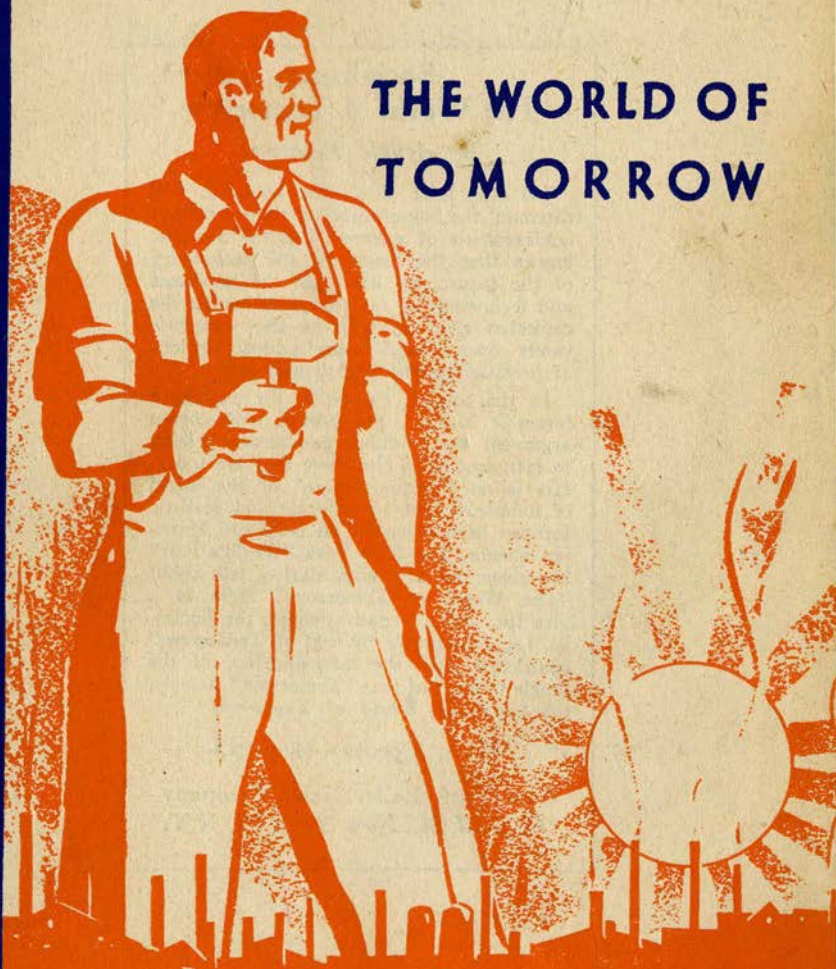


SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

SOCIALISM

THE WORLD OF
TOMORROW



BY ARNOLD PETERSEN

PRICE 5 CENTS

Socialism: The World of Tomorrow

By Arnold Petersen

No one, least of all the Socialist, will discount the importance of the marvelous achievements of science. But the Socialist knows that the machines and technology of the future, no less than the machines and technology of the past, will benefit the capitalist class as long as they are privately owned—and bring added burdens of privation to the useful producers.

In the present pamphlet, the author, a foremost Marxist, has proved with cogent argument how machines can become a boon to man instead of the curse they are today. His is no "dream picture" of the world of tomorrow, but an accurate and realistic forecast based squarely on facts and Marxian science. The New York "World's Fair" has given rise to a great deal of talk about "The World of Tomorrow." Here is a plea for, and a presentation of, the Socialist, i.e., *humanity's* "World of Tomorrow," contrasted with the intensification of the jungle concept of that "Tomorrow," namely, the *Capitalist World of Tomorrow*.

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THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

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ARNOLD PETERSEN

1953

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SOCIALISM: THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

Aid the dawning, tongue and pen,
Aid it, hopes of honest men;
Aid it, paper—aid it, type—
Aid it, for the hour is ripe,
And our earnest must not slacken into play.
Men of thought and action,
CLEAR THE WAY.

—Charles Mackay.

I.

Like men, who, keeping a vigil in the long dark night, ardently pray for the coming of the dawn, countless thousands today, groping in the deep, dark night of capitalism, pray for the coming of the social dawn. They have toiled so long in the gloom that they have almost despaired of the ending of the night. Yet, though the darkness seems to deepen, hope is kept alive at the thought that the night *cannot* last forever, and that dawn *must* follow night. As they wait—so few of them labor to shorten the night!—they ask themselves: What will it be like in that World of Tomorrow? Shall we be able to endure the dazzling brilliance of the new sun? But perhaps the new day will come cloudy and sunless? Or perhaps we shall not live through the night?

The questions, the doubts, are natural. For ages the hope of a better world has been kindled in the breast of man; again and again that hope was announced as having been realized, and yet each time the masses—the oppressed and the despoiled—were left

standing, clutching in their eager hands what proved to be the empty shell that once contained the meat of a happy life, with liberty in affluence and peace, offered to all, but in the end available to the few only. And each time the many bent their backs, and bowed their heads, in continued misery and resumed slavery, under new masters. And so it has been throughout the ages. Is there, then, no hope? Is there to be no Tomorrow worth living and striving for? Is the World of Tomorrow to be but a brutal or refined satire on the World of Today? Shall we conclude, with mournful Macbeth, that—

“Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in *this* petty pace from day to day,
To the last syllable of recorded time;
And [that] all our yesterdays have [merely]
 lighted fools
The way to dusty death”?

And that—

“Life’s but a walking shadow—a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing”?

There are those who would answer “yes” to these questions. They are the so-called “wise men,” the supposedly learned and holy men who insist that most men were made to slave—born, as Thomas Jefferson satirically suggested, “with saddles on their backs. . . . a favored few booted and spurred, ready to ride them legitimately, by the grace of God”—while but a few were privileged to enjoy the riches of the earth and the pleasures of the world, without toil, the slaves being given promissory notes on a life everlasting after “dusty

death" as reward—notes, which gave the issuers no embarrassments since the holders never returned with demands that they be redeemed!

But the answer is not in the affirmative—it is a ringing NO. For the claim that the mass must, in the nature of things, toil in slavery, is a superstition, a villainous lie. It is a claim which once received the support of reason, the reason being the deplorable, but undeniable, fact that the human race in the past could not produce enough to provide plenty for all. Wherefore, rather than maintain a static society with general equality in universal misery and never-ending ignorance, the race chose a division of society into classes, whereby the many toiled that a comparative few might be relieved of physical labors, thus enabling them to carry forward, and on to ever greater heights, the torch of knowledge and learning, with the resultant, gradual elevation of society generally, and an ever greater extension of the field of the arts and sciences. Twenty-four hundred years ago the Greek thinker, Aristotle, wrestled with this problem. The society in which he lived rested on human, or chattel, slavery, yet Aristotle and his contemporaries always spoke of democracy, liberty, equality; but in order to be consistent they had to evolve a system of philosophy (political economy we might loosely call it) through which it is demonstrated that slavery was a natural thing; and slaves were not spoken of in terms of human beings, but in terms of property, precisely as was once the case in the Southern states. But in considering the state of slavery and the status of the slave, Aristotle was driven to the necessity of dividing slaves into two kinds: those who by nature were slaves, and those who through "accident" became slaves. He asked the question:

"But is there any thus intended by nature to be a slave, and for whom such a condition is expedient and right, or rather is not all slavery a violation of nature?"

In answering his question Aristotle arrived at this ingenious and, to his class, comfortable conclusion:

"There is no difficulty in answering this question, *on grounds of reason and fact*. For that some should rule, and others be ruled is a thing, not only necessary, but expedient; *from the hour of their birth*, some are marked out for subjection, others for rule."

Perfectly simple, if you look at it the right way! What Aristotle in effect is saying is that some men are by nature intended for slavery because nature so intended them! But previously he had assumed that some men are necessarily born with brains mostly, and others with brawn mostly. "For," he reasoned, "he who can foresee with his mind is by nature intended to be lord and master, and he who can work with his body is a subject, and by nature a slave. . . ." The fact that in the course of time the "natural born" slaves would become men of learning, and of great intellectual aid to their not infrequently brainless masters, Aristotle overlooked, as, for instance, Aesop, who lived almost two hundred years before Aristotle's time and who was renowned for his wisdom and learning!

But Aristotle is not to be ridiculed for his inconsistencies, for, as has been already stated, they sprang from the fact that progress required that some should toil in order that others might maintain and carry forward civilization and progress. In his own words, Aristotle at one and the same time lays down the premise of, and solution for, the problem of slavery. For he said that if every tool "could accomplish its own work,

obeying or anticipating the will of others; . . . if . . . the shuttle would weave and the plectrum touch the lyre without a hand to guide them, *chief workmen would not want servants, nor masters slaves.*" In other words, slavery, inequality, classes, poverty and wars, etc., would be unnecessary if there were automatic or semi-automatic machines in existence; if we had power looms, electric fans, steam engines and self-moving vehicles, and other mechanical contrivances which obey or anticipate the will of others—if doors, for instance, would open of themselves, anticipating to the very second the will of the person who approaches the door; or if we had musical instruments which operate mechanically, as for instance, the phonograph, the radio, and so forth. If only (Aristotle in effect reasoned) we had these things, *all* could enjoy the affluence and liberty and ample leisure otherwise reserved exclusively for the privileged in society. If only we had these things?—but we do have them! Was then Aristotle wrong? Is social evolution a fantastic concept that means nothing? Is progress a chimera, or civilization a delusion? No—Aristotle was right. Social evolution, progress and civilization are neither fantasies nor delusions. Mechanically we are indeed in the year 1939, but in the social use and proper application of the mechanical production principle, and in the distribution and general enjoyment of the things produced mechanically, we are still in the year 320 B.C. when Aristotle lived and wrote! In nearly 2400 years we have made absolutely no progress with regard to the relation of the majority of the people to society as a whole. In an age of abundance we still have slavery, exactly (i.e., in essence) as in the Aristotelian age of scarcity, and falsely the modern ruling class, illogically invoking the claims of antiquity, still insists that—

"those who think must govern those that toil . . .," forgetting conveniently that those who toil do the thinking also, while the leisure class has become a parasitical class, pure and simple. Instead of striving for mechanical labor and abundance toward freedom for all, under capitalism we are now striving to thwart mechanical and technological progress, to destroy the very abundance that constitutes the condition and basis for the free life, in order to preserve class privileges and slavery—wage slavery—but slavery nevertheless!! The form of slavery has changed, but the substance and horrible effects of slavery are unchanged, or have grown worse in many respects. The forms of governments, of ownership of property, have changed, but in substance nothing is changed. As yet the mass of the people still believe that a *bare living* (a "living wage"—i.e., a slave's compensation) is all that they can hope for, all that they dare expect—what, in fact, they are deliriously happy to receive! — exactly as the slave hoped, expected and (contrary to the modern wage slave) *invariably received*.

And who is it that inculcates in the minds of the masses the insane notion that we may *produce a la* Edison, but that we must *distribute à la* Aristotle? Who is it that rationalizes that economically, productively, we may remain in 1939, but that socially, distributively, we must go back to and vegetate in the age of Aristotle 2400 years ago? Who is it that says we must be content with a slave's pittance in an age that no longer has the material and ethical basis and justification for slavery? Who is it that says that we must be content with our miserable lot — with our poverty, with the squalor and filth surrounding us, with our joyless existence—and all that follows therefrom? Why, our plutocracy-serving college professors; our politicians (as

for instance President Roosevelt who has boldly and presumptuously declared that the workers simply need "a living wage"—that "the wage earners of America do not ask for more"); the parasitical clergy ever eager to recommend the next world, because they cannot explain this world, as a witty American statesman once said! These and others in the same camp are the people who at the present time fill our ears with talk about the "World of Tomorrow"! Men and women, who live, and speak in terms of the World of Yesterday, with respect to social economics and ethics, prate about the "World of Tomorrow," when *their* "World of Tomorrow" (in point of mass production and distribution of the things produced) would inescapably show a still wider gap between possibilities and performance; a still greater widening in the Aristotelian contradiction; and a still fiercer conflict between the classes! In short, and to repeat, a still more unjust distribution of the wealth produced by labor alone! The fairyland which these "World of Tomorrow" apostles have created in the Flushing meadows—or rather which the workers have created for them—and which blatantly they call "The World of Tomorrow," is a mockery and a taunt, however beautiful it may be to behold, and however great a tribute it is to the genius, skill and infinite capacity of labor. For it emphasizes the fact of the monstrous contradictions and absurdities enumerated in the foregoing, and the emphasis receives a peculiarly fitting setting by reason of the fact that the one who presides over this "World of Tomorrow," Mr. Grover Whalen, is the gentleman who, as Police Commissioner under a corrupt Tammany Hall regime, caused innocent workers, assembled in a great city square, to be brutally assaulted and clubbed by his bluecoat myrmidons!

To speak of the World of Tomorrow in terms of the freer, more beautiful, more abundant and peaceful life, without implying or accepting Socialism, is either to be the victim of a grand illusion, or guilty of a monstrous fraud. For without Socialism, there will be no World of Tomorrow, no dawn of social and human regeneration. Without Socialism, the dark night will persist and deepen. Yet, so horrible have grown the miseries of the vast majority, so insane the contradictions resulting from capitalist misrule, that it seems almost unbelievable that the direct connection between cause and effects is not instantly perceived, especially by the chief sufferers, the workers. Already, nearly 150 years ago, one of the great Utopians, Charles Fourier, pointed to some of these contradictions, observable even in those early days of capitalism. "The present social order," said Fourier, "is a ridiculous mechanism, in which portions of the whole are in conflict and acting against the whole. We see each class in society desire, from interest, the misfortune of the other classes. . . . The lawyer wishes litigations and suits. . . . the physician desires sickness. . . . The undertaker wants burials; monopolists and forestallers want famine, to double or treble the price of grain; the architect, the builder . . . wants conflagrations, that will burn down a hundred houses. . . . etc."

Observe the contradictions, multiplied a thousand times since Fourier, in our present "ridiculous social mechanism": Wonderful machines are invented to lighten labor and increase wealth. The workers are rendered superfluous, thrown on the scrapheap like so many obsolete pieces of machinery; and no sooner has the new wealth been produced than enormous quantities of it are destroyed in order to raise the prices, as, for

instance, when farmers are ordered to slaughter their "surplus" pigs, or burn their "surplus" corn or cotton, or to plant less corn and cotton. And all this, while millions starve! Munitions interests, having instruments of murder to dispose of, incite wars in order that they may make fat profits, and those who helped to produce these instruments of murder are sent to the battlefields to kill with, or to be killed by, these very things! The more productive the workers are, the sooner they find themselves without jobs, bereft of means of making a living, for this very abundance made possible through their productive labor has rendered their services unnecessary, at least until the goods produced have been disposed of in the market, or destroyed in one way or another. The granaries and warehouses are groaning and bursting with the wealth stored (produced by labor alone), while from 12,000,000 to 15,000,000 workers in this fabulously rich land are starving, begging for a mere crust! Dictators in countries forced to the wall in the desperate jungle struggle of capitalism order an increase in the production of children, and then invade and pillage foreign lands, pleading that they must have more room for their rapidly growing population! Science is making it possible greatly to extend the span of human life, but the greater the life-possibilities, the less the means and opportunities, under capitalism, of sustaining life! Young men and women are trained in our colleges and universities, only to find that capitalism offers them no chance to turn that training to useful or profitable purpose! This is true to such an extent that it has become the object of legitimate satire, as for instance in the cartoon depicting droves of young college graduates making for picks and shovels, crying "W.P.A.! Here we come!" Diseases flourish because vested interests

either profit thereby, or because prevention would cause these interests to suffer pecuniary losses. A recent example was presented in the *New York Times* (December 1, 1938), involving compulsory pasteurization of milk, and amalgamation of small distributing companies, in Great Britain, to control typhoid and tuberculosis. The private interests affected "raised such an outcry that 130 of Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's supporters in the House of Commons [representing these private interests] threatened open revolt"! The result was that the bill finally introduced did not contain the compulsory pasteurization provision, despite the fact that, according to a report published four years ago, "40 per cent of the milch cows in Britain were infected with bovine tuberculosis." And so it goes—contradiction upon contradiction, madness multiplied a thousandfold! And the intensification and glorification of these contradictions, in the guise of a World's Fair, they call "The World of Tomorrow"!

III.

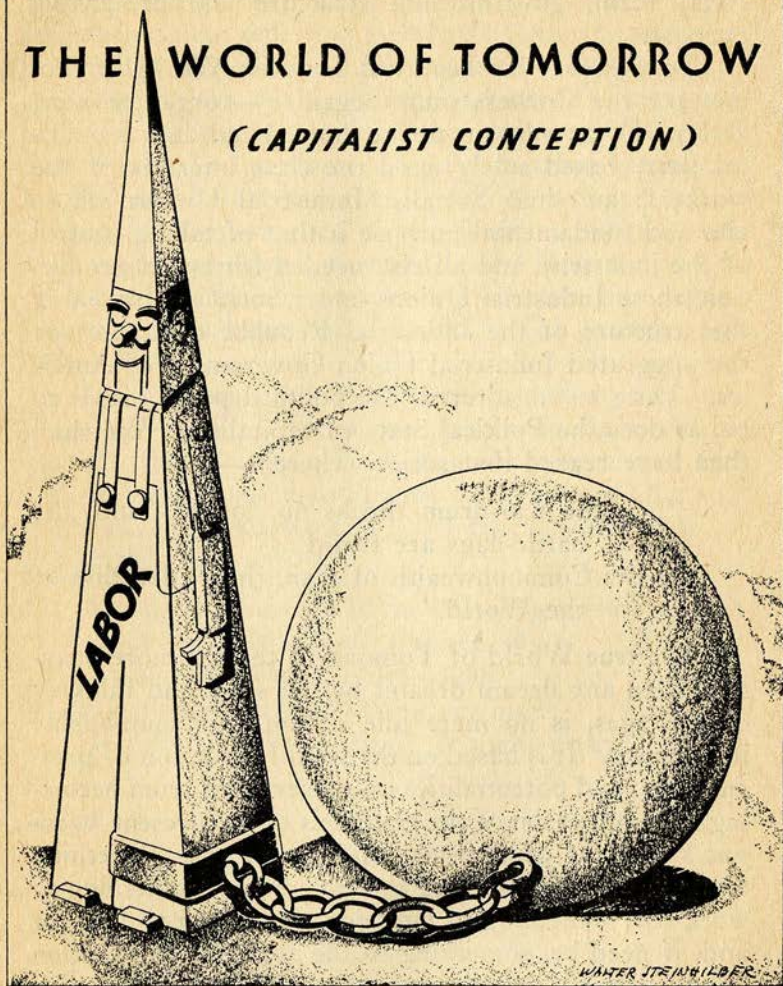
But there *will* be, there *shall* be a World of Tomorrow, a world that will know none of these criminally absurd contradictions, none of the miseries that beset the mass of humanity today, none of the agonizing terror which haunts millions of wretched human beings today. And that World of Tomorrow, we repeat, is Socialism—Socialism, the hope of the oppressed; Socialism, the dream of the ages; Socialism, the restorer of sanity in a fear-crazed and property-mad world; Socialism, the organizer of mass production and equitable distribution among the producers, with plenty for all; Socialism, the banisher of competition in individualism, and the preserver of individuality in cooperation; Social-

United States where not even differences in language justify the chopping up of a country that is almost a continent into 48 utterly meaningless parts. Instead of political government, with politicians elected supposedly to represent with impartiality a heterogeneous constituency with conflicting material interests (a patent absurdity which in practice results in the ruling class elements being in fact alone represented)—instead of such a political government of and by politicians, and *for* capitalist interests, we of the Socialist World of Tomorrow shall constitute a government democratically deriving its representation from *industry*, each industry being represented, from bottom up, by *workers* (useful producers) through gradually ascending deliberative and planning bodies, concerned with such practical things as the quantities and kind of useful things needed to insure an uninterrupted flow of the good things of life in abundance; the number of hours required for labor in the various industries; the proper distribution and exchange of the machinery and things of immediate consumption needed nationally and internationally, the erection of plants of production, of administration, education, etc., etc., as well as the building of dwellings for the happy denizens of the Socialist Industrial Republic. And also to provide for the needed physical means to keep in continuous operation educational and recreational institutions, at the highest known and ascertainable standards. To provide, in short, for a society of high culture and all the leisure compatible with the particular stage in economic development. Given a social production machine capable of turning out use-values in practically unlimited quantities, the work of such an *industrial administration* becomes in the main statistical and coordinating, apart, of course, from the cultural departments which require men and women

especially trained in educational work and in cultural activities generally. Obviously, the technological requirements will in our Socialist World of Tomorrow receive primary consideration, since they contribute to the material basis on which is reared our cultural superstructure. Technologically, the endeavor will be to produce a maximum of the good things with a minimum of effort. Culturally, the endeavor will be to produce the highest type human being regardless of cost. In the Capitalist World of Today the primary consideration and question are: Does it pay? In our Socialist World of Tomorrow the chief question will be: Is it needed or desirable, and socially beneficial? And is the individuality of each safeguarded without sacrificing the blessings of cooperative effort? The rest is of little or no consequence. In the Capitalist World of Today mass production methods are extended to the education of the youth. In our Socialist World of Tomorrow we shall multiply mass production in industry (and yet reduce the hours of labor), but in education the purpose will be to develop the individual—to make the student conscious of the fact that while he can no more exist apart from the collectivity than he can go to live on Mars, yet, his individuality is what matters — **INDIVIDUALITY IN COOPERATION**. In the language of Marx, in the Socialist World of Tomorrow man will remove the fetters trammeling his individuality, and develop all the rich capabilities of his species. Contrary to the tenets of decadent capitalism, which decrees that man lives only for the State, Socialism (in which the State is in fact no more) decrees that man's social and economic organizations exist for his convenience to which they are and will remain wholly subordinate. And thus Socialism, the World of Tomorrow in the Marxian definition of the Socialist Labor Party, is

THE WORLD OF TOMORROW

(CAPITALIST CONCEPTION)



Drawn by Walter Steinhilber.

the direct opposite of capitalism, both in its philosophy, its historical conception, and its economics, as well as in social form, governmental structure and productive purpose.

To achieve this beautiful Socialist World of Tomorrow the workers must organize — organize *now*, and merely as a means to the desired end, into a political party based solely upon the class interests of the workers; and into Socialist Industrial Unions whose aim and fundamental purpose is that of taking control of the industries and all else needed for social production, these Industrial Unions under Socialism becoming the structure of the Industrial Republic of Labor, or the integrated Industrial Union Government of America. Once so constituted, the political party ceases to be, as does the Political State of capitalism. We shall then have reared that society wherein—

“...the war-drum throbs no longer, and the
battle-flags are furl'd

In the Commonwealth of man, the Federation of
the World.”

The true World of Tomorrow, though more beautiful than any dream dreamt by the seers and thinkers of the ages, is no mere idle dream, nor soap-bubble iridescence. It is based on the solid foundation of present facts, and potentialities only prevented from becoming facts by reason of the trammels of the present worn-out system of capitalism. At present it is something to think about, something to argue about, something to work for, something to fight for, something to live for and, if need be, something to die for! Its realization lies wholly within the present possibilities, its attainment entirely within the grasp of mighty, industrially organized labor!

What will be the ultimate destiny of man in the glorious Socialist World of Tomorrow? No one can possibly know. We do know that on such a noble foundation man will rise to heights that we, with our present limited vision, cannot visualize. "Do you ask," says the author of "Looking Backward," "what we look for when unnumbered generations shall have passed away? I answer, the way stretches before us, but the end is lost in sight. . . . With a tear for the dark past, turn we then to the dazzling future, and, veiling our eyes, press forward. The long and weary winter of the race is ended. Its summer has begun. Humanity has burst the chrysalis. The heavens are before it."

And thus we greet the dawn—Socialism, the real, the true World of Tomorrow, where no slave will be found to bend a weary back, but where free men and free women, in noble and happy fellowship, shall stand erect, casting shadows that shall reach to the ends of the earth!

"Far, far away above the rumbling thunder,
I see the splendor of another day,
Ever since infant Time began
There has been darkness over man;
It rolls and shrivels up! It melts away!"

INDUSTRIAL FEUDALISM

ON THE MARCH

(An address delivered before the annual state convention of the
Socialist Labor Party of Pennsylvania, Hotel Mayfair,
Pittsburgh, Saturday, March 18, 1939.)

PROEM.

A new terror stalks the earth—new in form and immediate objective, old in essence and ultimate destiny. Some call it Hitlerism; others designate it Totalitarianism or fascism; still others anti-Christian. The proper name is Industrial Feudalism. **INDUSTRIAL FEUDALISM IS ON THE MARCH!**

It is futile to inveigh against it in the name of democracy; it were folly to denounce it as super-nationalism; greater folly yet to declaim against it in the name of ethics or the decent regard of mankind, or yet in behalf of truth and common justice. For whatever may be said, with trivial modica of truths, in behalf of all these and similar pious protestations, they fail to touch the essence of the monster slowly advancing on all fronts, over the earth, East meeting West, in this respect, with a unity of spirit and oneness of purpose that heed none of the cries raised against it by those who voice these protests. For the monster is the legitimate, though deformed and perverse offspring of the organism which itself rebels against the monster—to wit, cap-

italism. Monster though it be, it craves the right of way by virtue of its birthright, and rejects with legitimate scorn the pleas or denunciations of the thing that bore it and nourished it into being. For capitalism established itself by ruthless force, in disregard of its professed noble precepts of justice and liberty; it ruled by force in complete disregard of the eternal verities now invoked by its high priests; and seemingly it must perish by that very force which recognizes no master nor teacher other than superior force. Even as force is the midwife of a society pregnant with a new and supposedly superior society, so it may also become the abortionist and embryo-destroyer of that society.

Industrial Feudalism, economic serfdom—trampling underfoot all laws of civilization, overstepping boundaries, crushing helpless masses of humanity, threatening death and destruction—is on the march!

Error cannot be successfully fought and wiped out with error, nor can falsehood be crushed with falsehood. Nor yet can new injustice be fought by present or ancient injustice; still less can the rust-encrusted key of the past unlock New Freedom's intricate lock. Therefore, the cries and protests of bourgeois democracy against the Anarch Empire must needs be unavailing. For bourgeois democracy is but crying out against its own riper, or logically decayed, self. Yet, this is a lesson that bourgeois democrats will find it hard to learn, if indeed they are capable of learning it ever.

The struggle is not, because it cannot be, between capitalism's logical fruit and capitalism itself. The struggle must, will and *can* only be between capitalism—normal capitalism and feudo-capitalism—and its legitimate heir and successor, Socialism, or the Workers' Industrial Republic. Between the Political State, in whatever form, and the Industrial Union form of gov-

ernment. There is but one force which can deliver the old society safely and without fear of abortion—the *force* of the integrally industrially organized working class. Those who really desire to crush the monster of Industrial Feudalism, and who really and sincerely desire to establish freedom, true democracy and the brotherhood of man, with their accompaniments of peace, happiness and abundance on earth, will do well to heed these words. For they represent the quintessence of the truth of our age, and in the years to come men will return to them and pronounce them sane and wise, will acknowledge them prophetic and deplore the tragedy that they were not heeded and translated into action sooner, and specifically, and, above all, that the workers delayed united, organized class action so long, thereby giving the monster of Industrial Feudalism the time and opportunities to grow so monstrously destructive.

And so, while the Marxian scientist, the true social prophet, watches and warns, and while he urges upon the workers the need of action, he can say with the poet:

“But though we wallow in poisonous swamps
We cry neither woe nor alack!
We note each poison flower that bloom
On society’s upas tree.
Let the worm but hollow—the shell must be
Empty ere wall will break.
And let but the system turn inside out;
The sooner comes vengeance, in judgment to sit,
On the age-lie’s judgment day!” *

*From Henrik Ibsen’s “Murder of Abraham Lincoln.”

I.

To visit Sections of the Party, or attend state and federation conventions, is one of the luxuries in which, unfortunately, I cannot indulge as freely as I should like to. I have always believed that the place of a captain (if I may be so bold as to compare myself with a captain)—that the captain's place is on the bridge, especially in stormy weather. Hence, at the risk of inviting caustic comments about the hero of the Gilbert-Sullivan opera who, by sticking to his desk, became "the ruler of the Queen's navee," I am obliged to say, ruefully, that I conceive it to be my duty to stick to my desk, by which, of course, I mean National Headquarters. I say ruefully, for I am certain that it would give me great pleasure to visit our Sections throughout the country, and certainly to do so would be, I am convinced, a great education for me.

And so, when I tell you that it gives me extraordinary pleasure to be able to attend this convention—and, at the moment, this festal pre-convention dinner—I am not just uttering routine pleasantries. I shall carry away with me happy memories of a delightful and most instructive journey to this great industrial center in what is known as the Keystone state.

There is something symbolical about the fact that this important convention—one of the most important gatherings in the country at this moment, make no mistake about that—should happen to be in the important historic Keystone state. We all know what the Keystone denotes—that is, the stone without which the arch would not be complete, and without which it could not be locked and held together. We may take from this the thought and inspiration that the stronger the Socialist Labor Party builds its arch in this mighty industrial state, the sooner the keystone in the capitalist

arch will fall out, causing that oft-condemned arch to collapse; and, to carry the simile further, we might add that the stronger the S.L.P. builds in this state, the sooner will we place *our*—that is, the working class—keystone in the arch of the Industrial Republic of Free Labor. For on the ruins of the murderous, the utterly criminal and socially useless capitalist system, we shall rear that universal and all-embracing edifice of liberty and plenty, of peace and contentment which, in whatever varying forms, shall endure through all the ages to come.

The so-called civilized world is at this very hour confronted with a problem upon the proper solution of which depends the future happiness of the workers of the world for decades to come. If properly and logically solved, the golden age of mankind will be ushered in. If not so solved, a night darker than medievalism will descend upon us, and a politico-economic serfdom will be the lot of our class, here and everywhere else, which will cause the serfdom of feudalism (horrible as that was) to seem like freedom itself. And we are not playing with sonorous terms, nor indulging in idle oratory, nor yet drawing gloomy pictures not justified by the facts and certain tendencies. We of the Socialist Labor Party feel confident that the working class will rise to complete mastery of its fate—that it will take science and evolution by the bit, and the ruling class gangsters by the neck, so to speak, forcing the former upward and onward in the service of true progress and of all mankind, and throwing the latter on history's scrap-heap, as it were. Yet it will not do to lull ourselves into false security, and take for granted a too mechanistic process, or a too predestined happiness of the world's workers. As never before we must be on guard; as never before we must be up and doing, for

(to borrow a phrase recently become popular) it is much later than most of us think. The clock is pointing almost to twelve o'clock, and soon it will be too late to reflect, too late to plan—aye, too late to organize. But two things stand in the way of realizing our goal—working class blindness and dependence upon ruling class guidance; and ruling class insatiable greed and thirst for power, and its incredible folly. To what extent the former is responsible for the latter, or vice versa, is a matter of no great moment. Our primary concern is with the former. And to aid us we have the most powerful ally which any revolutionary cause can ask for: We have working for us the specific evolutionary process of this doomed capitalist system, and the general law of progress—the progress of the ages extending far back into the very dawn of human society. For we are truly the heirs of progress, the inheritors of the treasure which in one word we designate civilization. It has taken man a long time to travel this long road, from the time he emerged out of the Silurian slime to the vantage point he now occupies. It has been a long travail, with occasional glory and splendor for the race, as exemplified in the Hellenic culture which rose and sank, finally to disappear in the historic ice-age known as the millennial night of feudalism, with its few flickering lights of hope — sparks, however, which did eventually blaze into flame to purify the air, and lead the world on to that great step forward, capitalism and *bourgeois* democracy, both now tottering to the grave.

And as we look back, we marvel at the patience, the endurance of that dumb-driven mass of which the working class today is the historic counterpart. And we behold with wonder the fortitude, ingenuity and nobility of the comparatively few torch-bearers of the

past. We see them struggle against overwhelming odds; we see them tortured and racked, their very bodies and souls destroyed with what to us would seem small promise of social reward, and yet keeping faith, handing the torch to those who painfully followed them. We see the sweat and the agony of the disinherited of all ages, we know that rivers of blood and tears were poured into the mighty stream of social progress, and we must consider ourselves fortunate indeed that *we* are where we stand today, dark as the present hour may be, building, as we are, upon the magnificent foundation given to us through the inspiring work of countless martyrs and fearless heroes of that awful, yet mighty, past. There is an invisible, yet real, cord uniting us to these fighters for progress throughout the countless years. If today we reflect on the martyrdom of such great apostles of freedom and truth as Marx and De Leon; if now and then we shudder at the agonies inflicted today upon the peoples of darkest Asia, darkest Africa, aye, even darkest Europe, we are reminded of those who drained the hemlock cup, or perished at the stake or on the gallows, that men everywhere might eventually be free. Having recently re-read the accounts of the trial and death of Socrates, recorded by Plato and others, it has been brought home to me again, and more forcefully than ever, that there is nothing more enduring than the work achieved by adhering strictly and closely to principle; that everything else—temporary power and pomp and would-be success, quantitative all—is ephemeral, vain and the merest trivia.

II.

There, in our mind's eye, we see the noble Socrates stand before his judges—he that should be *their* judge. He is falsely accused, but the essence is the old and

ever new: that he has been preaching new and strange doctrines, neglected the recognized deities, and—crime of crimes!—that he has told the young people whom he gathered around him that they should pay no heed to what their elders (the politicians and the priesthood) taught them, if it conflicted with truth and common sense; and that he had instructed them in the art of thinking, specifically in thinking for themselves, independently, than which there is no greater crime known to any ruling class.

And so, dragged into a court of law, past the age of seventy, Socrates pleads his cause, heedless of his life which is at stake, but all-heedful of his integrity and reputation as an honest man. And he speaks:

“Strange, indeed, would be my conduct, O men of Athens, if I . . . were to desert my post through fear of death, or any other fear. . . . For this fear of death is indeed the pretense of wisdom, and not real wisdom. . . . I know but little of the world below [i.e., the underworld] . . . but I do know that injustice and disobedience to a better [world], whether God or man, is evil and dishonorable, and I will never fear or avoid a possible good rather than a certain evil. And, therefore, if you let me go now, and reject the counsels of Anytus [his accuser] who said that if I were not put to death I ought not to have been prosecuted, and that if I escape now, your sons will be utterly ruined by listening to my words—if you say to me: Socrates, this time we will not mind Anytus, and will let you off, but upon one condition, that you are not to inquire and speculate in this way any more, and that if you are caught doing this again you shall die—if this was the condition on which you let me go, I should reply: Men of Athens, I honor and love you but . . . while I have

life and strength I shall never cease from the practise and teaching of philosophy. . . . Wherefore, O men of Athens, I say to you, do as Anytus bids or not as Anytus bids, and either acquit me or not; but whatever you do, know that I shall never alter my ways, not even if I have to die many times."

In the manner of mobs of all times and countries, Socrates was frequently hissed and booed by the audience, and again and again he begged them to let him, on trial for his life, have his say. And he reminds them how he has given his life, without recompense, to the teaching of truth and virtue, to arousing, persuading and reproaching them—a strange defense, indeed! And he says: "Had I gained anything, or if my exhortations had been paid, there would have been some sense [to the charges], but. . . not even the impudence of my accusers dares to say that I have ever exacted or sought pay of anyone; they have no witness to that. And I have a witness of the truth of what I say; my poverty is a sufficient witness. . . ."

Socrates is found guilty, and condemned to drink the cup of poison. And he tells his judges, that he is not grieved, that he expected the verdict, and reminds them that the detractors of Athens will use his death as propaganda against their city. And he prophesies that his murderers will suffer a far greater punishment after his death than if they had spared his life. For, "me you have killed [he said] because you wanted to escape the accuser, and not to give an account of your lives. . . . If you think that by killing men you can avoid the accuser censuring your lives, you are mistaken; that is not a way of escape which is either possible or honorable; the easiest and noblest way is not to be crushing others, but to be improving your-

selves....” And he concludes his speech with these words:

“The hour of departure has arrived, and we go our ways—I to die, and you to live. Which is the better God only knows.”

But here Socrates was in error, for it was he who went to live, and his accusers and judges to die. The latter we do not know, and they are to us less than the dirt we step upon, whereas Socrates lives, and will live, until languages are dead, and lips are dust.

I have recited this ancient tale, first because to me it brings a message of hope and cheer in an hour when men grow despondent and mistrust the essential nobility of man, and the usefulness of continuing the struggle toward those summits of civilization which the Socrates of all ages have envisioned; and also because I like to think of ourselves—the S.L.P. vanguard—as true children and heirs of the great, good and noble Socrates.

III.

Never before have the principles and claims of the Socialist Labor Party received more emphatic vindication and tacit recognition than in the events that have transpired in Europe during the last year, and particularly during the last few days. Since civilized governments, so-called, were instituted, and since rulers and governments recognized such a thing as international law, the world has not witnessed a performance so unblushingly predatory, so bandit-like in character, as the acts and speeches of the unspeakable slummist gangster Hitler and his pal, the brutish and murderous Mussolini. There is no longer any pretext about their being

concerned about anything else but loot. The stupid and fantastic talk about superior races, about the sacred German (or Italian) soil; the insane ravings about the Jews—all this is, in fact, if not in words, discarded, and the highway-robber character of the Nazi-Fascist murderers, stands revealed in all its nakedness. The final absorption of Czechoslovakia in the German Reich exposes the Dillinger-Al Capone aims and “ideals” of the Hitler ape and the Mussolini gorilla. The especially coveted, immediate prize of the Czech conquest appears to be the nearly \$100,000,000 gold reserve of the Czech government, just as the gold and gilt-edged bonds being conveyed in armored cars are the coveted prize of a Dillinger. And all the while the gangster Hitler is thumbing his nose at the swindlers, Chamberlain, Daladier, and the rest of the nice “democratic” gentlemen, who simply cannot understand that there is no longer any honor among the capitalist thieves! Six months ago the S.L.P. conclusively demonstrated that the “democratic” swindlers were in cahoots with the Nazi-Fascist gangsters in selling out the Czechs. There is now no question whatever about the fact that rather than risk a Socialist revolution, the Chamberlain broadcloth marauders would accept the fact of a European Fascist dictatorship, but, of course, they expected that the Hitler bandits would keep faith with them. To such degeneracy has bourgeois democracy been reduced!

You have probably read in today's papers the speech delivered by Great Britain's Prime Minister, Neville Chamberlain. I doubt that there could possibly be presented a more perfect demonstration of the utter degeneracy, bankruptcy and hypocrisy of the bourgeois democrats, and the upholders of so-called normal capitalism, than this speech. In his speech Chamber-

lain either acknowledges himself more stupid and ignorant than a country bumpkin, or an unprincipled political swindler. Chamberlain certainly is not over-bright, and yet it is impossible to believe him as stupid as apparently he would like to paint himself. Consider also the fact that Chamberlain comes from a family notorious for having produced some of the biggest political rogues in modern England. His father, Joseph Chamberlain, for instance, enjoyed a reputation in his day that no decent self-respecting person would envy him, and it was Joseph Chamberlain who more than any other single person was responsible for the British imperialist bandit raid on the Boer South African republic at the turn of the century, which raid set the fashion in the modern governmental brigandage which Hitler, Mussolini and kindred spirits have so successfully followed and enlarged upon. Considering all this, it is nauseating, and only slightly amusing, to listen to the "jammergeschrei" of the Birmingham political huckster, especially when he waxes indignant at his good friend Hitler's treacherous failure to keep faith with "perfidious Albion." Chamberlain and his "democratic" allies were *particeps criminis* to the historically foul act of dismembering a fellow "democracy," turning millions of people over to the tender mercies of the absolutist bandits with the same nonchalant unconcern with which he might consign a herd of beef on the hoof to the butcher. When he shook hands with Hitler at Munich last fall he knew that he was grasping a fist from which there was dripping the blood of thousands of innocent people; he knew he was dealing with a lying, faithless and perverted knave—himself the associate of such underworld characters as the sadistic monster Goebbels and the brutal, low-browed flesh-mountain, Goering. He knew all this, and yet he now

professes indignation, and expresses pain, at his dear Adolf's villainy! As if any normal, intelligent person could have expected anything else! As if, indeed, Chamberlain himself had not made the deal with the Nazi beast—not, as he lyingly says, to save the peace of Europe and to spare “hundreds of thousands of families (who) today would have been in mourning for the flower of Europe's manhood”—not for that, but for the purpose of saving his and Hitler's capitalist slaughter-house! That, as we know, was the reason he shook the bloody paw of the Nazi ape at Munich—to save capitalism and to frustrate the attempts of the working class to achieve emancipation. “The flower of Europe's manhood” worries these political swindlers not one bit—it certainly did not worry them in 1914! Gladly would they sacrifice that “manhood” if by so doing they could crush the proletarian revolution. Look to Spain—there the attempt was not even made to establish working class rule, but merely to institute, in a rather mild fashion, the sort of democracy of which the Chamberlains boast so much, but which to them is in reality merely so much window-dressing for their imperialist butcher shops! So fearful of real democracy were Chamberlain and his reactionary British and French associates, that they were quite content to encompass the slaughter of the flower of Spain's manhood without so much as batting an eye-lash! Chamberlain, besides being a first-class political swindler, is also an actor, and as such prone to strike poses and to strut. You remember that after he had sealed the bloody bargain with the Nazi beast last fall, he boastfully quoted Shakespeare's lines:

“Out of this nettle, danger,
I pluck this flower, safety.”

Clown and faker that he is, Chamberlain may have thought that he had succeeded in hoodwinking the entire world. At the same time we said:

"With Europe's safety at present entrusted to two gangsters and two representatives of predatory imperialisms, that lovely flower (safety) will soon droop and wither."

Prague today furnishes confirmation of that prophecy. And the passage we then quoted from the same Shakespearian play (but not quoted by Chamberlain!) is so obviously appropriate in the light of Chamberlain's speech yesterday, that one wonders why his political foes in England do not fire it at him! You will recall it:

"And shall it, in more shame, be further spoken
That you are fool'd, discarded, and shook off
By him for whom those shames ye underwent."!

And we say again that a Chamberlain is simply an unripe Hitler or, conversely, that a Hitler is but an overripe Chamberlain. Yet, in all essential respects, the two—as social types and even as individuals—are as alike as are two peas in a pod! Here again it is important to discover the essential oneness of things seemingly unlike, rather than to discover divergences which do not affect the essence of things. The essential oneness as regards Chamberlain and Hitler lies in their acceptance of, and insistence upon, class rule. The obvious divergences do not at all cancel this essential oneness, nor affect it materially, nor even perceptibly. They merely call to our attention the fact that as purveyors and upholders of falsehoods, they are masters in their respective fields. For, indeed, truth and integrity are not in or of them—falsehood, trickery and all

the vices natural to capitalist robberdom are the ruling elements in their natures and actions. And yet they will be scattered, confounded and in the end defeated. De Leon once said that Truth is one; it alone unites. Error is manifold and contradictory, it inevitably scatters. Carlyle expressed it somewhat similarly. "The mistake of those who believe that fraud, force, injustice, whatsoever untrue thing, howsoever cloaked and decorated, was ever or can ever be the principle of man's relation to man, [that mistake] is great, and the greatest. It is the error of the infidel in whom the truth as yet is *not*. It is an error pregnant with mere errors and miseries; an error fatal, lamentable, to be abandoned by all men." And it would be foolish to dismiss, as idealism or naivete, one's confidence in the potency and eventual victory of truth over falsehood. There is a hard-bitten, solid logic in relying on truth, so long as we are sure that it is the relevant, fundamental truth we are relying upon, and not the dried bones of truths once pregnant with celestial fire, but now burnt out, and cold and dead.

The present situation fully establishes the fact that there is no half-way stop between stark Industrial Feudalism (with economic serfdom for the workers) and Socialist Industrial Democracy. The parting of the ways has finally been reached. It is "Either-Or"—EITHER complete social and industrial freedom on the basis of the principles and program of Marx and De Leon, OR complete subjugation of the working class under the iron heel of naked brutish industrial feudalism. Thus is fulfilled the marvelous prognosis of Daniel De Leon, made many years ago, while the then "united front" of "bourgeois socialism" and out-and-out plutocratic capitalism jeered and sneered at the great De Leon and the S.L.P. What a heavy price

mankind pays for the folly, blindness and class-greed of its so-called leaders! De Leon, again and again, reiterated that the inevitable result of failure to effect a revolution that is due and overdue is stark reaction. The answer to those who fatuously attempt to resist the higher civilization we call Socialism is the monster Hitler! Yet, nonetheless, the criminally stupid, or class-blinded bourgeois democrats, yell to high heaven against Hitler, whom, in the end, they will embrace as a necessary evil rather than accept working class emancipation and the class-less society, with all its promise of freedom, universal affluence, and supreme happiness, which otherwise would be the logical climax of the evolutionary processes of the past.

Having just had a glimpse into the noble character and lofty purpose of Socrates, there are those who may feel discouraged in considering the presence of a Caliban so ominous and loathsome as the Austrian mass-murderer, Hitler. Indeed, the two are the direct opposite in everything essential. Though Socrates lived more than 2400 years ago, he towers as high above the vulgar, ignorant and blood-stained Hitler as the top-most Himalayas tower above the foot-hills of the Alleghenies. But just as surely as bright dawn conquers ebon night, so the brood of Socrates will conquer the Hitlers and all their evil brood. Let there be no doubt about that.

Undoubtedly mankind as a whole has risen, and certainly the material possibilities for instituting an Eden on earth are here. And yet, under the obstructing trammels of predatory capitalism, man in his way of life still is essentially as primitive as his forebears. An English naturalist writer, Richard Jefferies (a kind of English Henry Thoreau), has put it beautifully:

"The most extraordinary spectacle . . . is the vast expenditure of labor and time wasted in obtaining mere subsistence That twelve thousand written years should have elapsed, and the human race—able to reason and to think, and easily capable of combination in immense armies for its own destruction—should still live from hand to mouth, like cattle and sheep, like the animals of the field and the birds of the wood; that there should not even be roofs to cover the children born, unless those children labor and expend their time to pay for them; that there should not be clothes, unless, again, time and labor are expended to procure them; that there should not be even food for the children of the human race, except they labor as their fathers did twelve thousand years ago; that even water should scarce be accessible to them, unless paid for by labor! In twelve thousand written years the world has not yet built itself a house, nor filled a granary, nor organized itself for its own comfort

"This our earth this day produces sufficient for our existence. This our earth produces not only a sufficiency, but a superabundance, and pours a cornucopia of good things down upon us. Further, it produces sufficient for stores and granaries to be filled to the roof-tree for years ahead. I verily believe that the earth in one year produces enough food to last for thirty. Why, then, have we not enough? Why do people die of starvation, or lead a miserable existence on the verge of it? Why have millions upon millions to toil from morning to evening just to gain a mere crust of bread? Because of the absolute lack of organization by which such labor should produce its effect, the absolute lack of distribution, the absolute lack even of the very idea that such things are possible. Nay, even to mention such

things, to say that they are possible, is criminal with many. Madness could hardly go farther.

"That selfishness has all to do with it I entirely deny. The human race for ages upon ages has been enslaved by ignorance and by interested persons, whose object it has been to confine the minds of men, thereby doing more injury than if with infected hands they purposely imposed disease on the heads of the people. Almost worse than these, and at the present day as injurious, are those persons incessantly declaring, teaching, and impressing upon all that to work is man's highest condition. This falsehood is the interested superstition of an age infatuated with money, which having accumulated it cannot even expend it in pageantry. It is a falsehood propagated for the doubtful benefit of two or three out of ten thousand. It is the lie of a morality founded on money only, and utterly outside and having no association whatever with the human being in itself. Many superstitions have been got rid of in these days; time it is that this, the last and worst, were eradicated.....

"This our earth produces not only a sufficiency and a superabundance, but in one year pours a cornucopia of good things forth, enough to fill us all for many years in succession. The only reason we do not enjoy it is the want of rational organization. I know, of course, and all who think know, that some labor or supervision will be always necessary, since the plow must travel the furrow and the seed must be sown; but I maintain that a tenth, nay, a hundredth, part of the labor and slavery now gone through will be sufficient, and that in the course of time, as organization perfects itself and discoveries advance, even that part will diminish. For the rise and fall of the tides alone furnish forth sufficient power to do automatically

all the labor that is done on the earth. Is ideal man, then, to be idle? I answer that if so I see no wrong, but a great good. I deny altogether that idleness is an evil, or that it produces evil, and I am well aware why the interested are so bitter against idleness—namely, because it gives time for thought, and if men had time to think their reign would come to an end. Idleness—that is, the absence of the necessity to work for subsistence—is a great good.

“I hope succeeding generations will be able to be idle. I hope that nine-tenths of their time will be leisure time; that they may enjoy their days, and the earth, and the beauty of this beautiful world; that they may rest by the sea and dream; that they may dance and sing, and eat and drink. I will work towards that end with all my heart. If employment they must have—and the restlessness of the mind will insure that some will be followed—then they will find scope enough in the perfection of their physical frames, in the expansion of the mind, and in the enlargement of the soul. They shall not work for bread, but for their souls.”

These are words, and perspectives in reasoned terms, which sustain the spirit of those engaged in this present titanic struggle. They are charged, not only with hope and wisdom, but also with moral and physical courage. Written more than 50 years ago, these words are certainly a thousand times more relevant and timely now, in this year of capitalist *disgrace* of 1939.

IV.

We of the Socialist Labor Party do, indeed, need to muster every ounce of moral and physical courage of which we are capable. For we have a world against us, and our words are too often drowned out by the

raucous voices of the ruling class gangsters, and their agents and allies, the reformers and pseudo-revolutionists, loudest and most unscrupulous of which we find at the moment to be the ignorant, brainless Communists of this country. We need to draw close, to perfect our organizational machinery, to plan carefully—in short, to hang together, and to *work* together, as if our very lives depended upon it, as, indeed, they do. And, as I said before, we have great allies working for us—the logical working out of the economic laws of capitalism, and of the general laws of social progress and evolution. The upholders of capitalism stand bewildered—bewildered despite their brazen impudence and class arrogance. The paid or voluntary lackeys of the ruling class make the most fantastic speculations, and draw the most incredibly imbecile conclusions, each succeeding one contradicting those that preceded. They frequently talk a language of abracadabra not essentially different from that of ghost-conjuring medicine men of primitive tribes. The bandit governments of Europe, in ridiculing bourgeois democracy, sneer at their “democratic” fellow marauders, and tell them the absolutist governments constitute new ideas, new contributions to “the art of government,” as if they were not plainly the collective expression of capitalism gone utterly decadent, corrupt and desperate. And although bourgeois democracy never represented true democracy in its fullest sense, it did once serve the needs of progress. It has remained for plutocratic capitalism—specifically the American plutocracy—to put the “mock” in democracy so loudly that all who run may hear! They boast of their capitalist system—the system, they say, under which America has grown great. What a strange boast is that! True, America has grown great under capitalism. Being rude, uncouth Marxists, we ask: “So

what?" Greece and Rome grew great under slavery, and what has become of the glory that was Greece and the boast that was Rome? It is as if a person who has recovered from a broken leg were to insist on continuing using the crutches that helped him to recovery, for did he not grow strong with them, and through their aid? It is an argument so infantile that one is left amazed to reflect that men and women of adult, supposedly trained mentalities, are capable of advancing it. It seems trite to say, in this day and age, that there is no permanency in political and economic systems, yet the contentions of the fatuous defenders of capitalism imply precisely such permanency. They will concede that there was need of fundamental social changes once, but there is none now, they argue! There was history once, but history is no more! There is movement, change, they will insist in rebuttal, but upon examination it will be found that the movement and change are of the kind that characterize an ant-hill. There, to be sure, we find movement, plenty of it, but the same dull, endless traffic of insects whose sole endeavor and life-purpose are the preservation of the ant-hill, and the form and kind of life that are found around and within it. And so, logically enough, the contentions of the upholders of bourgeois democracy come to represent a plea for the reduction of human society to the status and level of the ant-hill, and the reduction of the workers to nothing more nor less than the state and condition of endlessly toiling working-ants! And such sloppy, vulgar thinking passes for wisdom among our capitalist intelligentsia!

We hear on occasions something about the negation of the negation—don't be frightened: This isn't going to be a lecture on dialectics! However, we speak of the negation of the negation as resulting in a higher or

new affirmation. You will remember that Marx in "Capital" speaks of the destruction of individual private property, as the first negation. Thereupon, says Marx, capitalism begets its own negation, that is, capitalist private property destroys itself through becoming collectivized, socialized, rendering it capable of being expropriated by the mass of the people for common use. This he calls the negation of the negation. The negation of capitalism by logical processes, i.e., through laws inherent in, and by processes normal to, the development of capitalism, leads consistently to Socialism. Negation of capitalism, by obstructing the working out of the economic laws inherent in the system, and by introducing processes that, in a productive sense, are alien to capitalism, logically leads to fascism, or industrial feudalism. In one sense we can speak of fascism as the logical result of capitalism, but only in the same sense that we speak of the rotten fruit being a further "natural" step in the "development" of the ripe fruit. But from the standpoint of human beings, fruits are not grown for the purpose of having them rot. Nor are social systems developed for the purpose of having them turned into denials of their very reasons for having been ushered into existence in the first place. A grain may be destroyed in two ways: The seed is sown; it is transformed into plant; the plant dies, but in this destruction of the seed it has fulfilled its mission, so to speak, by multiplying itself manifold. The seed may also be destroyed by crushing it. In the first instance we have the negation of the negation by normal processes; in the second instance the negation of the negation is achieved by abnormal processes, resulting in frustration. And that is precisely what the degeneracy of capitalism into fascism amounts to. And that is what the stupid claims of the Nazi and Fascist bandits come

to with regard to their alleged new and supposedly superior forms of government.

V.

Those capitalist propagandists who fill our ears with their repeated shoutings about the possibility of resuscitating and indefinitely saving their murderous robber-system, are due to become Time's most ludicrous laughing-stock! You remember the story told in Greek mythology about Sisyphus who was eternally doomed to roll a stone up-hill which, as soon as the hill top was reached, rolled down again. Or about the fifty daughters of Danaus who were doomed everlastingly to pour water into a vessel with a sieve. Their tasks were the very essence of simplicity compared to the task of those who are trying to save capitalism. The unemployment problem, on the solution of which President Roosevelt said he would stand or fall (and with the solution of which capitalism itself will stand or fall), is farther removed from solution than ever, the number of unemployed coming close to being the highest ever, and this after billions have been spent by the government to cure this incurable disease of capitalist society. Only the other day (March 10, 1939) the *New York Times* reported that one out of every nine persons in the United States is on a government payroll, the wages paid these constituting one-eighth of all salaries and wages paid in the country. And this figure does not include those who work on relief projects. The report goes on to say that the number of government employes have increased 17.5 per cent, while those in private employ declined 9.1 per cent. There's recovery with a vengeance! Rather, *there* is "progress" toward industrial feudalism with a double vengeance! And the ex-

cuses or explanations advanced for the failure of the reformers and the unreconstructed plutocrats alike are sublimely childish. As a sample I cite a news item in the *New York Times* of a few months ago wherein an "agricultural economics specialist" (whatever that may be) is reported to have blamed the low citrus fruit prices on birth control! Believe it or not, this "specialist" had figured out that the low price was "due to a lack of population increase"! And, speaking of "population increases" brings to mind the insane antics of the Nazi and Fascist bandits when they order the women of their countries to bear more children, and then turn around justifying their grabbing of foreign territory by the plea that they simply *must* have an outlet for their overflowing population! It reminds me of a story told by Lincoln. "It used to amuse me," said Lincoln, "to hear the slave-holders talk about more territory, because they had not room enough for their slaves; and yet they complained of not having the slave-trade, because they wanted more slaves for their room."! Which calls to mind still another story about Lincoln. Lincoln, you know, bitterly opposed the war with Mexico, which he denounced in no uncertain terms while a member of Congress. Those who argued that the war with Mexico was not a war of aggression (how familiar that sounds!) he answered by telling about the Illinois farmer who said: "I aint greedy about land, I only want what jines mine."! And while on this subject, I cannot resist another Lincoln story which is amazingly apropos of the bandit raids upon other nations by the fascist gangsters. Japan, you know, sobbingly denounced China for resisting the foreign invaders, accusing the wicked Chinese of causing the death of so many human beings, and the destruction of so much property, while all that the nice Japanese brig-

ands wanted to do was to civilize the benighted Chinese, and educate them in the ways of fascist governmental gangsterism. Well, it seems that Lincoln was discussing the Emancipation Proclamation, and the denunciation of it by Southern slaveholders as an interference with the rights of private property. Lincoln illustrated the attitude of the slaveholders by telling this story: A ruffian made an unprovoked assault upon a quiet citizen, at the same time drawing his revolver; but the assaulted party made a sudden spring and wrested the weapon from the hands of the would-be assassin. "Stop!" said the bandit, "Give me back that pistol; you have no right to my property."!

VI.

Capitalism and wage slavery are doomed. What Lincoln said about slavery applies to wage slavery: It is an evil, and an evil can't stand discussion. With Emerson we say: "We must get rid of slavery [that is, wage slavery] or we shall get rid of freedom." We of the Socialist Labor Party must proclaim this obvious truth until the very stones heed our thundering demand. We are called fanatics, uncompromising, intolerant. Very well, we are all these, especially intolerant. To the revolutionist in class society there is no such thing as tolerance. To be tolerant of the irrelevant and harmless makes no sense. Would they expect us to be tolerant of the very evils which we proclaim to be intolerable? All decent men are intolerant of vice, of crime, of avoidable diseases. Why should we not be intolerant in the case of the greatest crime, the foulest vice of all—the father of all modern crimes, vices, diseases and social wretchedness—capitalism? And we must be utterly intolerant in dealing with those who support, in

whatever degree and form, this monstrous crime. For to be tolerant in this respect is to be accessories to the crime itself.

And so we must dedicate ourselves anew to the great task that is to be done, and which at present we alone know how to do. And this also means that we must, each and every one of us, cooperate in close unity and harmony. There is no room in our ranks for the deliberate shirker. If there be any such, let them depart in peace before they get in our way and put the painful obligation upon us to put them out of our way. It is true that ours is a voluntary organization, but the word "voluntary" must not be given strange or new meanings. Once many years ago we had a member by the name of Signarowitz, who was very devoted and active. He was organizer at the time of our Brooklyn Section, and at one of the Section meetings he pleaded with the members to volunteer for certain work to be done. There was no response. In exasperation Signarowitz cried, "Gol darn it [only he didn't say "Gol darn it!"]—Gol darn it! This is supposed to be a voluntary organization, but nobody volunteers to do anything!" Sometimes the plea is that we tried and tried, and the difficulties were too great, and so, with amazing lack of logic, these comrades decided to surrender to the difficulty. The first lesson in the catechism of the revolutionist is that the greater the difficulties, the darker the outlook, the more determinedly and with ever increasing efforts must we carry on the struggle. It is easy enough to carry on the work when everything is pleasant and goes according to our wishes. What we must all learn, or remember, is that there is no choice of roads before the revolutionist, and that it's on, on and on, until the goal is reached, regardless of the obstacles that may pile up before us. Let there be

no encouragement of the summer soldier and sunshine patriot. Each and every one of us must do *now* all that lies in our power to bring to the workers the message of new hope, of economic freedom. Each and every one of us must assume that the successful outcome of the issue depends upon us *individually*, no less than collectively; that if *I* shirk *my* responsibility, evade *my* duty, thereby our collective strivings shall be frustrated, and the success of the revolution be indefinitely deferred! *This* is the hour, *this* is the spot, and *you* are the man!

Are we few, and are they many? A great cause counts neither the number of its friends, nor the multitude of its enemies! Its ultimate success is not determined by present numbers. We may be three thousand, against three times hundreds of thousands—is that a reason for feeling hopeless? We have fought bravely for a half century against tremendous odds—is that a reason? By yielding now, we may prove ourselves heroes another time — as if such unworthy promptings were reasons!

The present task is the one we must not shirk! This is the higher command which must be unconditionally obeyed! This is Rhodes—here we must dance! This is the spot in the universe upon which the decision depends! For none of us can ever know whether the spot whereon we stand may not be the turning point, whence interminable threads start in all directions.* We do not know—certainly we cannot be sure. The only thing we do know is that *now* is the time, and *this* is the task. Let us bend to the performance of that task as men and women who mean what we say, and who say clearly what we mean; who recognize no choice

*With apologies to Georg Brandes.

that might be presented to bring into doubt whether support to the Socialist Labor Party should be deferred or abandoned for personal or private considerations. We are in this great movement to rise and fall together—AND WE MEAN TO RISE TOGETHER!

You are about to enter upon serious deliberations with respect to the work that must be done in this state this year, with an eye, above all, to next year, the Presidential campaign year. As to what is going to happen next year, your guess is as good as mine, but you will not guess far wrong when you conclude that it is going to be a campaign that will be remembered in the years to come. And whether we of the S.L.P. shall remember it with bitterness and regret, or with that sense of satisfaction and serenity of mind that result from a duty well performed, depends upon the manner in which each of us responds to the call of duty. We are banded together in the noblest of causes, in the service of the most pregnant and fate-freighted truth that ever appealed to any age for recognition. The truth, that the workers are enslaved, and that only *these* means—our principles and program—can set them free, and put an end to wage slavery. We are surrounded by lies and shams, by unscrupulous foes, and unprincipled renegades and traitors. But falsehoods and shams will be overcome in the end, for man and his life, as Carlyle said—

“rest no more on hollowness and a Lie, but on solidity and some kind of Truth. . . . Truth of any kind breeds ever new and better truths. . . . Falsehood, which, in like contrary manner, grows ever false,—what can it, or what should it do but decrease, being ripe. . . .”

*

The long night of slavery is drawing to an end.

The rays of the New Dawn peer above the horizon. The time is close at hand when the workers must, willy-nilly, definitely choose between intensified slavery, and complete social and economic freedom. It is unthinkable that willingly they should choose slavery when freedom, peace and plenty beckon; when it is possible to rear a social order wherein the fields shall yield abundance without arduous toil of sowers and reapers; wherein the workshops and the mines, and the entire productive social mechanism, shall become sanitary laboratories, and where laborious work for miserable existence shall be no more, recreational exercise and healthy play in happiness and abundance taking its place; wherein, in short, toil and drudgery, poverty and social misery, shall be banished forevermore.

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