REPORT OF THE
Sharts-O’Brien Debate

Resolved: “That the Citizens of Dayton Should Elect Candidates Pledged To International Socialism”

MEMORIAL HALL,
DAYTON, OHIO,
Sunday, April 17, 1921

Price 15 Cents
Resolved:—"That the Citizens of Dayton Should Elect Candidates Pledged To International Socialism."

Affirmative: JOSEPH W. SHARTS, of Dayton, O., representing the Socialist Party

Negative: JACK O'BRIEN, of Racine, Wisc. Representing the Constitutional Defense League.

SUNDAY, APRIL 17, 1921
Memorial Hall, 2:30 p. m.
Dayton, - - - Ohio

Chairman - - - - L. E. SPEER

Verbatim Report By
FRANK I. BROWN and ISAAC S. DEMENT
Official Court Reporters
INTRODUCTION

When arrangements for the Sharts-O’Brien debate were being discussed between the representatives of the Socialist Party and the representatives of the Constitutional Defense League, certain stipulations were made. The Constitutional Defense League insisted that all money received after paying necessary expenses, should go towards printing the debate in pamphlet form. The League employed the court stenographers and had the tickets printed. The Socialists looked after the renting of the hall. Each side was to receive 1,500 tickets for disposal at ten cents each. Each side was to pay half the expenses of the meeting, together with half the expense of printing the debate in pamphlet form. This was all formally agreed to by both sides, and a contract signed to that effect.

Immediately after the debate, the Constitutional Defense League lost all interest in the further proceedings and decamped, leaving the Socialists to pay the bills. As the Constitutional Defense League had apparently had the backing of the Dayton Chamber of Commerce, the Knights of Columbus, and the American Legion, to the extent that these organizations were advertised in the daily papers as distributing agencies for its tickets, we notified each of them that we considered them morally if not legally bound to make good the League’s share of the expense. The Knights of Columbus replied through their lawyers disclaiming any responsibility. The Chamber of Commerce also disclaimed responsibility but undertook to bring pressure to bear at Racine, Wis., to compel payment by the League.

The expense of printing the debate has been borne by the Socialist Party of Dayton. In so doing, we are carrying out the terms of the contract and also enabling many who could not attend the debate to read it in printed form. We believe this debate can be read with profit by both Socialists and non-Socialists. Both speakers agreed upon what Socialism is, and no time was wasted talking about “breaking up the family,” “destroying religion,” “dividing up,” or other oft-exploded lies about the Socialists. It is something new in Socialist debating to find an opponent really trying to argue against Socialism as an economic problem. Above all this pamphlet will make a fitting epitaph for the Constitutional Defense League and its “Soap Box University,” so far as the city of Dayton is concerned.

LOCAL DAYTON OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF OHIO.

Later: As we go to press, May 16, 1921, word reaches us that the Dayton Chamber of Commerce has demanded and obtained from the headquarters of the Constitutional Defense League at Racine, Wis., a check to cover their half of the expenses.
Mr. Chairman, Mr. O’Brien, Comrades and Friends:

As I look upon this magnificent audience that has braved the elements to attend this meeting, as I realize that probably half of you have never in your lives before listened to a Socialist explain what Socialism stands for, and that this afternoon you are going to allow one-half of your attention to hear what the Socialists have to say for themselves, I want to express the thanks of the Socialist party of Dayton to Mr. Jack O’Brien. (Applause.)

We could not have gained this opportunity for a hearing ourselves. Like Balaam, he came to curse, and like Balaam, he is forced to bless. (Laughter and applause.) We sought this debate eagerly. Immediately when the newspapers announced that a Mr. Jack O’Brien was stopping at the Hotel Miami and seeking a debate with the Socialists, two members of our campaign committee attempted to call him up at his hotel. We were informed that he wasn’t there, but could be reached at Main 545, the celebrated telephone number of the Employers’ Association. (Laughter.) They would have sought him, even at the feet of Mr. A. C. Marshall, the celebrated friend of disorganized labor; but found they were too late. They afterwards located Mr. O’Brien, and I want to say that Mr. O’Brien consented very readily to the terms that were offered; and we come here without any favors that we have asked or that he has asked. We have here a fair field and that is all that we have asked at any time. If we are wrong, we want to know it; if we are right, we want you to know it. (Renewed applause.)

The subject of this debate pertains peculiarly to the City of Dayton. Dayton is a city that boasts 1,000 factories—most of them now idle. (Laughter.) The owners have been down in Florida playing polo, golf, lawn tennis,
indulging in surf-bathing, yachting, and so on, with the keys in their pockets, waiting for a profitable market. The men and women who depend upon these factories for their living have been walking the streets in enforced idleness, or sitting at home in enforced idleness, waiting for the word that will permit them again to earn their daily bread.

Now, this is the supreme question for the City of Dayton, as for every other American city, and I am going to challenge Mr. O'Brien in this debate to solve that unemployment problem, and he is not going to meet that challenge. He cannot meet it, because the moment he attempts to meet it with a remedy he must invade the sacred private property rights of the owners of the factories. Let us examine the population of the City of Dayton according to employment. How do they get their living? There are 150,000 people in this city. Nine out of ten depend upon their own labor, or the labor of the breadwinner of the family, for their support—brain labor, or hand labor, mainly or entirely. There are some of us who may own an extra house or may have a few shares of stock somewhere; may have a little money out on interest, but if we don’t live upon that, if that is not our means of living, we are still workers. We can safely class all who mainly depend on their own labor for support as in the working class. Then that is the vast majority of the City of Dayton—nine out of ten. One out of ten, in number, you will find depends mainly or entirely upon some form of ownership of property. They may also be engaged in certain labor. They may engage in the active superintendence of their factories, as Mr. Patterson, for example, does.

But if that is not their main support, if they depend mainly on the ownership for their support, if they depend upon rents, interest, profits or dividends, then we may fairly classify them as an owning class, those who live by profit, the profiteering class, the capitalist class.

Now, it has so happened that from time immemorial this City of Dayton has had a city government that is in-
variably controlled, not by the nine-tenths majority, but by the one-tenth minority, who own for a living. In all the history of this town the nine-tenths majority have never yet placed in office, in control of the political machinery of the town their representatives to represent their interest. Fifteen years ago, as many of you will recall, the Republican organization in this city was known as the artificial gas gang, under Dr. Lowes; the Democratic organization was known as the natural gas gang, under Ed Hanley. These two groups of interests openly fought each other for the possession of the City Hall. (Applause.)

They needed it in their business. (More applause.) Finally in 1912, Mr. James M. Cox combined the two, watered the stock, and lo!—(laughter)—and lo! immediately we had a combine city government, the famous Oakwood brand (laughter and applause), the non-partisan commission manager form that we are blessed with today. (Laughter.)

Take our present city government and you will see that what I have said as to the minority owning and controlling the city government is by no means exaggerated. We have a city commission of five. Of that five, who are the law-making and governing body of this town, there are two manufacturers; one merchant, one building contractor—four representatives of the owning, employing, capitalist class—and then we have one—now, count him, please—we have one representative of labor, a printer. Four to one!

They consider that a fair proportion for representation by the working class. But even this one lone representative of the working class was not selected, was not put forward for the office, by the working class. He was selected by the Chamber of Commerce, or its political expression, the "Oakwood" Citizens' Committee. He was financed in his campaign by them, and elected by their propaganda; and in all ages of the world the ruling class in every community has known how to select a docile, servile member of the servile class to place in charge of...
the others that are to be held in subjugation. It is a means by which they rule, and it means no more than if under the old south a slave-holder had selected a serviceable and intelligent slave to be the overseer over the slave gang. It doesn't mean that the working class is any nearer its freedom.

Now, look at this government that is ruling us in one form or another at the behest of the owning class of the town. What has it done in this city? I will challenge my opponent to name one thing that it has ever done for the benefit of the working class of Dayton. He can take its record from the beginning to name one thing that it has ever done for the benefit of those who work for a living.

On the other hand, what has it done for the owning class? Two generations ago they gave away the street railway privilege to private capitalists, and for two generations the people of this city, in order to obtain that service, have been compelled to pay high street car fare for miserable service. They have paid tribute every time they have stepped upon a street car.

A generation or two ago they gave away the gas privilege to selected representatives of the owning class who had seen an opportunity for profit there; and for two generations the citizens of this town, in order to obtain that service, have paid tribute to the owning class, paying it in the form of poor gas and high prices. (Applause.) And whenever they were in distress—the owners of the gas company—because their dividends were falling off, all they had to do was to request the City Commission to change the contract so that it would favor them still more. (Applause.)

The same criticism applies to the telephone service and to every other public utility service in this city. They have given away to the representatives of the capitalist class, to the profiteering class, everything that had an opportunity for private profit.

In the matter of street paving and street repairs, they had to fatten the pockets of the contractors every time in
order to have that service performed. The result has been that we have had rotten street paving, we have had rotten bridges, and when this Third street bridge collapsed the other day, they sent to Kansas City, Missouri, for an expert to explain why it had collapsed. (Laughter and applause.) They could have found that out at home. Every one of you should know that a rotten system will build a rotten bridge (laughter and applause), and the cause of the Third street bridge’s collapse you can find in the ballots that have been cast in this town. (Laughter)

And now, as a natural and inevitable consequence they have reached the point where the city has no longer a sufficient income for its work. Therefore, the city government was compelled to borrow right and left. Bonds, bonds, more bonds, emergency bonds, short-time notes, so that today fifty cents out of every dollar of tax money has to go to the payment of past debts. We are paying two dollars, in principal plus interest, for every dollar that is obtained.

Now, they have, after one hundred years of this kind of misgovernment, this kind of robbery, reached the point where the city government can no longer function. What, I challenge my opponent to say, what ray of hope is held out by a continuation of this sort of thing? Here in this city that we have to live in all the year round, not having any Florida winter homes to go to, in this city that we have to live in, what ray of hope do these gentlemen hold out by continuing the program that they have always followed?

Well, the Socialists point to this thing as simply the result of an industrial system that creates an owning group at the top and a mass of wage workers at the bottom who are dependent on that group at the top for their means of life. Wherever you have a system of industry that cleaves society into classes you are going to have a class government because no one can ride two horses going in opposite directions. A man cannot serve two masters, and if you have a city government at all, it is bound
to choose between the interests of those classes, and it will choose invariably for the interests of those who finance the campaigns of the ones that are elected.

We say we Socialists do not believe in a class system of industry; we do not believe in class governments. We would abolish classes, we would build anew upon the fundamental principle of the American Declaration of Independence, that all men are created equal. (Applause.)

If we had our way, we would abolish this industrial system that breeds a few owners at the top and millions of wage serfs at the bottom. We would abolish the system that makes classes, by substituting for it the collective ownership of these factories. We would have, if we could, the public own, and the public control, and we would have them produce, not for private profit, but for use. We would place them upon a basis by which every man would receive for his toil the full social value thereof.

As a consequence, having the full fruits of his labor, and an honest man can ask no more—a free-born American should accept no less—having the full fruits of their labor, everyone, the unemployment problem would be solved automatically, because as their producing power would increase, their purchasing power would automatically increase too, so that they could buy back the fruits of their labors so far as they needed them, and if they had produced more than they could use, they would declare a vacation, but not the kind of a vacation that many of you are enjoying today. (Laughter.)

We say that under a class system of industry, which the majority of the American people still desire to maintain, there must be a class government; but we say we believe in majority rule. He who does not believe in majority rule is dead to the teachings of the American Declaration of Independence and deaf to the teachings of American history.

We believe in majority rule. Who are the majority? The working class are the nine-tenths majority in this town. Therefore, we say we believe in a working class government for this city. (Great applause.)
But you will say "What can they do?" Well, we have chosen Barringer, Farrell and Geisler, because they are working men who have lived their lives among us. We are not so bankrupt of brains that we had to go to Cincinnati or to Joliet. (Laughter and applause.) And, having these three men in power in this city, they will apply correct principles of city government so far as power is entrusted to them. They will apply the fundamental principle of collective ownership and democratic management of the city's affairs.

What can they do? Well, for one thing they can establish a municipal coal yard, and break the grip of the profiteers on the people's fuel. That is one thing that the other crowd cannot do. They have been financed by the people who own the fifty odd coal yards in this town.

Our men could establish a municipal ice plant, even in this bankrupt and beggared city and give the children of the poor, in the summer time, a chance for a cooling drink.

Our men could establish in this city at least an understanding with the street railways, that if they do not live up to the terms of their contract—and they never have—(laughter and applause), if they do not live up to it strictly they will be ousted from their charter, and we will give the people of this town a chance to run their own street railways at cost.

Our men can issue the same mandate to the gas company. We can say: "You live up strictly to the terms of your contract that you have now obtained from the city government. If you violate it in any respect we will oust you from your franchise." And if they undertook to deal with the city government under a Socialist administration as they have in the past, at least we could guarantee to you that our city administration will not surrender to them.

What more can they do? North of the city stands the Englewood dam, and by the erection of that dam there is there also the possibility of harnessing the waters and generating unlimited light and power. With a determined and united citizenship behind them perhaps our three
Socialist candidates, if elected, dominating the city government, might persuade the capitalists who have charge of the Miami Conservancy District board to lease to the City of Dayton the right of generating electric light and power as a municipal enterprise. We could, therefore, with a municipal electric light and power plant, furnish electric light and power to the factories of this town, and we could use the profits from that source to pay off our city debts instead of pouring those profits into the private pockets of the gentlemen who support the present administration. (Loud and continued applause.)

**MR. O'BRIEN**

Mr. Chairman, my Worthy Opponent, Ladies and Gentlemen:

By way of variation this afternoon, I will take up the subject under discussion.

I understood that the subject for discussion today was to be: Resolved, That the citizens of Dayton should support candidates pledged to international Socialism.

In the introduction by the worthy chairman he has outlined, to some extent, the purposes of the organization which I represent; and my worthy opponent has attempted to explain to you under what occasion this debate was arranged. May I say a few words entering into the personal side of this question as to how this debate was arranged?

When I came to this city, representing the League, which has been explained to you, the first place that I stopped into upon arriving in this city was the so-called So-Co hall, or Socialist headquarters. I went to the shrine of the local commissars and there I explained that it was the desire of not Jack O'Brien but the Constitutional Defense League to present to the citizens of Dayton the pro and con of the subject of international Socialism.

We recognize that, on public platform in the cities of Ohio as throughout America, speakers have monopolized these platforms, and, if I may differ with my venerable opponent, I wish to say that the opposition, or the affirm-
ative of this question, has had plenty of opportunity, throughout America, on public platform, of expressing their particular ideas and ideals.

It was the desire of our organization to endeavor to give the other side of that question. Now, as my opponent has said, if they are right we want you to know about; if we are wrong, tell us about it. I want to reverse that proposition. If they are right, let's tell them about it, and, if they are wrong, let's tell you about it. (Applause.)

And so I was in the Socialist headquarters and first expressed my own willingness to present a person on this platform to debate the subject under discussion.

In the words of my opponent and even the chairman there are certain social problems that affect humanity at the present time, not less in the City of Dayton, not less in the City of New York, not less in the United States of America, but throughout the entire world, and the proper solution of these problems does not lie on a local application in one specific city of the United States and even in one entire country of the world. The problems that the human race have confronting them today are on your mind to a great extent. They are in the head-lines of both the so-called—in the words of my opponent—capitalist press and are well pronounced in the head-lines of our Miami Valley Socialist. And, in all of these papers, you recognize that there are these serious problems that confront us and it is the desire of any honest and sincere man, whether he carries the red card of Socialism or whether he recognizes another political or economic philosophy to solve these problems, and any discussion, on a public platform, in the City of Dayton or in America, for the purpose of solving, in the best possible manner, the problems which confront us, is commendable.

You have heard discussed, in the first twenty-five minutes, the affirmative side of this subject, to prove that international Socialism, as applied to our economic and political evils, would be a remedy for the problems of society today.
Now, sometime ago, I had occasion to debate another modest gentleman, who had a remedy for all of our existing problems. He spoke longer than twenty-five minutes, and in that space of time I failed to find one single constructive program or platform or idea which could be applied to American society to remedy these problems which exist today. (Applause.)

He says there is something rotten in Denmark—that does not mean that we need men like Lenin or Sharts to give a remedy for these propositions.

If I had the affirmative of this question, the first thing I would endeavor to do for the clarification of the minds of the people of this audience, would be to define what international Socialism is, so that you, the audience, leaving this hall, will have the knowledge of what that particular philosophy is.

Looking in your newspapers, pro and con, you see two sides of that question. If you look in the Socialist press, if you look in the non-Socialist press, no matter where you look you find today they are calling those who disagree with one another, a bolshevik or a Socialist. That is the truth. And, if you go around an American audience and let them write down the definition of that word, "Socialist," let alone the word "international," you would have the most conflicting array of statements as to what Socialism is. Now, my friends, inasmuch as my venerable and worthy opponent has neglected, possibly, to explain what that philosophy is, I will endeavor, with my youth, to present to you the principles of international Socialism.

When you go to the ballot box, whether next September or next July, when you vote for a candidate and he is pledged to international Socialism, you want to know what that international Socialism is. What is it that he is pledged to? Does it mean the municipal ownership of a gas plant, and does it mean the ridding of our community of corruption? Has the Socialist philosophy a program of eliminating the selfishness and greed and the evils that we have in American society? If not, what is international Socialism? All those in this audience who have
had a definition of that program of Socialism, kindly raise your hands. (Several hands are raised in the audience.) I am very glad that there are several. I am not, at the same time, so clear on the question from the former speaker.

"Socialism," declares Morris Hillquit, "is the ownership in common of all of the means of production, distribution and exchange." I quote word for word. "Any man who does not accept that program, is not a Socialist. There can be no variation from that program." That is expressed by an international authority, Morris Hillquit.

Now, my friends, Eugene V. Debs, has explained very clearly, in a book I have on the desk, that "voting for Socialism is no more Socialism than a menu is a meal," to use his own words. Just because a candidate, standing on a platform, as an opportunist, says to you that there are evils in society, that there is corruption, that there is graft, that poverty is a cancer upon civilization, and that unemployment today is walking throughout the land, is no sign that the application of the fundamental idea of Socialism, in contrast with our present economic system, would remedy those evils. And so we must analyze the proposition under discussion, international Socialism.

International Socialism is expressed in America through three particular factions. One is the Communist party, another is the Socialist party of America, and the Industrial Workers of the World, so-called I. W. W. Each one of these three factions represents international Socialism as embodied in the question which is being expressed here today.

The difference between these three factions is, to a great extent, a proposition of tactics, as to how the Communist, the I. W. W. or the Socialist, would apply to our American society and to the world the principles of international Socialism. The ultimate goal is the same.

In every political platform expressed by the Socialist party there are two separate things. One is immediate demands, so-called reformistic program, and the other is the ultimate goal. On the one hand the immediate de-
mands are the bait, are the vote-catching proposition, in the words of William Bross Lloyd, a leading Socialist of America, who has spent more money in this international Socialist movement in America than any other human individual on American soil. He says that all platform planks and immediate demands, which are expressed so beautifully by the political opportunist of the political Socialist party, are bunk. And William Bross Lloyd should know. He has been a member of the party for years.

When they stand on the platform before you and express certain denunciations of local conditions, that is not Socialism. In Milwaukee we have a particular instance of that. In Milwaukee we had another hurry up, get-it-over quick sort of a fellow, who stood on the platform, in 1910, by the name—a mayor—of Emil Seidel. (Laughter and applause.)

I thank you for the opportunity for a drink.

Emil Seidel said, just like my opponent has said of the platform and a local political situation. He said: “Why there is corruption in the city government. There is waste and graft. Why, in the year 1910, and I refer you to statistics, it cost the citizens of Milwaukee $900,000 to run their city government, and that is waste. There is corruption; there is graft. Permit us economists of the Socialist philosophy, permit the Socialists to come in and take over your city government and we will solve that problem. We will economize. We will save for you.” And they did. In 1911, Emil Seidel, on the practice-what-you-preach platform, was elected mayor of the City of Milwaukee. He took over the reins of government. In one year the Socialist administration, in complete control, exercised their means of economy, and they saved the city to such an extent that it cost an increase of $500,000 in the next year. And that was the economy of Emil Seidel. (Applause.)

The next year they continued to economize to the extent of an additional $400,000 in running the city government of Milwaukee.
Now, I don't say, my friends, I don't say that because he was a Socialist politician, I don't say that because he accepted the Marxian theory of Socialism, that he was any worse than the politicians which preceded him. I only make this statement to prove that our worthy opponent, and his members, have no wand of magic to pass over the City of Dayton and reduce the cost of government by some magical application. (Applause.)

No matter who is running the affairs of the city government, it still costs money, but I want to say that there was a promise made of economy. I want to say that those politicians who went into office, went out; that when they got into office they were human individuals, and, in spite of the fact that my opponent was inconsistent enough to make two separate declarations, one which is charging the fault of our present economic evils to the fact of our industrial system, and then because there was something wrong in the votes which were cast I want to take the latter course, and say that it is true; it is possibly wrong with your votes that we have these evils in society, and that there are graft and corruption.

Now, how will we solve the problems which confront us today? I am not here taking the affirmative to present a remedy for the existing evils. The only thing I am charged with doing in my thirty minutes—(laughter)—the only thing that I am charged with doing is to present the negative. But on the other hand, for the benefit of those who have applauded, I will endeavor to introduce a more constructive remedy for the existing evils in society than my opponent will do, in the next thirty minutes. (Laughter.) And I challenge him to show where any place in the civilized world, the principles of Socialism, applied to any evils in society, have ever presented the people with a constructive remedy for any existing evils. (Great applause.)

Now, my friends, please applaud with your minds. I want to take every minute of this.

In the first place, international Socialism is not a new thing. The principles of international Socialism are ap-
plied in different parts of the world. Before my opponent sat on this platform there had been others declaring that our present society was wrong.

We must understand where this idea of socialism comes from before we judge its merits or demerits. On May 5, 1818, Karl Marx was born, and that man was the first individual to introduce in a platform, or so-called working program, the principles of international Socialism. They were embodied in 1847, when in London Karl Marx and Frederick Engels wrote the Communist Manifesto, and that was distributed throughout the entire world. That is the Bible of my opponent today. Not because he accepts it as such, but because their party endorses the principles of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.

What are the principles of Karl Marx? What are their economic ideas and philosophy? It is this, that society is divided into two classes, as my opponent has explained, on the one hand the so-called capitalist class, and on the other the proletariat, two classes in American society and in the world. And that those in the so-called upper or capitalist class constitute a separate division in our economic life, and that there is a struggle on in American society, social, political, economic and every other way, between these two classes, and that struggle must go on until the working class, as he terms it, takes possession, of the means of production, distribution and exchange, and abolishes the so-called class system which exists today. That is one of the principles, the principle of class struggle.

Now, my opponent says, in the same words as the platform, that the Socialist party expresses the principles of the working class in the State of Ohio.

Now, let us see how it does. I want to quote for you from the Ohio state constitution of the Socialist party, to bear me out. The Socialist party of Ohio is the expression of the interest of the workers of this state; 725 members at the last count, 725 members who are subscribing to this principle, who express the principles of the vast majority,
nine out of ten, of the citizens of Dayton, Ohio, who are represented in this so-called class.

Now, my friends, throughout the state of Ohio, we have a good many thousand citizens, men who toil—the Communists arise from time to time and say “We are the self-savior of the working class.” Lenin arose in Russia and said “I am the savior of the working class,” but he put “poor”—and the “oo” kept rolling out of his mouth—stretched out the word “poor” to such an extent that the tears would come in the eyes of the poor working class. And in the state of Ohio the Socialist stands on a platform that is absolute throughout all Europe with the working class, as he calls it, and declares himself the self-appointed savior of the working class of the state of Ohio. Take it throughout America, we have a larger body of workers not affiliated with the Socialist movement in America.

In the first place, who are these appointed saviors of the working class. The highest pinnacle in the United States in the Socialist movement you find in the international secretary, who appears at this international conference in some other part of the world, Morris Hillquit. (Laughter.) Is Morris Hillquit one of those with calloused fingers? Is he a man who arises out of a home of poverty and misery? I visited him a very short time ago. I went into New York City to find Morris Hillquit, and there on Riverside Drive in New York, the richest street in all of New York, in a mansion, was this self-appointed savior of the working class of America. There was Morris Hillquit, a majority stockholder in the Burns Coal Company of New York, a multi-millionaire if you please.

Does he arise in the morning from the economic oppression of the so-called capitalist system and step out into a car and drive away? I personally visited his house. Twenty-seven years ago Morris Hillquit came to this country from Riga, Russia. He landed over in New York and accumulated millions of dollars under this “oppressive” capitalist system, and he today is one of the leaders and the pinnacle of authority in the Socialist movement of the
United States, accepted as such by his appointment as delegate at the international conference.

Now, my friends, I am not standing before you today as a self-appointed representative of any class—of the working class or of the so-called capitalist class. Whenever a man stands on a platform and opposes a Socialist in debate, they immediately charge him with being a capitalist, or in the pay of the capitalist class of America. In other words, any man who opposes their particular idea, any man who opposes that multi-millionaire's philosophy, who lives on Riverside Drive in New York, is one of the capitalist class of America.

Now, my friends, there are people in this country, workers, who are in the majority, as my friend has admitted, and who have established in America the working man's government, and who have time and time again denounced the principles of Socialism; time and time again, an organization in this country, the largest one that there is today, of organized labor, five millions of people, the largest organization, have condemned the principles of Socialism and have bitterly fought Socialism from the time that it organized on December 7, 1886, up to the present time.

But in the Communist Manifesto, as I gave awhile ago, there are certain principles that the Socialist desires to apply to society today, and it is of those principles of which I wish to speak, and it is the application of them in which I am interested.

In the first place, my opponent says that he believes in majority rule. I want to charge—if I haven't the time I am willing to prove it the next time I come up to the bat—I want to charge that the Socialist party is undemocratic as charge No. 1. I want to charge that the Socialist party does not represent the workers of America in any sense of the word, and that less than 20 per cent in the Socialist party by their own classification, and I have copies of their own documents to prove it here, are men who are represented in the class of labor. Morris Hillquit said in the year 1909, standing on a platform, that the Socialist
party today is in the position of being a working class movement, minus the working class. (Laughter.) It is true. Morris Hillquit told the truth. The men who are debating for the Socialist party on platforms throughout the country, no doubt they are of the working class, no doubt they are those who toil in the factory in your community, and receive their psychology by the application of the psychology of the workers.

The principles of international Socialism, if applied to the proposition of unemployment, to the proposition of a free press, the proposition of democratic government, that is what you are interested in today. You are interested as to what is a concrete constructive program. Any man can denounce society as it exists today.

In the first place, when you vote for a man to go into office in this city, politically, you elect a man for the purpose of representing, not only yourself, but the majority opinion.

In other words, today we have a different set of political ideals and ideas. On the one hand possibly the Republican party expresses certain ideas; on the other hand, the Democratic party; on the other hand, the Prohibition party, and other parties that exist in American society, they come before the mass of the American people, irrespective of a class interest, and say to them: "These are the principles of government which we desire to introduce in America. These are what we term the proper application of a certain idea which we as a group believe in." Then the next day after election, after you have declared that you accept a certain principle with a certain amount of compromise, the next day every man ceases to be a Republican, a Democrat, a Socialist, and the man that goes into office becomes a representative of the people. He has no strings from any particular faction whether it be the Chamber of Commerce or what. (Laughter). He has no strings from any particular direction. He has no concrete acceptance of a plan by which a group from behind controls him. That is the desire in your heart;
whether you accept it or not, that is the desire in your heart.

Well, what is the exact situation? What is the situation in the City of Dayton, Ohio? When you elect a man on the Socialist platform, the next day he ceases to be a representative of the majority opinion, but confines himself to the dictation of the small Socialist local.

I want to prove that case to you. I want you to challenge me on that. I mean by this that in this city there is a local, a Socialist local of less than 200 dues-paying members at the present time, in this city. That 200 absolutely control their representatives which are introduced by their particular party, and are voted and accepted by the majority of the people. They cannot represent the majority under any circumstances. The first thing he does is to appoint the different men in office. If it were a chief of police, he cannot appoint a chief of police to represent the majority. He don't appoint. If he is elected on a Socialist platform he walks down to this local and says, "Who shall I appoint?" And then Comrade Sharts, Farrell and others assemble together in that little local and say "Here is the man that you will appoint." He signs a resignation before he is even nominated, declaring in that resignation that if he is elected into office he will accept the dictatorship of the Socialist local of the City of Dayton in all matters. He signs a blank-date resignation, and he places that in the hands of the local Socialist soviet, and this local Socialist soviet, at any time, when they decide that he is not acting in the interest, not of the majority of the people, but of that Socialist local, they merely put a date stamp on the document and send that in, and he ceases to be a commissioner or a mayor or a governor or lieutenant governor. Every man, even my opponent, I challenge him to disprove this proposition, when he was nominated for attorney-general, was required to sign by the Socialist party, acceptance of that proposition, that he could not represent the majority opinion of the people, but after he became a member of
this particular office he immediately was under the dictatorialship of that small Socialist local, of less than 200.

Now, carry that to the other extreme. Now, let us say that some club or society, let us say the Chamber of Commerce, if you please in this city, had an application blank, and the men who went into office, as my opponent is charging the Chamber of Commerce of controlling certain city commissioners, if a man going into office signed a resignation, and when he signed that resignation, he said to the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce, "Here, you take this resignation of mine, and when I cease to function in the interest of the Chamber of Commerce—that minority of people, which is a larger number than the Socialist local—when I cease to function in the interest of that particular organization, you put the date in the date line and send it in, and I lose my position as commissioner or as mayor of the city." That is the proposition that confronts us today as to whether or not the Socialist party is under the dictatorship of a particular local, or can represent the majority opinion, as my opponent says. (Great applause.)

JOSEPH W. SHARTS

I have listened in vain to hear from the lips of my opponent any acceptance of my first challenge. I pointed out that in this city of Dayton there is a problem of unemployment that must be met. Here is the situation, and it enters into the lives and homes, I am sure, of several hundred who are listening to my words now. There are probably 20,000 wage workers out of work who are willing to work. That means that they want to work. It means that they have to work sooner or later or they will starve to death. It means that in this city they, and the ones dependent on them, are slowly drawing near to the gulf of destitution and despair. Now, that is the American problem. That is something that enters into the American homes of this town.

The gentleman comes in the name of Americanism, and I ask him what is he going to offer as a remedy for that American situation? What is America? Is it the small
one-tenth, property-owning group that you will find in
every American community? Is it their group of prop-
erty interests? Is that America? (The voices from the
audience: "No!")

The fact that you men and women have to live upon
your labor for your support, does that make you un-Amer-
ican? The gentleman comes to you as a 100 per cent
American. I say—(laughter)—I say if he can't meet that
problem he is only a ten per cent American. (Great ap-
plause.)

I wondered in advance how the gentleman was going
to meet that problem, and a friend of mine supplied me
with some of the literature that the Constitutional Defense
League is putting out. I have in my hand "Lesson 2" of
the 12 lessons that are guaranteed to enable you to drive
every Socialist in a panic from the platform. (Laughter.)
On the last page of "Lesson 2" I find this remarkable
statement, and I want you, when I read it, to notice how
carefully the gentleman has lived up to his own lessons.
Notice. "Remember, in all your propaganda, don't allow
the Socialist to maneuver you into the position of defend-
ing capitalism as it stands today." (Great laughter and
applause.)

Very well. If he won't permit me to maneuver him into
a position of defending capitalism as it stands today, then
he is compelled to present his remedy. What is it? For-
tunately, the gentleman hasn't left us in the dark on that
question. It is true that he showed some reluctance here
to set forth his remedy. He said that he wasn't here to
present a remedy—simply to show that our remedy was
no good. (Laughter.)

But again, I have the benefit of the printed literature
that is to abolish Socialism. I find here a synopsis of the
12 lessons that are given by the "soap box university." The
fourth lesson is thus described: "A study of the alter-
native to the Socialist program which Americanism offers.
How much of the indictment is true? The program of
social reform. Meliorism is the thing, not revolution." There
is the remedy! "MELIORISM." (Laughter.)
Now, the gentleman has been careful in defining Socialism, but he has not once offered any definition of "meliorism." (Laughter renewed.) I will challenge him to produce an explanation, to expound "meliorism" for our benefit.

Now, we Socialists are here to learn. If we find that this gentleman can point out that Socialism is impossible, impracticable and that it is un-American, and that "meliorism" will do what is needed, here is what we will do. We will disband the Socialist party, and we will organize a "meliorist" party. (Great laughter and applause.) But if this "meliorism" which the gentleman teaches, cannot meet the unemployment problem that enters into these American homes, I say we have no time to spend upon it. We have to face a crisis that confronts us now. If the Socialist remedy for this is not sufficient, something or other must be found. Is it to be found in capitalism, either as it stands today, or after a program of social reform? It seems to me that one thing is quite evident to anyone who will carefully consider what is at the basis of unemployment. When thousands of men have been producing in the factories, and these factories shut down, and drive them out into the streets to wait, what is the trouble? The trouble is that they have produced more than the market can take. Does that mean that everybody has too much food; that everybody has too much clothing; that everybody is amply sheltered and has all the luxuries of life? Not at all. At the very time that these men are turned loose from the factories and told to wait until the market can absorb what they have produced, there is also more suffering than at any other time. More people out of food; more people lacking clothing; more people lacking shelter, and in our Dayton homes today you will find hundreds of families too proud to tell what they are enduring as they wait in the vain hope that these factories will open again.

Now, why is it that the market suddenly disappears? The explanation seems to be quite simple. If you take all of the wages of all of the wage workers and compare
them with all of the prices of what they have produced, you will find that all of the wages, no matter how high they may mount, will be only a part of the market price of what they have produced. And it must invariably be so under this capitalist system, because between their wages and the market price must come in the profit of the private owner of the factory.

Now, if you have a market to absorb what these men produce you must have people that will be able to buy what they have produced. If the working class as a whole are able to buy back only a part of what they have produced, what is left? What is to be done with the surplus? Who will buy that? The capitalist class? They are too few, and Mr. John D. Rockefeller, with his billion dollars, cannot eat any more food than any person here present. He cannot wear any more clothes at any one time than any of us. He may buy a few more houses. He can occupy only one at a time. The capitalist class cannot absorb the surplus. They are too few. Their physical powers are too limited. What is left? The surplus must be dumped on foreign markets, but all over the world you find that the capitalist system is producing the same results, and all of the capitalist countries are seeking foreign markets to dump their surplus goods too. So that you come to that kind of a pass, where all over the earth the working class is producing too much food, too much clothing, too much shelter, too many luxuries; therefore, it must starve, and starve in idleness.

That is the crowning absurdity, the comic feature, the tragedy of our civilization, that they who have produced these things must starve because they have produced too much, and the capitalists must wait until they can unload those things at a profit.

But, this gentleman has not accepted my challenge with regard to Dayton. I asked him to point out one thing that this city government, tracing it back to its origin, has ever accomplished for the working class in the city. One thing. He has not accepted that challenge, either. But he has adopted tactics that, perhaps, are familiar to those
who have studied the criminal court. (Laughter.) Wait a minute. (More laughter.) There is a peculiar method that is adopted by pickpockets. (Laughter.) Now, wait. I am not making any personal allusions. I am simply illustrating certain logical things here. If a pickpocket is going to pick a pocket and he finds a gentleman of rather simple demeanor on the street he will say: "Well, Uncle, isn't that a tall building? Look up at the tall building." And he will be going through his pocket. "See, 'way over there. What is happening 'way over there? Isn't that awful?" The gentleman did not want to talk about Dayton, but he said: "Let's go to Milwaukee." (Applause and laughter.) He said: "Don't look at Dayton. Don't look at Dayton. Look at Milwaukee." He said: "Ah, ha! Back in 1910 the Socialists elected Emil Seidel mayor of the town, and they had a program of efficiency and economy, and they were in there for two years, and what did they do? They increased the city debt." That is true. We do not have to go to Milwaukee to find that out. Just let me point out one thing. The gentleman did not bring it out.

When Emil Seidel was elected mayor in 1910, there were three tickets in the field, the Republican, the Democrat and the Socialist, and when, in that triangular fight, the Socialists had captured the city government, or, the better portion of it (they did not have a complete control), immediately, the Republicans and Democrats got together, organized a non-partisan movement, familiar to us. (Laughter.) And they combined their forces to beat the Socialists out before they would do any more damage to those property rights. At the subsequent election the Socialists increased their vote, but they could not beat the combine. A few years later, however, they put up Daniel W. Hoan as their candidate and beat the combination. (Applause.) And Mayor Hoan is in office today. (Applause.)

But, it is true that they do not have control of the city council and they, therefore, cannot institute any kind of measure of constructive influence.
What is the lesson that we may draw from this little reference to Milwaukee? It seems to me, first, we can draw the lesson that the people of Milwaukee did not think so poorly of the Socialist administration after all. (Applause.) Evidently it satisfied the majority of them. And, when you consider that, in order to beat the combination, the Socialists had to go up against the united business interests of the city, the manufacturers' association, the employers' association, all of the funds that those gentlemen of those corporations could pour into the campaign, that they had to go up against a united brass check press, that they had to meet every kind of influence and misrepresentation that could be poured out against them—it seems to me that we might safely draw the conclusion that there must be something vital and something particularly beneficial in the Socialist administration of Milwaukee that brought them back again. (Applause.)

We may draw another lesson from the reference to Milwaukee. If you want any constructive program by the Socialists in this town, do not just elect Barringer, or Farrell, or Geisler. Let's have all three in and give them a chance to dominate the city commission, so that when they do undertake to do a thing they can put it through. (Applause.) But, don't—(further applause)—don't imagine that, by putting one man into the city council, or two men, I should say, in the city commission, putting them there as a minority, you are going to have any test of what we can do in the way of a constructive program. If you like what you are getting, vote for the other gentlemen from top to bottom. If you like it stick to it.

Ah! But, listen, listen. Mr. O'Brien says: "Why, the Socialists are only a few of them working men. Why, there is Morris Hillquit. He is a rich man." Mr. O'Brien says he has accumulated millions of dollars. Well, I won't undertake to deny that, because I never saw his tax return, but I know enough of Morris Hillquit, and I have seen some of his operations, to know that, while he has probably accumulated a fair amount of means, he is not a rich man. I wish he were. I wish he had those millions
that the gentleman has ascribed to him. If he had, we would have a campaign fund in the Socialist party. (Applause.)

But, he says: "Look at their hands. Their hands are not calloused, and yet they want to overturn the capitalist system." Well, if we wanted to retain the capitalist system, would not that be an indication that we liked to work for other people? If we voted for the capitalist tickets, if we were trying to put back into power the gentlemen that already have absorbed about sixty per cent of the visible wealth of the world, if we were trying to put back into power the gentlemen that have been draining our surplus value from our labor all these years, it would seem to be logical for us then to say: "Well, we like to be poor. We like to work. We like to live on starvation wages. We like to be put out in the street to wait till the factories start again." Why, we Socialists do not like to work any more than the rest of you. (Laughter.) And, if we have got brains enough, we are going to continue to exist under the capitalist system, and we are going to get what we can so long as the capitalist system satisfies the majority of you. We have not taken any vow of poverty. Why should we put on overalls? We are not immolating ourselves upon the altar of sacrifice. Do you think that we are offering ourselves as victims of the capitalist system? No. We realize that this capitalist system is an exploiting system. We realize that, if we are going to live, the thing for us to do, as long as you insist upon it, is to play the game of competition as the others do. We do not need Socialism half so much as some of you that we are trying to get to see it. (Applause.)

But, he says, only twenty per cent of the membership of the Socialist party are working men. I think he got his figures a little bit crossed. I have a card on which I jotted down those figures, which he has used before, taken, I believe, from the Socialist campaign book of 1912, page 37: Socialist membership data. Nationality—notice this, those of you that think we are such an un-American party—nationality: American born, 71 per
cent. That is pretty fair. I do not think the Democrats can show that in this city. (Laughter and applause.) Occupation: Laborers, 20 per cent. That is what the gentleman was referring to; craftsmen, and we class them as working men, 41 per cent; transportation—that means railroad workers—we class them as working men—5 per cent; farmers, 17 per cent. Then we have, also, some professions and so on. But you can see that the bulk of our membership are really those who have most to gain by Socialism. (Loud applause.)

MR. O'BRIEN

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am to conclude in thirty minutes after which my opponent has ten minutes for his final rebuttal.

You know it is the good old American game to "pass the buck." My opponent seems to be trying to place me in the position of presenting the affirmative of this question. I am here to present the negative to that question of Socialism.

As I told you before, I am going to present in this thirty minutes my idea of a remedy for the existing evils in American society. At the same time I want you to be fair with yourselves regarding your political views. I want you to analyze in your mind right now, reach, if you can, for one constructive thing that my opponent has shown you which would remedy the condition of unemployment.

Now, insofar as voting next September, or October or December for the Socialist party as a remedy, they have done that in Milwaukee, as my opponent has said, and they have a Socialist administration, and the percentage of unemployment in Milwaukee is even worse under the Socialist administration than it is in the City of Dayton.

Now, I don't cite that to you to try to point out that Socialism was the cause of that. I want to point out to you that you cannot, merely by electing those certain candidates, solve the problem of unemployment. As I said before the great old game of "passing the buck" is
that proposition of “well, he didn’t tell you any way of how to solve the problem of unemployment.” He neglected to do that. Let my opponent show you how to remedy these things. Now, the two opponents are pointing to each other to show you a remedy for the existing problem of unemployment.

Now, I am not here representing a political faction which has a “canned” formula of remedy, for this proposition of unemployment. My opponent ran out of material—surprising for a Socialist—and reached down for a book put out by the Constitutional Defense League in presenting its case. He said “he is here representing Americanism.” Now, I haven’t brought that in because it is so significantly in contrast with the fundamental proposition of Socialism, that I didn’t want to bring that up for discussion today. I have not mentioned the word “Americanism” in my entire thirty minutes in this debate. I am at a loss, like a good many of my friends here, trying to find out how Socialism would remedy this problem. I am here to permit the Socialist party to explain, through their duly accredited representatives, to the people of Dayton how they would solve the problem of unemployment. It does not merely mean to get on the platform and say there is unemployment, but what would remedy it? How have they done it in other parts of the world, and how will the fundamental principles of Socialism apply to the society of today?

Now, Americanism as a political philosophy has done more in this country to remedy the problem of unemployment and the other injustices in American society, than anything else.

Now, take, for instance, your proposition of Socialism. My friend told you about the pickpocket. My opponent of the Blackstone knowledge of criminal law told you about how to reach down into the pocket of a man by drawing his attention out there to something else. It is true. It is a fact. It is exact, he could not have put it any better, tells you how the Socialist politician plays for your votes by telling you of the views over there, how the
Socialist soviet system would solve all your problems, reach down in your pocket for your votes. (Loud applause.)

They have done that same thing from one end of this country to the other. And he says they have put the Socialists right back into offices. Oh, apparently he has not recovered from the shock of the last two elections. In Milwaukee they have had a chance to apply their solution to the unemployment and the other problems, and the result is that in the county election they swept every man who was then in office as a Socialist from the county sheriff down to the smallest man in the county of Milwaukee.

That was last November. And then again, the unemployed and the others who listened to these poor explanations of how the starving people were being driven down and ground down under the capitalist system, they listened to the explanation of the Soviet leaders of America, to such an extent that at the last election, only a week or so ago, they threw them all out of office, except one woman on the school board. They put them all out of office that ran for office.

Now, then, they have had several years, as he has already explained, to solve the problems in Wisconsin. I mention that because he may insist in Dayton you have not had a Socialist administration tampering with your city government and solving your particular local problems. The problems we have are too deep and fundamental for a certain group of energetic live men to step forward and solve them overnight. But this hurry-up get-it-over-quick sort of a fellow has been in American life for years. They have preached it everywhere in this world from that time, 1847; they have stood on the same platform that Karl Marx stood on in 1847. I quote you word for word, that "capitalism as a system of society has outlived its usefulness." That was in 1847. And then later another prominent Socialist declared the same thing. But in spite of the fact that Karl Marx predicted that our system of society had outlived its usefulness, it is a
significant fact that through these years of "robbery," from 1847 to 1914—remember that in 1847 there was only four thousand million dollars of commerce in the world—and after capitalism had "outlived its usefulness," in 1914, when another get-it-over-quick sort of a fellow made a prediction, there was forty thousand, four hundred and twenty million dollars of commerce throughout the world. The steamship tonnage, when Karl Marx made this great prediction, was 864,000, but in 1914 it turned out to be 27,988,000, that is, the world's steamship tonnage, had outlived its usefulness. The world's cable miles was 1,500 in 1847, but after these years of "poverty" and "robbery," after Marx had said that capitalism as a system of society had outlived its usefulness, it is a significant fact that the cable mileage was 33,500 mile, and it is still going on.

When Marx made that same prediction the miles of railways throughout the entire world was only 2,400 miles, and in 1914, when another leader came along, it was 729,000, to refute the Marxian idea that capitalism, as an idea of society, had outlived its usefulness. There was a cotton production in the world of 1,000 million pounds in 1847. It was 12,000 million pounds in 1914.

And since the time that Karl Marx said that this system of society had outlived its usefulness, it is a significant fact that we have had in this country, and throughout the world for the first time, our telephone introduced. No one spoke on a telephone when Karl Marx made the prediction that the capitalist system had outlived its usefulness; no one at that time had ever ridden on a street car or a train. Radium was not discovered. There was no such a thing as a phonograph; there was no such thing as the modern machinery of today. All the great inventions you have had you will find they were from that time, 1847, to the present day. Karl Marx told the people in his day that our system of society was corrupt and had outlived its usefulness and that they were ready for Socialism.
Another prominent Socialist, Robert Blatchford, in England, said that a social revolution would come in the world in 1890, and after they had predicted time after time that our system of society had outlived its usefulness, we are going on progressing every day. And just as long as the Socialist agitator stands on the platform and denounces society, telling you everything is wrong, points out from the platform the existing evils of society, there is another man, a constructionist, who is going along and practicing and carrying out the program of social reform, which remedies the evils in society of the world. He is the man who has a program and a vision of social reform. He speaks of meliorism as against revolution.

I don't believe you need any explanation of the two words when thrown in contrast. We are explaining in that book that as a remedy for the evils in America and the world we do not need revolution. I mean by that, in America, to solve the problem of unemployment, it can be better solved under our existing form of government with its means of change, than it can be under a Socialist commonwealth.

Let me give you an illustration of that. We have got along for 130 some years under this system of society, getting better all the time. (Laughter and hisses.)

Feigenbaum, a leading Socialist authority, and very few Socialists (renewed hisses) deny that fact, that society is becoming better every day. (More hisses.) As an illustration, take the 49 men who sat around the table and wrote our constitution of the United States. They had no electric lights, even, at the time. They had not the commodious building that you have been sitting in today and listening to a lecture; they hadn't the means of living that you have in your homes; they didn't live in houses with fine floors, the largest majority of them.

Now, if you disregard the actual conditions in your analysis of conditions, trying to find a remedy, you will never arrive anywhere. The Socialist tells you we are getting worse. Karl Marx predicted the same thing. If you believe that the people of the world are getting worse
every day under our present system, then no doubt you are a revolutionist, because you don't take into consideration that program of social reform, which has decreased the 15-hour day to 12, and the 12-hour day to 10, and the 10-hour day in some places to eight. You don't recognize that change going on. You don't recognize the change in the clothing that you have. (Laughter and hisses.) You don't recognize at the same time the standard of living. Compare your standard of living in this country. Well, at the same time he made the same declaration I am making here today: Don't have your opponent make you stand on a platform of defending the system called capitalism as it is today. No man ever did that sensibly, because we oppose their evolution, because we become better every day, because our laws, the fundamental law of our land, embodied in our constitution, simply are a restriction upon the greed and selfishness, if properly applied, and then our constitution permits people to go along and produce for society the things that are essential.

Now, he quoted the Declaration of Independence. The man who wrote that, Thomas Jefferson, struck the greatest blow against Socialism that any man ever gave when he said in these words that "That government which governs least, governs best," and that is an everlasting truth. That government which governs least, governs best.

If the Socialist tells you about the rotten politics today in our American system and throughout the world, he would increase the rotten politics by extending the institution to our shops, our factories and our mines and thereby have additional corruption which he has expressed as existing in our social order.

Our evils are not due to a specific outlined idea of a group or a small minority in society. Most of our evils in society come from the individual selfishness, or individual greed and the fault that we find with human nature. (Applause.)

Just like if you had a set system of society passing through, and you try to apply a set system to society, human nature gets right in the way. Just like if you say
everybody in America wears straw hats; when down in the south they would be warm with straw hats, but up here the snow is on the ground, nature interferes with it, and so it is with people here today.

Now, people today, whether they are Socialists or non-Socialists, in my idea are looking for a better and a more equitable distribution of the things of life; they are looking for a better system of society, but that can only come by social reform and not by revolution.

What do I mean by revolution? I mean the Socialist party of America, of which my worthy opponent is the spokesman, is an organization formed on our body-politic, not for the purpose of reforming our institutions, not for the purpose of making our social life better, but for a violent revolution. (Applause.)

Let me quote to you. In the platform of the Socialist party of 1920, the last one, let me quote to you their own words. Now, this is not some individual spokesman of the Socialist party. This is not some man who is speaking for himself, but this is the official declaration of the entire party who accepted that platform: "1920 Socialist party convention. The Socialist party seeks to organize the working class for independent action on the political field, not merely for the betterment of their conditions, but also and above all with the revolutionary aim." (Applause.) Declaring in that platform that the desire of that organization is to bring about a change by revolution in this country. Oh, they make quite a job of it in the platform, telling you that revolution means evolution, trying to spell revolution without an "r" and evolution with an "r" and rifles without an "r" and bombs and bullets without a "b." (Hisses and derision.)

My opponent was the chairman of that convention. My opponent was there when that declaration was written. And I charge them with being in the opposite direction from American, because of that very declaration for revolution—when our idea of government is based upon a change embodying the idea of social reform.
Do you suppose that my opponent arose on that platform and said, "No, we don't want revolution. We want evolution. We want to change this by an evolutionary change, taking over industry after industry, applying the principles of collectivism?" What did he say on that platform when he held the gavel? Did he call the man out of order that introduced that proposition of revolution?

Let me go a little farther. Here is a booklet published by the Socialist party—William Bross Lloyd's booklet on the "Socialist Party of America." In that booklet, put out by the organized body at the Socialist party headquarters in Chicago, the man who wrote that booklet said, stood on the platform in the City of Milwaukee and declared these words; this is what he means by reforming the present system of society; this is William Bross Lloyd: "We want to have bombs; we want to be ready so that when the time comes, we can put our men in the proper places: we want to have rifles; we want to blow up the banks." These were the words William Bross Lloyd declared to the members of the Socialist party in the City of Milwaukee.

Now, if you stand for revolution, which is un-American, if you stand for that program of revolutionizing the present system of society, in order to better your condition, then you stand for the program of the Socialist party, and you belong to the Socialist party.

On the other hand, if you stand for an orderly change, such a change as has been going on all the time in this world for the last 133 years in America, then you stand for the American constitution which specifically provides for a change in an orderly manner by amendment to the constitution of the United States.

Nineteen amendments we have had to our constitution, each one of these amendments making the change orderly and without revolution.

And so I say to you as American citizens today, the reason why I am on this platform is to introduce the proposition of social reform. There is no set law to remedy unemployment. Has he explained the cause of it?
The cause of unemployment today is because our industry is organized on an international basis, and because of that fact you recognize readily that we could use or dispose of the materials in America that we have overproduced, over in Europe, if they could buy them.

The economic condition, the law of supply and demand, is something that works 24 hours a day whether you believe it or not. How do they remedy it? They had the whole government in their power in Soviet Russia. Over there the Socialist government was brought to the people and they tried for three years and a little more to introduce their problems, and today they have cut down the morale of the Russian people. They have lived on what has been produced under the old rotten Czar system, and still Lenin has declared himself that the government is a failure. Why is that? Simply because he has found, where he has applied the principles of international Socialism he has failed. And down through history, from the Paris commune in every instance, wherever Socialism has been tried out in the world, every case has been a failure, each and every case, and I challenge my opponent to introduce a single instance, a single time, where Socialism applied, either to a national scale like in Russia, or to a smaller community, where the people have socialized all the means of production, distribution and exchange, where it has ever been a success. And I can mention 200 times where it has been a failure. Why is that, why has it been a failure? Because they have tried to put a certain specific economic system on a people who were not prepared for it, and who could not live under such a system, because human nature revolted against the tyranny which was necessary to enslave the people.

I have not much time left this afternoon to present my side of the case; but I want to say this, that, like my friend, I have no specific plan to remedy unemployment. If he will come out squarely on this platform, he will admit that he has none. There is no concrete remedy for unemployment. You do not get these remedies over night. You know the quack doctor that stood on the
street corners in years gone by. He had a cure for everything, and taurantula cures, and he says it is good for whatever ails you. If you ever tried it out you found out that things don’t happen just over night. There is no set law or way of remedying conditions over night in America or throughout the world, and the only way it can be remedied is by finding the specific evil in our society and applying the principles of social reform, to pass legislation, if necessary, curbing the injustices in a particular system. Now, to do that we have equality in voting in the workingman’s government—(derisive laughter)—because every man has a right to the ballot. Morris Hillquit will refute any Socialist in this audience in his book on the history of Socialism in the United States, in which he declared, Morris Hillquit, that authority on Socialism, that working men have equal political rights in America. And if you laugh and say they haven’t such political rights, you are refuting Morris Hillquit, who states that the cause of Socialism has failed to grow in this country because it springs up in certain places and then dies again. Who says that you haven’t political equality under our American form of government? Another check to Socialism here in the United States is to be found in the political institutions of the country. The working class in European countries, were as a rule, deprived of political rights enjoyed by other classes of citizens and the classification of these rights was the cause that drew them together in political union. In the United States, however, the working men enjoyed full political equality at all times and they have only in the last months organized politically on a class basis. This book is endorsed by Eugene V. Debs. (Applause.)

So he refutes the proposition wherein a man says that any particular combination can control this government. As my worthy opponent told you you can go down into our institutions and make your correction. He has already told you that the trouble was at the ballot box. But you don’t have to vote into power people who have a proposition of revolution, who have a program to overthrow and
destroy the entire system, any more than if you owned an
automobile and you wanted to apply the principles of
meliorism, if you please, on the one hand and revolution
on the other. You go on the one hand into that car, and
if it stops you will find out where the trouble is; you will
remedy that particular condition. If the carburetor was
not functioning right you will either buy a new carbur-
etor for it, or else you would repair the carburetor. You
would not destroy the motor or destroy the car, carrying
out the principles of Socialism or revolution. (Applause.)
But, instead, you would carry out the idea of meliorism.
You would apply the remedy where it was needed.

If you have a rotten political system in your city and
you are not satisfied with it, it does not mean that you
have to accept the vulture of civilization as a remedy for
your evils, who pounce down upon the political system at
certain places and says that the remedy for it is Socialism
and they hold out to you the hand of revolution, time and
time again. Show me a single case where Socialism came
into active operation without a violent overthrow by revo-
lution. Take the Communist Manifesto; take any of the
Socialist leaders throughout the country, and you will find
that everyone of them has declared or desired to bring
about a change in this country by a revolution and over-
throw the present-day conditions. I deny the proposition,
I deny the idea that we have to overthrow our condition
and perhaps inject new evils into the social order.

If we want to remedy our things, it is the same proposi-
tion as in your house. If you have any changes to make in
your house, you go about it in an orderly manner. If you
want a room enlarged you have it enlarged. If you want
more light you have electric lights put in, or some other
form of lighting system. You don’t put a bomb under-
neath the foundation of the house and blow it up. And
so it is with your economic system. And so it is with your
form of government. If you have any changes to be made
in the form of government you don’t have to take a vote
of a political party which declares every time in confer-
ence. The local state organization has declared its policy
with the Third International at Moscow. This Third International program is for a violent overthrow of the institutions in every country. Now, in some countries of Europe, they have a good reason for trying out Socialism. In Russia is a good place to try it out. The old system was so rotten they didn’t have political equality. Compare this country with Russia prior to that time. Socialism did not overthrow the Czar of Russia. Compare this country with the time that it was under the political corruption system under the Czar and find the tyranny that existed there. There are two extremes in society. This extreme rule was embodied on the one hand in the extreme rule of the tyrant, and the rule of the mob on the other; and the golden mean between the two was found when our American form of government was given to the people, and that was the right of equal franchise, the Republican form of government.

And I challenge my opponent in closing here this afternoon to introduce a concrete method or remedy of unemployment so that you, leaving this hall today, will find sufficient reason to go out and vote for the Socialist, like they have done in other communities, who have made the same promises, and wherever and whenever they have got into power they have failed to carry out their promises, even where they had on an international scale in Russia, and I have the documents put out by the Socialist party where Victor Berger and every other Socialist have denounced the Soviet Russia and the I. W. W. because they say no longer liberty exists over there under that rotten system.

Now, I want to say in concluding, that measuring up this proposition, measuring up the program of formative things, a program which is constructive, if this program will provide a remedy, every person in this audience should join in order to carry it into effect. First, have they proved it to you? If they ask you to overthrow the present system, they must have a working plan of operation, a working program. Don’t be fooled with a pickpocket scheme like they were in other places, like they
were at Milwaukee where they told you about these social reforms, where they baited you with promises of a remedy to change local conditions. They were all the time pointing up to that thing and reaching down in your pocket, spreading the propaganda for Socialism. Socialism, as an economic theory has failed in every instance, and it takes no less an authority than Victor Berger to show that Socialism has failed in every crisis.

Take the community which has been formed less than thirty-two miles from here, the Yellow Springs community. That was one of the experiments of Socialism contained in Morris Hillquit’s own book, showing the failure of the Yellow Springs community of Socialism. So, in the words of my opponent that he applied to Socialists, “we don’t want to work unless we have to,” we are all of that same calibre, and the quicker we quit kidding ourselves into the idea that we are going to find some great unknown thing, whether you call it Socialism or Bolshevism, or any other system which will provide an easier way of living, and you won’t have to work, the quicker we will be able to solve our problems. Because, after all, we live on a ball of earth, and sunshine and moisture and rich soil from which the hand of labor brings up the things necessary for us on this earth, the things which we live on, the things which help produce the things, and then under any economic system, we must devise a practical plan of bringing up from this earth, whether by machine power or muscle power the necessities, and if we don’t provide a system of society which will at least provide as much as we have today, then there is no use of talking about the inequitable distribution, because if they cannot maintain the present standard of production, it will be like the proposition of a woman cutting a pie. If she is to cut a pie for you, if you talk all the time about cutting a pie equally, so that all of the members of the family can have it, the father and mother and the children, and she goes into the pie-cupboard and finds there is no pie-filling to make a pie, it is useless to talk about it. And the same thing about the hat. You have heard this illus-
tration given probably by me and by others: whenever any man has another economic system to introduce, which calls for the overthrow of the present one, you want to tell him the same thing as the man who has the hat, and he says “Bill, your hat is rotten; you look bad in it. Throw it away and come home and get one I have got there.” If you are a sensible man you are going to find out first if the hat will fit you. (Laughter.) Whether you look just as well, whether you look just as good. Look into it, and then if you do, throw it way. But you always wear your hat home.

And so about our system of society. Before we join hands with the international Socialist movement, which has declared for the overthrow of society, it is our aim, it should be our common logical, sensible program, to find out a solution for the evils, and find out whether that program, applied to those conditions, will remedy them, and in its application will solve the problems that we have today.

Out of all the camouflage words that you hear speakers use, from the platform, out of all the bunk literature that you get from either side of this question, measure it in these terms: What will it do for you better than your present system, and what has it done in the past? One last illustration I want to make to you. If you had a doctor working on some patient, your wife or your sister, and that patient was sick but was getting better all the time, and finally a new doctor came along and said “I have a special prescription. If I can apply that prescription to your patient I will cure him.” You listen to him. Isn’t it fair to say to him, “Well, the present doctor, by a slow means, of course, is making my patient better all the time. He is getting better. Now, before I take you over, where have you tried out this prescription? Where has it been successful? If it has been successful before then I will possibly try you out.”

And so it is with your economic system. If you ask that doctor, “Where have you tried out this prescription?” and he says, “Well, the people who have tried it
out are down in the grave-yard," you are not going to try out that prescription of that doctor on your wife or sister.

And so it is with your economic system. You have a system today which, regardless of how you can make figures lie to suit your own ideas, it has been getting better all the time, a gradual improvement; shorter hours of labor, shorter periods of unemployment. From time to time you will always have unemployment, and just as long as your system shows improvement, just as long as you look over in Europe and see in Austria 3,000 die in one month of starvation, and look over in China and see hundreds of thousands of Coolies are working for 12 cents a day and working twelve hours a day, and all over the world, and find, like Austria, and find that we are better off economically, and politically and socially and in every other way, when Dr. Socialism comes to you and says "I have a prescription," it is safe for you to say, "Where have you tried out that prescription? Where will I go to see the fruit of it?" And if he says "You have go to go down to the economic grave-yard to find the results of my prescription," I am safe to say here: you are ready to stick to the present system. (Great applause.)

MR. SHARTS

The gentleman uses an illustration of an automobile. Well, if I had an automobile I had been trying to patch up for a hundred years and it wouldn't work, I think I would get a new automobile. (Laughter and applause.)

As for unemployment, if we produce for use instead of profit we automatically, as I stated in the beginning, increase the purchasing power of labor to equal its producing power. So much for overproduction. That ends it. (Applause.)

The standard of living: well, when he told us how we had been getting better all the time, I thought I would take up some statistics I have here from the report of the Industrial Relations Commission, but when I heard the
audience on that subject I thought I wouldn't need that. (Laughter and applause.)

Listen! There is one thing I want to take a moment for out of this precious time. I am sorry if any Socialist in this crowd expressed his disapproval by a hiss. (Applause). Why, we want this gentleman back again. We want to debate with him again and again. (Applause.) Now, you cannot hiss a man like that and expect to get him back again.

He says, and he read from the Socialist platform of the convention of which I was a chairman, that we are in favor of revolution, therefore, violence. Send for the police! I was chairman, and, therefore, an “advocate of violent revolution.” What is a revolution? The revolving of a wheel. In 1787 the old Articles of Confederation were abolished, and a political revolution instituted the present federal constitution, and not one drop of blood was shed. (Applause.) And that was no less a revolution because it was done quietly.

Now, friends, when we take up this subject of violence I think the gentleman is in rather an embarrassing position. When have the Socialists ever advocated or practiced violence? Was it down here in Cincinnati when they took Herbert S. Bigelow, kidnapped him and tortured him in the Kentucky hills? Was it the Socialist party when they took John Steiger, down at Hamilton, kidnapped and horse-whipped and tortured him? Was it Socialists doing it? Where is there any advocacy of violence on our part? Here is the state platform of the Socialist party. I am sorry I haven't the national platform.

I just want to read what the gentleman must have had before his eyes, and yet he didn’t quote it. (Laughter.) Here it is: “Force, violence and lawlessness are not in our program. They will come, if come they do, not at our instigation, but because of the failure of the masses to recognize in time the necessity of proper political action.” (Great applause.) “Ah!” he says, “don’t look at Dayton. Look at Russia! Look at Russia!” Well, they have had
some hard times over in Russia. They have had the whole imperialistic world against it, and in spite of that they have beaten back the Japs in the East; they have beaten back the French and the British; they have beaten back the Poles; they have put down counter-revolutions financed by our American capitalists—(great applause)—and you have heard me tell on the stump time and again the story of that London couple, 'Arry and 'Arriet, and how 'Arry had died, and 'Arriet consulted a Spiritualist medium and asked 'Arry how he felt and "Where are you, 'Arry?" He said he "felt fine," "in 'ell." (Laughter.) He didn't want to come back to 'Arriet.

You don't find these Russian communists seeking a return to the capitalist system. They may have it hard, but at least they are their own masters. They are not the victims of an owning class.

I will tell you what is the trouble with the Soviet system. I am going to read it. This is why these capitalists are conducting their propaganda against it. This is from the constitution of the Soviet Republic: "The Soviet Republic considers work the duty of every citizen of the republic. It proclaims that 'he shall not eat who does not work.'" (Applause.) Why, the gentleman didn't need to go to Russia to find an instance of violence. He could have found it nearer here. He could have found it in Ireland. Frank P. Walsh, the legal counsel for the Irish Republic has sent me a pamphlet that I must hold in confidence at present until the proper time for its publication, but I am not violating any confidence when I state to you that it contains page after page of instances where children six years of age have been taken out and shot; where they have killed the mother with her babe at her breast, standing in the cottage door; where they have taken children 12 to 14 years of age and massacred them; where they have taken the Irish city officials from their beds at midnight and murdered them in the presence of their families. Go over to Ireland and say to them—go over to Ireland and say that capitalism means peace and prosperity, and Socialism means violence, and they will
answer you, "You lie; it is British capitalism that is destroying us!" (Tremendous applause.)

He talks of violence as the program of the Socialists and he says "Capitalism means peace and progress and prosperity," and says it in the face of the acres of white bones in Flanders. (Applause.) Swarms of orphans and widows in those blackened and smoky ruins of towns in France and Belgium! He says we Socialists stand for violence. Why, we opposed the war!

But gentlemen, comrades, what is the fundamental message that he brings to you? He says that you must be content with that lot in life in which you find yourselves. You must submit to a system that dooms you, and your children after you, to a career of industrial serfdom in which you depend upon the mercies of the owners for the privilege of earning your bread. He says that, and he says it in the name of Americanism! Why, this country, this Americanism was conceived and born in the thunderstorm of a people's discontent against exploitation! This is the land where Patrick Henry flung his words of warning into the teeth of an encroaching king and class. Have you forgotten that? They used to teach it to us in school before the capitalists undertook capitalist propaganda in the schools. This is the land where the Sons of Liberty for ten or fifteen years before the American Revolution organized their locals, their branches, as we have; they gathered under their "liberty tree" in Boston, and over that "liberty tree" those Americans raised the red flag. (Great applause.) And on the day that they put the red flag over the liberty tree in Boston in Hanover Square, that night they dumped the British tea into Boston harbor. (Applause.) This is the land that wrote upon the morning sky, in letters of flame, the grand sentences of the Declaration of Independence. Have you forgotten what they say? The first words pronounce the doom of exploitation. The first words pronounce the end of those that would take from men the fruits of their labor and live at ease and idleness upon the sweat of other men's brows. The first sentence, "that all men are created
equal!" Equal in what? In the right to life, to liberty, to the pursuit of happiness. How can you have those rights when other men own your job, and can say to you when you shall work and when you shall not work, how much you shall get and how much you shall not receive? If you have a class system of society that cleaves you into two classes, those that own and those who are under the heel of those that own, where do you get your life, your liberty and the pursuit of happiness? Do you believe that the fathers that marched with bloody feet at Valley Forge had in mind this kind of an existence for their children? Was this their idea of life—that you should submit, that you should accept industrial serfdom? Why, they pictured their children, they dreamed of them standing tip-toe on the earth and reaching for the stars as free-born men and women. And it is we who come to you, we Socialists, with this message of equality, this right to life and liberty and to the pursuit of happiness, and we are the ones that proclaim to you the message of one hundred per cent Americanism today. (Great and continued applause.)

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