless search for work
he returned to his home. Go back and put yourself in his
place and feel what he felt when the day had passed
and he returned overwhelmed with the sense of defeat.
Then multiply that into a million such cases and on
that add all the black curses with which the system
darkens the world. Add the slum and all that comes
from it, the enforced ignorance of the working class,
hope destroyed and life despoiled; add the horror of
prostitution and the infinite murder of child labor.
Contemplate all this black pyramid of evil that over-
hangs the majority of lives led upon this earth, and
tell me if we have one moment to waste upon any of
these empty proposals of futile reform!

So if these things mean anything to you, if you have
any feeling of brotherhood in your breasts, if you
believe that others are entitled to the rights that you
possess, if you have faith or hope, if right means
anything to you and you wish it to mean anything to
your fellow men, come with us! Come, join hands
with us, for we have entered upon a war against this
system that will never cease until we have swept it
from the face of the earth. (Prolonged applause).
Here we stand shoulder to shoulder and we proclaim
the holy war for an emancipated race. We found here a new religion—the religion of man, man above all, man before everything else in this world. It is more important to us that just one man should be redeemed from misery to life as it ought to be than that miles of Fifth Avenue should be lined with golden palaces. (Cheering and prolonged applause).

We stand for the emancipation of man, woman and child. Of man that he shall cease to be the slave of productive industry and become its master. Of women and children that they shall cease to be the slaves of slaves and have their birthright of joy, light and opportunity. So we proclaim this religion of man and its trinity is Life, Labor and Love. In the sound of the advancing army of united labor you can hear that cry, you can hear the very hymn it sings of the day that is to be—

GLORY TO MAN IN THE HIGHEST FOR HE IS THE MASTER OF THINGS!

(Shouts of approval and prolonged applause).
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