SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY

The Americanism *Of* Socialism

By ERIC HASS

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The Americanism of Socialism

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Socialism is international. Yet, it is not un-American. Indeed, as this work by the Editor of the WEEKLY PEOPLE shows, the principles and aim of the genuine Socialist movement are in complete harmony with the forward-looking traditions established by the rebels of 1776.

Revolt against the tyranny of a foreign ruling class was American. Loyalty to a foreign king was un-American. Even the reactionists of the present day are forced to admit that—in order to prove their "Americanism."

Similarly, the Socialist demand for the end of modern capitalist despotism is American. The times call for it. The needs of the working class majority demand it. The threat of civilization's collapse makes it imperative.

Read this pamphlet. It refutes a host of lies spread by the capitalists. It demonstrates that Socialist Industrial Unionism is the bearer of new freedom for the American people.

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The Americanism Of Socialism

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Eric Hass

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Apart from the circumstance that the American flag was first raised by men, who, however, and pardonably, mistaken in their sociology and economics, did sincerely believe that the American flag raised over the boundless natural opportunities which the land offered to industry, would insure the citizen the power and responsibility of being the architect of his own fortune; apart from the circumstance that the American flag was the first to wave over a constitution that "legalizes revolution";—apart from these and many other kindred circumstances, the historic fact that the scientist, the noble-minded, the venerable Franklin, when the scheme of the flag was presented to him, a blue field with a star for each state, expressed the hope that the day would dawn when every nation in the world would be represented in that blue field with her own star—that fact confers upon the American flag the lofty distinction of being the first on earth to urge the Brotherhood of Nations; the first to herald the Solidarity of peoples; the first drapery-symbol of Peace on Earth;—that fact renders the American flag the anticipation of the Red flag of International Brotherhood, and endears it to the heart of civilized man.

—*DANIEL DE LEON.*

The Americanism Of Socialism

You see, my kind of loyalty was loyalty to one's country, not to its institutions or its office-holders. The country is the real thing, the substantial thing, the eternal thing; it is the thing to watch over, and care for, and be loyal to; institutions are extraneous, they are its mere clothing, and clothing can wear out, become ragged, cease to be comfortable, cease to protect the body from winter, disease, and death. To be loyal to rags, to shout for rags, to worship rags, to die for rags—that is a loyalty of unreason, it is pure animal; it belongs to monarchy, was invented by monarchy, let monarchy keep it. I was from Connecticut, whose constitution declares "that all political power is inherent in the people, and all free governments are founded on their authority and instituted for their benefit; and that they have AT ALL TIMES an undeniable and indefeasible right to ALTER THEIR FORM OF GOVERNMENT in such a manner as they may think expedient." Under that gospel, the citizen who thinks he sees that the commonwealth's political clothes are worn out, and yet holds his peace and does not agitate for a new suit, is disloyal; he is a traitor. That he may be the only one who thinks he sees this decay, does not excuse him; it is his duty to agitate anyway, and it is the duty of the others to vote him down if they do not see the matter as he does.

MARK TWAIN.

(*"A Connecticut Yankee In King Arthur's Court."*)

I.

Spurious vs. Genuine Americanism.

You've been told that Socialism is un-American. The politicians say so. Your employer is emphatic on the point. The labor fakers rarely miss an opportunity to brand Socialism "un-American." If you are like most workers, you're sceptical. First of all, you can't quite swallow the "Americanism" of the super-patriots who peddle this yarn—super-patriots like the American Legion Commander-in-Chief[1] who said several years ago that his organization would be used to smash Socialism.

"Do not forget," he said, "that the Fascisti are to Italy what the American Legion is to the United States."

Because such people are the loudest in traducing Socialism, you smell something fishy in their attacks. Moreover, your native sense of fair play prompts you to give the Socialists a hearing. It is up to them to prove their case.

That's precisely what we aim to do. We aim to prove that there are two kinds of "Americanism"; that one is spurious and is a reflection of property interests; that the other has its roots deeply embedded in Amer-

[1]Alvin Owsley, former Commander-in-Chief of the American Legion, in an interview copyright by the N.E.A., January, 1923.

ican tradition and is in harmony with the loftiest aspirations of the Founding Fathers.

It is an ancient device of despotism to cloak itself in virtue. When it is attacked, it cries to high heaven that virtue is outraged. In this manner it sows doubt among the enemies of despotism and divides them against themselves. Justice Brandeis made the point neatly when he said:

"Despotism, be it financial or political, is vulnerable unless it is believed to rest upon moral sanction. The longing for freedom is ineradicable. It will express itself in protest against servitude and inaction *unless the striving for freedom be made to seem immoral.* Long ago monarchs invented, as a preservative for absolutism, the fiction of 'The divine right of Kings.' "[1]

Here is a modern example of the employment of this device: When capitalist apologists speak of capitalism they do not say "capitalism," they say "democracy" or "Americanism." They use "democracy" and "Americanism" as synonyms for "capitalism." They know the workers cherish American traditions and treasure the Bill of Rights. If the workers can be made to believe that capitalism and democracy, or capitalism and Americanism, are one and the same, capitalist tyranny is saved. Just as the rogues of the Middle Ages sought sanctuary in a church, the exploiters of modern times seek safety in the folds of the American flag.

The capitalist class and its sycophants and servitors may pay lip-service to democracy but, whenever democracy and their material interests clash, they are ever ready to strangle the former to preserve the latter. It

[1] "Other People's Money," by L. Brandeis.

was the big industrialists and financiers who financed the rise of Nazism in Germany and Fascism in Italy, and who applauded the strangulation of free speech, free press and popular elections in those unhappy countries. And it is the capitalist class in America which applauds every liberty-throttling measure that is proposed, which clamors for anti-strike laws and other curbs on human freedom. Like the slave-owning class of the old South, they are blinded by their property interests. This property-blindness, characteristic of all propertied classes, caused the truly great American, Abraham Lincoln, to remark:

"The love of property and a consciousness of right and wrong have conflicting places in our organization, which often make a man's course seem crooked, his conduct a riddle."

In contrast to the spurious, spread-eagle variety of Americanism is the Americanism embodied in the Declaration of Independence. That immortal document declares that whenever *any* form of government becomes destructive to the ends of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, it is the right of the people to abolish it—nay, "it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security." It utters an admonition against complacently suffering evil conditions because of a mistaken reverence for ancient *forms*. ". . . .all experience hath shewn," it says, "that mankind are more disposed to suffer when evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed."

When a certain judge was called upon to read the Declaration of Independence at a Fourth of July cele-

bration in New Jersey a few years ago, he mopped his forehead when he had finished and remarked: "Phew! I didn't realize that that was such an incendiary document!"

It is not incendiary but it *is* revolutionary. Its authors believed that liberty should be a living thing, not a dead abstraction with which to cloak slavery. But what is liberty? Is it liberty to be able to quit one master only to be compelled to seek another? Is it liberty for one class to be in economic bondage to another? The Declaration of Independence does not define liberty. Abraham Lincoln, the son of toil and champion of the oppressed, did. He said:

"With some the word liberty may mean for each man to do as he pleases with himself, and the product of his labor; while with others the same word may mean for some men to do as they please with other men and with other men's labor. Here are two, not only different, but incompatible things, called by the same name, liberty. And it follows that each of the things is, by the respective parties, called by two different and incompatible names—liberty and tyranny."[1]

So it is with the Socialists and capitalists. The capitalists regard as tyranny the proposal that the workers should appropriate and dispose of the product of their labor; the Socialists conceive as the essence of liberty a social system under which the useful producers receive the full social product of their toil. This is the nub of the social question of our age. Around it such questions as war, unemployment, civil liberty, dictatorship, and many others, revolve.

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[1]Address delivered at Baltimore, April 18, 1864.

II.

Hamiltonism vs. Jeffersonism.

Spurious Americanism, the Americanism which reflects property interests, is distrustful of the workers. Its definition of democracy is:

"Democracy—a government of the masses..... Result is mobocracy. Attitude toward property is communistic—negating property rights."

This was the definition given in Army Training Manual No. 2000-2025 published about twelve years ago by the War Department but withdrawn after protests were made against it. It bespeaks the fears and apprehensions of the property-owning class. Such an attitude was in evidence among a few aristocrats when our nation was born. They believed, and argued, that the government should be free of all pressure from the people and that it should have "unlimited power" over them. Alexander Hamilton was the most distinguished exponent of the idea that the "elite" should rule. For the judgment of the people he had supreme contempt.

"The voice of the people," Hamilton told the Constitutional Assembly, "has been said to be the voice of God; and, however generally this maxim has been quoted and believed, it is not true in fact. The people are turbulent and changing; they seldom judge or determine right."

He feared that a "democratic assembly" would be

dangerous to the interests of the wealthier citizens and he argued for giving the "first class" (aristocracy) disproportionate power and for the election of its representatives for life. "Nothing but a permanent body," he contended, "can check the imprudence of democracy."[1]

Among those who vigorously opposed rule by the "elite" was Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson had boundless faith in the people's sagacity and judgment. "I am not one of those who fear the people," he wrote. "They, and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom."

He did not believe the people were either stupid or turbulent as did Hamilton, and he considered it to be a primary duty of government to educate and inform them and withhold no secrets from them. "Educate and inform the whole mass of people," he wrote in a letter to James Madison. "Enable them to see that it is their interest to preserve peace and order and they will preserve them. They are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty."

Hamiltonism, the theory that the elite should rule, did not die with Hamilton. It is in evidence today even among those who feign to embrace Jeffersonian principles. Hamiltonism is especially virulent as the conflict of class interests sharpens, and never more so than when the interests of the capitalist class demand war and the overwhelming mass of workers demand peace. It is then that the most celebrated "democrats" advance the specious argument that the people are in-

[1]From the notes on the secret proceedings of the Constitutional Convention by Robert Yates, Esq., "United States; Formation of the Union," Library of Congress, p. 781.

capable of making the right decisions, and should defer to those who are, allegedly, "better informed."

Among those who have recently advanced this argument is the ardent Roosevelt supporter, the Most Rev. Joseph P. Hurley, Roman Catholic Bishop of St. Augustine, Florida. In a nation-wide radio address[1] urging that America emulate the Nazis and allow the President to plunge the nation into an undeclared war because "the constitutional prerogative of the Congress [to declare war] is no longer the style," Bishop Hurley posed the question of who should decide on war or peace:

"Since. . . . we are confronted with a conflict between aid to the Allies and avoidance of war, who shall decide? *Certainly not the people, for they have neither the experience, nor access to the facts, nor in many cases the understanding which are required."!*

"The people. . . . seldom judge or determine right," said Alexander Hamilton.

Bishop Hurley, the "democrat," is in perfect accord with Alexander Hamilton, the advocate of undisguised oligarchy. They differ only in this: Hamilton was without the base alloy of hypocrisy. The politician-priest who in one breath contemptuously derides the judgment of the people, in another piously exclaims: "I have an abiding faith in government by the people. . ." And he proceeds to confirm his "abiding faith" with the impudent and baseless implication that "the people" were responsible for the chaotic pre-war state of affairs with the words:

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[1]Address delivered over the Columbia Broadcasting System network, July 6, 1941.

"Nor is the record of democratic peoples in the pre-war period such as would inspire much confidence."

This cunning and contemptible aspersion on the victims of capitalist dissolution and mismanagement is not unlike the more direct assaults on the principles of popular rule which are daily being made in "authoritarian" France. For in France, under the rule of the Ultramontane absolutist, Marshal Petain, the lips of the "sovereign people" are sealed, the "elite" rule, and all the evils which have befallen the nation as a result of capitalist chaos and decay are openly blamed on the people who, in the words of the Chief of State, exercised their rights "in total irresponsibility."[1]

Bishop Hurley's speech, abounding in sophistries and slurs upon the anti-war majority of American workers, was promptly endorsed by nearly every war-mongering capitalist newspaper in America. Cabinet members and Administration whips in Congress commented on it enthusiastically. The President remained eloquently silent.

Attempts have been made, and are being made, to justify the President's usurpation of the power to make war by citing the actions taken by Abraham Lincoln against the Confederacy in the first days of his Administration. But Abraham Lincoln was confronted with an armed rebellion and the Constitution clearly gave him authority to act swiftly. Neither armed rebellion nor invasion threatens America today. In edging the nation into an undeclared war against the demonstrable opposition of eighty per cent, or more, of its citizens, Mr. Roosevelt responds to the interests of the

[1]New York *Herald Tribune*, July 9, 1941.

owning class whose foreign markets are imperilled by Nazi capitalist rivals.

When it is understood that the issues of the great war now raging are not ideological, but economic, it becomes perfectly clear why the ruling class cannot "educate and inform the whole mass of people," as Thomas Jefferson urged. The "mass of people," i.e., the working class, would not fight a war for venal ends. Hence they are treated to spread-eagle oratory and exhorted to defer to the decisions of the President and the "elite" who surround him.

Spurious Americanism distrusts the workers and believes "they seldom judge or determine right," i.e., "right" for the interests of the exploiting few.

Genuine Americanism, of which Socialism is the highest expression, has unswerving faith in the working class, and in its ability, once it is informed and educated concerning its class interests, to regenerate society, preserve the liberties wrested from tyranny in the past and augment them with the freedom of freedoms—freedom from exploitation and wage slavery. To those workers who, being baffled by the contradictions of decadent capitalism, are inclined to invest the "elite" with autocratic powers, we recall the signal warning of Abraham Lincoln:

"Let them [the workingmen] beware of surrendering a political power which they already possess, and which, if surrendered, will surely be used to close the door of advancement against such as they, and to fix new disabilities and burdens upon them till all of liberty shall be lost."

III.

Free Speech—Weapon of Truth.

"Come say and publish all one knows
And go on gladly thus—
BUT—let nobody blow his nose
Unless he thinks like us!"

—*Goethe.*

No one sings louder praises for freedom of speech, freedom of press and the right of peaceful assembly—*in the abstract* — than the self-styled "100 per cent American." And no one is more eager to deprive the workers of these liberties when his capitalist interests are imperilled. In times when the class struggle simmers, comparatively few attempts are made by the ruling class and their sycophants to infringe on the liberties nominally guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. Perhaps we should add that this holds for the greater part of the nation. There are communities such as the states of the deep South, and certain industrial feudal communities in the North too, where Goethe's clever satirical verse expresses *the rule.*

It is the common experience of workers in steel towns, or coal mining communities, for example, to be stripped of all their nominal liberties the moment the class struggle begins to boil. Especially when martial law is invoked to break strikes are the workers confronted with a series of "verbotens" forbidding them free speech and even the right to assemble in groups. Many a toiler will take with him to the grave scars he

received from plug-uglies and minions of the law for insisting on the exercise of his constitutional rights.

As capitalism feels the cold hand of death upon it, ever bolder assaults are made upon those liberties which afford Socialism the opportunity of freely presenting to the workers a program for their emancipation. As Karl Marx pointed out long ago:

"The bourgeoisie [that is, the employing class] perceives correctly that all the weapons, which it forged against feudalism [free speech, free press, etc.], turn their edges against itself; that all the means of education, which it brought forth, rebel against its own civilization; that all the gods, which it made, have fallen away from it. It understands that all its so-called citizens' rights and progressive organs assail and menace its class rule, both in its social foundation and its political superstructure—consequently, have become 'socialistic.' "

One has only to look back into American history to the era preceding the Civil War, to the mob spirit invoked against the Abolitionists, to the tar-and-feather "parties," to the shameful murder of Lovejoy and the persecution of the brave William Lloyd Garrison. The Abolitionists were attacking a form of property, the institution of chattel slavery. The owners of that property and their supporters in the North, though they mouthed praises to the Bill of Rights, argued that there was a "limit" on free speech, free press, and other liberties through the exercise of which their "peculiar" institution was attacked. The Bourbon slave-holders "loved democracy"—in the abstract, or until it was used against their system. They were answered sharp-

ly by the devastating logic of the brilliant Abolitionist leader, Wendell Phillips:

"He does not really believe his opinions, who dares not give free scope to his opponent."

So we say to the latter-day Bourbons,[1] who speciously argue today that free speech is a "privilege" and should not be extended to those who oppose the present social order and the institution of private property. This is a far cry from the Americanism of the Founding Fathers. To them the Bill of Rights was no set of glittering generalities to be dragged out as tinsel for Fourth of July orations and honored in the breach. They believed implicitly that "the best test of truth is the power of the thought to get itself accepted in the

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[1]The list of those who have lately argued boldly or subtly for limitations on the right of free speech is extensive. It includes such columnists as Westbrook Pegler, Dorothy Thompson and Raymond Clapper; such politicians as Mayor Hague, George U. (Rubber-Hose) Harvey and Governor Eugene Talmadge; and such intimates of the President as his son, Captain Elliott Roosevelt, and his wife, Eleanor Roosevelt. In a radio address delivered Sunday, October 19, 1941, Mrs. Roosevelt joined the "free speech but" fraternity by citing (and misapplying) the late Justice Holmes's statement that free speech does not include the right to shout "fire!" in a crowded theater! Mrs. Roosevelt did not add that neither does it include the right (on the part of the theater management) to suppress the fact of the fire until *all* are hopelessly trapped and doomed!

Captain Elliott Roosevelt, less subtly, suggested to the Federal Communications Commission, March 8, 1939, that "persons preaching.... communism [i.e., *Socialism*] .... are making treasonable remarks and are therefore not subject to freedom of speech." His reference to treason recalls the following memorable statement made by Thomas Jefferson on this head:

"Most codes extend their definition of treason to acts not really against one's country. They do not distinguish between acts against the government, and acts against oppressions of the government. The latter are virtues, yet have furnished more victims to the executioner than the former, because real treasons are rare; oppressions frequent. The unsuccessful struggles against tyranny have been the chief martyrs of treason laws in all countries."

competition of the market."[1] This was the theory of the Constitution. Its authors knew that many fighting faiths were proved by time and experience to be obsolete, and that if new faiths were not permitted to arise and flourish society would surely retrogress. Perhaps none among the Revolutionary Fathers reflected more profoundly upon this subject than Thomas Jefferson, whose words of wisdom come echoing down the aisles of American history as a warning to our own generation. Said Jefferson:

"Truth is great and will prevail if left to herself. She is the proper and sufficient antagonist of error and has nothing to fear from the conflict, unless, by human interposition, disarmed of her natural weapons—free argument and debate; errors ceasing to be dangerous when it is permitted freely to contradict them."

The numerous infringements of Constitutional liberties reported in the capitalist press, the new ordinances intimidating aliens and workers, fingerprinting, the invocation of discredited anti-sedition and anti-syndicalist laws, all bear witness that the modern capitalist class is shaking in its stolen boots and that, unlike the founders of the republic, it fears the natural weapons of truth—"free argument and debate."

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[1]Supreme Court Justice Holmes in a dissenting opinion on the case of Abrams et al *v.* U.S.

IV.

Throttle Minorities at Your Peril!

> Civil liberties are always safe as long as their exercise doesn't bother anyone.—New York *Times* editorial, January 3, 1941.

"Freedom of speech," said Mr. Roosevelt in a speech on the eve of the 1940 elections, "is of no use if a man has nothing to say." To this we might add: Freedom of speech is of little use if a political party cannot also submit for the decision of the majority its proposals. Mr. Roosevelt has eloquently saluted "free elections," but there is a conspicuous contrast between his words and the actual conditions which prevail. The Socialist Labor Party can speak with authority on this question, for, only a few weeks before Mr. Roosevelt said that "Americans are determined to retain for themselves the right of free speech, free religion, free assembly and the right which lies at the basis of all of them—the right to choose the officers of their own government in free elections"—only a few weeks before the President thus declaimed on free elections, the Socialist Labor Party had been prevented by illegal and violent means from placing its ticket on the ballot in some of the most important industrial states[1].

The experience of the Socialist Labor Party in Il-

[1]Illegal interference with the political activity of minority parties was reported in 23 states in 1940.

linois alone reveals the hollow mockery of such declamations as those of the President. There members of the Party were systematically harassed and assaulted, and one was kidnapped, to prevent them from circulating nominating petitions and otherwise to deprive them of opportunities to reach the electorate with the Socialist message. Illegal interference with a federal election was clearly a federal offense and called for an investigation by the Department of Justice and the apprehension and arraignment of the guilty parties. Instead, the Department of Justice hemmed and hawed and finally dropped the matter—without even a serious pretense at investigating.

Illinois is by no means the only state where hoodlum tactics are employed against the Socialist Labor Party, by the self-styled "super-patriotic" organizations. But crude and violent though these flagrant assaults on "free elections" are, they are less damaging to the principles Mr. Roosevelt declaimed for than the obstacles raised in the path of minority parties by state legislatures in the form of prohibitive election laws. In some states election barriers have been raised so high that minority parties are ruled out and new parties haven't a "Chinaman's chance" of challenging the monopoly of the capitalist Tweedledum and Tweedledee, the Republican and Democratic parties. These capitalist politicians forget that monkeying with the thermometer cannot change the social temperature.

To grasp the sinister import of this, one has only to recall that the Republican party could not have been organized if these laws had operated in the days of its formation, and its predecessor, the Free Soil party, would have been suppressed in 1848 for its failure to poll for Martin Van Buren a sufficient number of votes.

Like the Republican party in 1856, the Socialist Labor Party could muster only a minority support in the past. But to those who charge that lack of voting strength in the past is a denial of the imperative necessity for a Socialist reconstruction of society *today,* we reply in the measured words of Abraham Lincoln:

"The fact that we get no votes in your section is a fact of your making, and not of ours," he told a New Haven, Connecticut, audience March 6, 1860. "And if there be fault in that, that fault is primarily yours, and remains so until you show that we repel you by any wrong principle or practice. If we do repel you by any wrong principle or practice, the fault is ours; but this brings you to where you ought to have started—to a discussion of the right or wrong of our principle."

The moment you consider the right or wrong of our Socialist principles, you are compelled to admit the gross evils inherent in capitalism. You are compelled to admit that they are aggravated as the system decays. You are driven to face squarely the fact that every liberty-throttling measure capitalism concocts to prolong its rule will ultimately throttle *your* liberties and *your* rights. "Familiarize yourselves with the chains of bondage," warned Lincoln, "and you prepare your own limbs to wear them. Accustomed to trample on the rights of others, and you have lost the genius of your own independence." Finally you cannot escape the conviction that Socialism, in its struggle to make real and enduring the inalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, harmonizes with the best and noblest precepts of Americanism, and that its foe, though it appears draped in the national colors, is sub-

verting Americanism and introducing despotism in the folds of the flag. With James Russell Lowell we say:

> "Let us speak plain; there is more force in names
> Than most men dream of, and a lie may keep
> Its throne a whole age longer if it skulk
> Behind the shield of some fair-seeming name."

V.

Anti-Militarism—American Tradition.

Bona fide Americanism and militarism cannot be reconciled. They are as hostile to one another as freedom and tyranny, as democracy and absolutism. It is written in our Declaration of Independence. It is written all over the pages of our national history. If there was one thing that the majority of the Founding Fathers were agreed upon it was that, having overthrown one military autocracy (that of King George III), they would not permit another to gain a foothold in this republic. This anti-militaristic sentiment was so strong, and the reaction against the man in uniform—whether royal or hireling—was so profound that for a few years after the defeat of the British, the United States Army consisted of 80 men and officers! Not until 1790 did Congress create a small army consisting of 1,283 men and officers and this it jealously kept in the background and under its strict control.

Why this fear and detestation of military power among the Founding Fathers? That it was deeply rooted is beyond dispute. The notes and papers on the secret sessions of the Constitutional Convention record the strong anti-military sentiments which prevailed. Said George Mason: ". . . . when once a standing army is established in any country the people lose their liberty." And James Madison, who is known to his pos-

terity as the Father of the Constitution, replied: "I most cordially agree with the honorable member last up, that a standing army is one of the greatest mischiefs that can happen." These men were not speculating. They were men of high moral and intellectual caliber, men learned in history and in the philosophy of government. Their deep and exhaustive study of history had taught them that just as war invites and feeds militarism, militarism invites and feeds war. This is the way James Madison put it:

"In time of war, great discretionary powers are constantly given to the executive magistrate [the President]. Constant apprehension of war has the same tendency to render the head too large for the body. A standing military force with an overgrown executive will not long be safe companions to liberty. THE MEANS OF DEFENSE AGAINST FOREIGN DANGER HAVE ALWAYS BEEN THE INSTRUMENTS OF TYRANNY AT HOME. Among the Romans it was a standing maxim to excite war, whenever a revolt is apprehended. Throughout all Europe, the armies kept up under the pretext of defending have enslaved the people. It is perhaps questionable whether the best concerted system of absolute power in Europe could maintain itself, in a situation where no alarms of external danger could tame the people to the domestic yoke." (Capitals ours.)

Madison's words should be reread, should be committed to memory. "*The means of defense against foreign danger have always been the instruments of tyranny at home.*" It is worth reflecting on this as we observe the rise in America of a monstrous military power, as we witness the intense training given our con-

script army in the "art" of breaking strikes, handling "mobs" and suppressing civil "disturbances." Speaking for spurious Americanism, the Boston *Daily Globe,* after describing strikebreaking maneuvers at Camp Edwards, piously observed: "Such work. . . . is a typical duty of troops, and the practice is necessary as a part of the nation's preparedness program."!

Militarism implies conscription, for no nation can maintain a huge army in peacetime without employing compulsion. Known to be the very foundation of totalitarianism, conscription in time of peace has always been as repugnant to Americans as dictatorship itself. On May 16, 1777, Thomas Jefferson wrote to John Adams:

"[The draft] ever was the most unpopular and impracticable thing that could be attempted. Our people, even under the monarchial government, had learnt to consider it as the last of all oppressions."

Thirty-four years later, the celebrated orator, Daniel Webster, delivered a ringing speech against conscription. ". . . . what would have been more absurd," he said, "than for this Constitution to have said that to secure the great blessings of liberty it gave to government an uncontrolled power of military conscription." He held that, if it could be proved that Congress had the power under the Constitution to deprive men of their civil liberty by thrusting them into military service against their will, the same arguments or pretext of an "emergency" could be used to prove "that Congress has power to create a dictator." Then, summing up his contempt for this view:

"A free government with arbitrary means to admin-

ister it is a contradiction; a free government without adequate provision for personal security is an absurdity; a free government, with an uncontrolled power of military conscription, is a solecism [incongruity], at once the most ridiculous and abominable that ever entered into the head of man."

The American tradition against militarism and peacetime conscription was the envy of military-ridden peoples throughout the world. For more than a century it was not seriously challenged. Then, after the outbreak of the first World War, a small and powerful minority of the American ruling class raised an imperious demand in the public press for conscription as a "national defense" measure. This attack on one of the noblest American traditions failed. It was scotched in harsh terms by President Woodrow Wilson who, in his second annual message to Congress, December 8, 1914, said:

"It [national defense] cannot be discussed without first answering some very searching questions. It is said in some quarters that we are not prepared for war. What is meant by being prepared? Is it meant that we are not ready upon brief notice to put a nation in the field, a nation of men trained in arms? Of course we are not ready to do that; *and we shall never be in time of peace so long as we retain our present political principles and institutions.* And what is it that it is suggested we should be prepared for? To defend ourselves against attack? We have always found means to do that, and shall find them whenever it is necessary without calling our people away from their necessary tasks to render compulsory military service in time of peace."

Then, in words recalling the warning of the Founding Fathers, Woodrow Wilson proceeded:

"*We never have had, and while we retain our present principles and ideals we never shall have, a large standing army. . . .we shall not turn America into a military camp.* We will not ask our young men to spend the best years of their lives making soldiers of themselves. . . . . And especially when half the world is on fire we shall be careful to make our moral insurance against the spread of the conflagration very definite and certain and adequate indeed."[1]

Wilson's denunciation of militarism is direct and unequivocal. Try as you will, you cannot twist it to mean anything else than that militarism and peacetime conscription are repugnant and hostile to our principles and ideals of personal liberty. As a student and teacher of history, Wilson knew that the officers of the Army and Navy represent a system which is the very antithesis of democracy, a system dependent upon a multitude of ranks in which each station adulates its superiors and despises those below. He knew that the military caste are, by nature, ambitious for power and rank and that they can enhance these only by adding more humble privates to their commands. Finally, he knew that militarism brings about an unhealthy alliance between the military hierarchy and the war traffickers

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[1]Senator George W. Norris, who was one of that group of "willful men" who voted against a declaration of war in 1917, agrees with Wilson that militarism means death to democracy. While the conscription bill was being debated, on August 22, 1940, he said:

"I am afraid of building up a society based on compulsory military training in time of peace, for that leads to dictatorship and ultimately to the downfall of such a government as ours, at least, to the ending of democracy, just as surely as the sun rises in the east."

and munitions makers and that this, in turn, brings into being a self-interested political power which operates in the name of patriotism. ". . . . such associations," said a Senate Munitions Committee report, "are an inevitable part of militarism, and are to be avoided in peacetime at all cost."

Socialism, being anti-militaristic, is in complete harmony with this fine and noble American tradition. It raises its voice now against those propertied interests which, in the name of "Americanism" and "patriotism," would scuttle the anti-military tradition and duplicate in our nation the monstrous instrument of force which has cursed Europe for so many centuries. With Abraham Lincoln, Socialism holds that "our frowning battlements, our bristling seacoasts, the guns of our war steamers, or the strength of our gallant army. . . . are not our reliance against a resumption of tyranny in our land." And again with Lincoln, Socialism holds that "all of them may be turned against our liberties without making us stronger or weaker for the struggle."

Yet, if militarism is not to become a fixture in American life, and if the immense war machine now abuilding is not to be "turned against our liberties," those who cherish the American tradition against anti-militarism must learn that all their protests are futile and all their energy wasted *unless they are directed against the cause of militarism.* Modern militarism is the product of predatory capitalist society. It flourishes in the measure that capitalism decays. It cannot be uprooted unless and until capitalism is uprooted. The American scholar and social scientist, Daniel De Leon, succinctly expressed the viewpoint of Socialism:

"The attitude of the Socialist Labor Party toward

anti-militarism is—'Organize the working class integrally-industrially!' Only then can the revolt against militarism result in a Waterloo to the class of sponge, instead of a massacre to the class of labor."

VI.

The Constitution and the Right to Revolution.

One of the darkest and most disgraceful chapters of American history was written in the months which followed the Armistice of 1918. Spurious Americanism, the "Americanism" which reflects the interests and fears of the ruling class, sought victims for its anti-Bolshevik crusade. It brazenly incited the mob spirit, and, aided and abetted by the police, the courts and the Department of Justice itself, it deprived hundreds of their liberty on the flimsiest of pretexts. Among them were many members of the Socialist Labor Party, but these the Department of Justice was compelled—reluctantly—to release. The Socialist Labor Party could not be legally suppressed and its members could not be legally jailed for the very simple reason that it planted itself squarely upon the Constitution of the United States.

To those who are unacquainted with the unique character of our basic charter it may seem contradictory that a political party of revolution can plant itself squarely upon the Constitution. It is not contradictory; it is logical. The American Constitution is, itself, a revolutionary document. It was the first ever adopted which provided ways and means for its own amendment. Its authors, being men of vision and foresight, believed that, as conditions changed, the Constitution

would have to be altered to fit the changed conditions. In inserting the amendment clause (Article V), they afforded "We, the People," of succeeding generations the means whereby to make any alteration in our society and government which we deem essential to our welfare and happiness. Article V, in effect, legalizes revolution.

The celebrated American humorist, Artemus Ward, tells an amusing story of a man who was in prison fifteen years. Then one day a bright thought struck him. He recalled that the door was not locked, opened it and walked out a free man. Article V of the American Constitution is the open door to liberty for the American workers. It gives them the Constitutional *right* to unite their majority and demand that private ownership, with its evil brood of war and poverty, give way to collective property and progress.

Spurious Americanism, speaking through the lips of professors, priests, politicians and their masters, the economic overlords, strives to conceal the revolutionary implications of the Constitution. "Undoubtedly," said the aristocratic-minded president of the capitalist-endowed Columbia University, Nicholas Murray Butler, "the weakest link in the chain of the Constitution is Article V. . . ." From the capitalist premise he is right, for reasons to which we have already alluded, but only from the *capitalist premise.*

Because of the revolutionary implications of Article V, spurious Americanism is making a prodigious effort to implant the idea in our youth that the Constitution is "sacred" and that any attempt to alter it radically would be "sacrilegious," therefore immoral. Fortunately, the view was explicitly repudiated by some of the most celebrated of the Revolutionary Fathers. In a

letter to Samuel Kercheval, dated July 12, 1816, Thomas Jefferson made it plain beyond peradventure that amendments were anticipated and that a peaceful method of altering the Constitution was provided to render unnecessary bloodshed and violence. Wrote Jefferson:

"Some men look at constitutions with sanctimonious reverence and deem them like the ark of the covenant, too sacred to be touched. They ascribe to the men of the preceding age a wisdom more than human, and suppose what they did to be beyond amendment. I knew that age well; I belonged to it and labored with it..... We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy, as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their .... ancestors. ....This corporeal globe, and everything upon it, belong to its present corporeal inhabitants, during their generation. They alone have a right to direct what is the concern of themselves alone, and to declare the law of that direction, and this declaration can only be made by their majority..... *If this avenue be shut to the call of sufferance, it will make itself heard through that of force,* and we shall go on, as other nations are doing, in the endless circle of oppression, rebellion, reformation; and oppression, rebellion, reformation, again; and so on forever."

Thomas Jefferson's reasoning was sound, and his words stand as a sharp rebuke to those who, today, would deny the right of the majority to "provide new Guards for their future security." Jefferson expressed the philosophy upon which the nation was built, a philosophy summed up succinctly by George Washington when he said: "The basis of our political systems is the

right of the people to alter their constitutions of government."

If the people did not possess this right, if the Dr. Butlers had their way and Article V were qualified to exclude fundamental changes in our society, is it not glaringly apparent that all hope of the impoverished masses rising above their present condition of servitude through peaceful and civilized means would be gone? For surely it is fatuous to conceive of the ruling class voluntarily relinquishing their rule. There is not a vestige of a basis in history for such a hope. "*I challenge you to cite me an instance in all the history of the world where liberty was handed down from above!*" wrote the World War President and historian, Woodrow Wilson. "*Liberty always is attained by forces working below, underneath, by the great movement of the people.*"

The immortal utterances of Abraham Lincoln on the right of the people to throw off their oppressors likewise constitute a blistering refutation of the narrow, restrictive construction put upon the Constitution by spurious Americanism. In his arraignment of President Polk for that executive's unprovoked attack on Mexico (January 12, 1848), Lincoln said:

"Any people anywhere being inclined and having the power have the right to rise up and shake off the existing government, and form a new one that suits them better. This is a most valuable, a most sacred right—a right which we hope and believe is to liberate the world."

And in his first Inaugural Address the Great Emancipator repeated this fundamental philosophy—a philosophy which finds expression in the amendment clause of our Constitution:

"This country, with its institutions, belongs to the people who inhabit it. Whenever they shall grow weary of the existing government, they can exercise their Constitutional right of amending it, or their revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow it."

How often have the traducers of Socialism winced when Lincoln's unequivocal words have been flung into their teeth? How often have they wished fervently he had never spoken them? But whether Lincoln had given expression to this fundamental principle of Americanism, or not, the *right* would still be ours. It would be ours for the same reason that it was the right of the Revolutionary Fathers to rise up and throw off the military autocracy of George III, for the same reason that it was the right of all people at all times to wrest what measure of liberty they were capable of wresting from the reluctant hands of tyranny.

We are fortunate, indeed, that this right is embodied in the Constitution, fortunate, indeed, that the founders of the Socialist Labor Party possessed the wisdom to build this great movement on that right. Their foresight, like the foresight of the Founding Fathers, provides our generation with the means for a peaceful Socialist reconstruction of society. The A. Mitchell Palmers of decadent capitalism may fret and fume as they please. To "get at" the Socialist Labor Party they must repudiate the Constitution, they must acknowledge that their Americanism is spurious.

VII.

Industrial Feudalism or Industrial Democracy?

Should a typhoid epidemic break out in your community, you would not merely treat the several cases reported; you would seek the cause and eliminate it. Why, then, should we treat social diseases—poverty amidst plenty, unemployment, war—with less intelligence? Their cause is clearly capitalism, ownership of the means of production by the idle few and production for sale with its terrible concomitant, the international struggle for markets and war. In the light of the plainly written injunction in the Declaration of Independence enjoining us to throw off *any* government obstructive to the ends of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, who will gainsay that Socialist aims are the very essence of Americanism? To keep silent in the sight of needless misery *would* be un-American. Such conduct would be cowardly and contrary to the revolutionary, freedom-loving spirit in which this nation was born.

Gradually in the beginning, then at a more rapid tempo, the wealth of this nation has concentrated, rendering propertiless and dependent the overwhelming majority. Yet the illusion of independence has persisted. It is still true that the individual worker may quit his master. But the "independence" ends there, for as soon as he quits one master he must seek another.

Withdraw yourself! Get perspective! Then look at the social scene in America. You will see, not a mass of independent workers, but *a class of wage slaves* bound as securely to a class of capitalist owners as ever chattel slave was to his master or serf to the soil.[1]

"It is of no consequence by what name you call the people," declared the American patriot, John Adams, in the Continental Congress of 1777, "whether by that of freemen or slaves; in some countries the laboring poor are called freemen, in others they are called slaves; but the difference as to the state is imaginary only. What matters it whether a landlord employing ten laborers on his farm gives them annually as much money as will buy them the necessaries of life or gives them those necessities at short hand?. . . .The condition of the laboring poor in most countries—that of the fishermen particularly of the Northern States—is as abject as that of slavery."

The condition of the wage slave today is bad. For more than a decade millions have rotted on the industrial scrapheap while their more fortunate brethren have hung precariously on the raw edge. Only through war — mass butchery of "surplus" workingmen and mass destruction of surplus commodities—could capitalism start the wheels of industry again. Everyone who will reflect but for a moment knows this. They

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[1]The American anthropologist, Lewis Henry Morgan, celebrated author of "Ancient Society," in a lecture delivered in 1852, entitled "Diffusion Against Centralization," underscores this point:

"Centralize property in the hands of a few," he said, "and the millions are under *bondage* of property—a bondage as absolute and deplorable as if their limbs were covered with manacles. Abstract all property from the hands of labor and you thereby reduce labor to *dependence;* and that dependence becomes as complete a servitude as the master could fix upon his slave."

know that had it not been for the violent contest for world trade we would still be wallowing in the trough of a "depression" or "recession" or whatever euphemistic name our capitalists choose to call their chronic economic crisis.

But wretched and insecure though it is, the lot of the toiler under capitalism is not as bad as the industrial serfdom which is in store for us if we permit capitalism to drag society backward to Industrial Feudalism. The "free" wage slave is rapidly disappearing from Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy. In those blighted countries workers are forbidden to quit their jobs at will and are bound to their employers in much the same way as the serf was bound to the soil and, thereby, to his feudal lord. *This is the trend in every capitalist nation!* It is a trend which is accelerated by organization for total war. In an editorial on "Britain's 'Dictatorship,'" May 24, 1940, the premier organ of plutocratic capitalism in America, the New York *Times,* declared:

"But once the principle of conscription for the army is admitted .... *then there is no logical stopping point.* If men can be ordered to leave their jobs, their homes, their civil life, to obey commands at any hour of the day or night, go wherever they are sent, perhaps to be shelled, machine-gunned, bombed or slain, *then there is no reason why other men should not be ordered into coal mines, or to work twelve hours a day instead of eight, or seven days instead of six.....*" (Italics ours.)

Aye. There is no logical stopping point short of TOTALITARIANISM FOR THE NATION AND INDUSTRIAL SERFDOM FOR THE WORKERS! It is to avert that calamity, it is to put society

back upon the road to peace and progress, that the Socialist Labor Party urges the workers to heed this warning and acquaint themselves without delay with the Socialist program for a reconstruction of society.

Instead of wasting their energy and substance in a vain and futile effort to reform outmoded capitalism, the workers must unite under the political banner of Socialism to demand the unconditional surrender of capitalism. The day is past for so-called "immediate demands" in the platform of Socialism. "Immediate demands" (reforms) are as out of place in the platform of bona fide Socialism as they would have been out of place in the Declaration of Independence. For our generation of toilers it is all, or nothing. There can be no compromise, no half-measures. If we do not dare to claim our rights and perform our duties as men, the reaction will be emboldened to destroy those rights —even though it set progress back a thousand years.

The rights asserted in the Declaration of Independence were backed up by arms which the colonists possessed and which their mode of life had taught them to use with great skill. The modern working class has neither arms nor practice in their use. But the toilers of our age possess an infinitely superior weapon, or force, with which to back up the Socialist ballot. The immense changes and improvements wrought in the methods of production have placed that weapon in our hands. Mass production has placed the workers collectively in *de facto* control of industry. They run industry from top to bottom. Organized into a Socialist Industrial Union, prepared to act concertedly the moment the political signal is given, the united working class is in a position *to take possession of all the means of production and distribution, lock out the rebellious*

capitalist class, if it stages a "pro-slavery rebellion," and continue operation for the benefit of society.

The Socialist Industrial Union alone can cope with the situation should the minority of capitalists choose to rebel against the decision of the majority. It alone can prevent chaos and civil war, maintain order and avert widespread distress among the workers. Above all, the Socialist Industrial Union supplies the framework for the Industrial Republic of Labor to replace the worn-out capitalist State. Just as the thirteen colonies became the thirteen states in the United States, the Socialist Industrial Unions become the units in the Socialist Industrial Republic. An Industrial Congress composed of democratically elected representatives from the industries will replace the political Congress of capitalist politicians. As the celebrated American social architect, Daniel De Leon, described the purpose and aim of Socialist Industrial Unionism:

"Industrial Unionism is the Socialist Republic in the making; and, the goal once reached, the Industrial Union is the Socialist Republic in operation.

"Accordingly, the Industrial Union is, at once, the battering ram with which to pound down the fortress of capitalism, and the successor of the capitalist social structure itself."

*

Never, not even in Abraham Lincoln's time, was it more true that "the dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present." To cling to hackneyed capitalist dogma, to maintain the capitalist system, means to re-enact over and over again all the dreadful tragedies capitalism has produced, each time upon a

more stupendous scale and bringing proportionate havoc and human misery. In spite of ourselves and and irrespective of our private wishes, our generation has been entrusted with the gigantic task of sweeping away the incubus of wage slavery as our forebears, eighty years ago, swept away the incubus of chattel slavery. Once more "we shall nobly save or meanly lose the last best hope of earth." We stand today where the roads fork. One leads to Industrial Feudalism and imperialistic barbarism; the other to the Industrial Republic of Emancipated Labor, a society of equity, harmony and abundance for all.

It is a quality of revolutions not to go by old lines or old laws, but to break up both, and make new ones.

—*ABRAHAM LINCOLN.*

TWENTIETH CENTURY DEMOCRACY.

On the two following pages political representation and industrial representation, as proposed by the Socialist Labor Party, are graphically contrasted. Although political representation survives today, the growth of modern industry has made it obsolete. It fitted a condition when communities were largely self-sufficient economically, when wheat was ground into flour at the local mill, when hides went to the village tannery and leather to the village shoemaker.

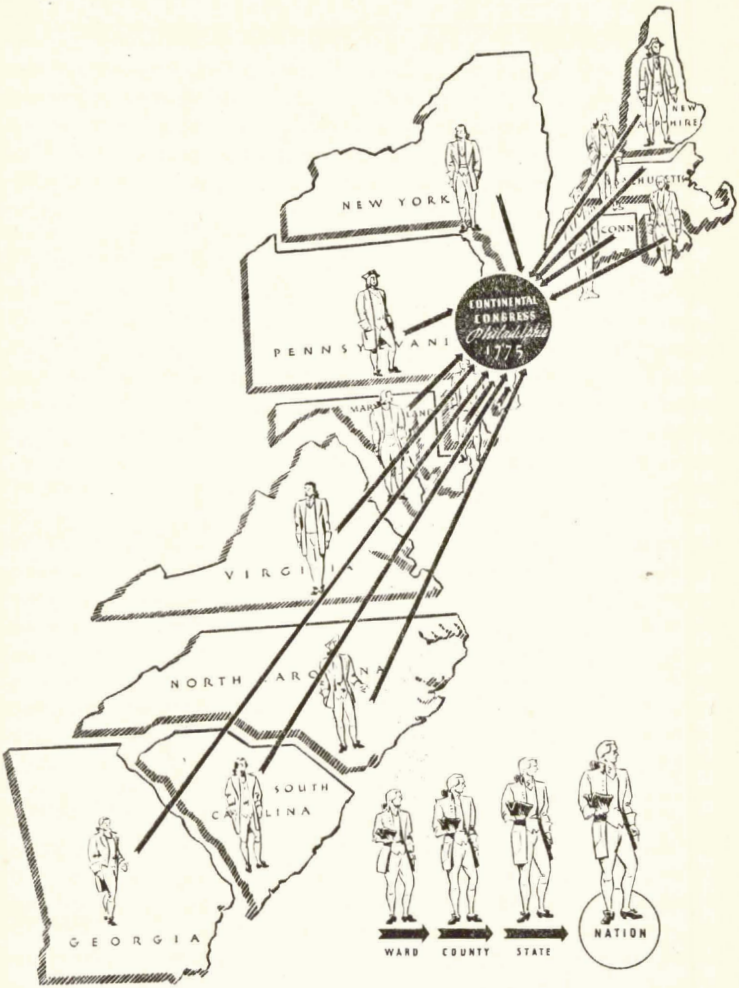
Modern mass production industry, growing up within the political-geographic framework, has made boundary lines between counties and states meaningless. Instead, it has raised new "boundary lines," economic "boundary lines," between industries. To administer this gigantic productive apparatus in order that it will benefit society, instead of yielding incredible profits for the few, requires that society recognize industry as the basis for democratic representation, and set up a Socialist Industrial Union Administration in place of the outmoded political State.

For the sake of graphic presentation we have chosen the baking industry to depict the Socialist Industrial Union setup. "Bakery No. 1" is comparable to the political ward; the Local Industrial Union comprising all the bakeries in the community, to the political county; the National Industrial Union of the baking industry, to the state. Together with other food-producing industries the National Industrial Union of Bakers forms a Department, and all the Departments, as shown by the illustration on page 45, are represented at a General Executive Council, which replaces the political Congress.

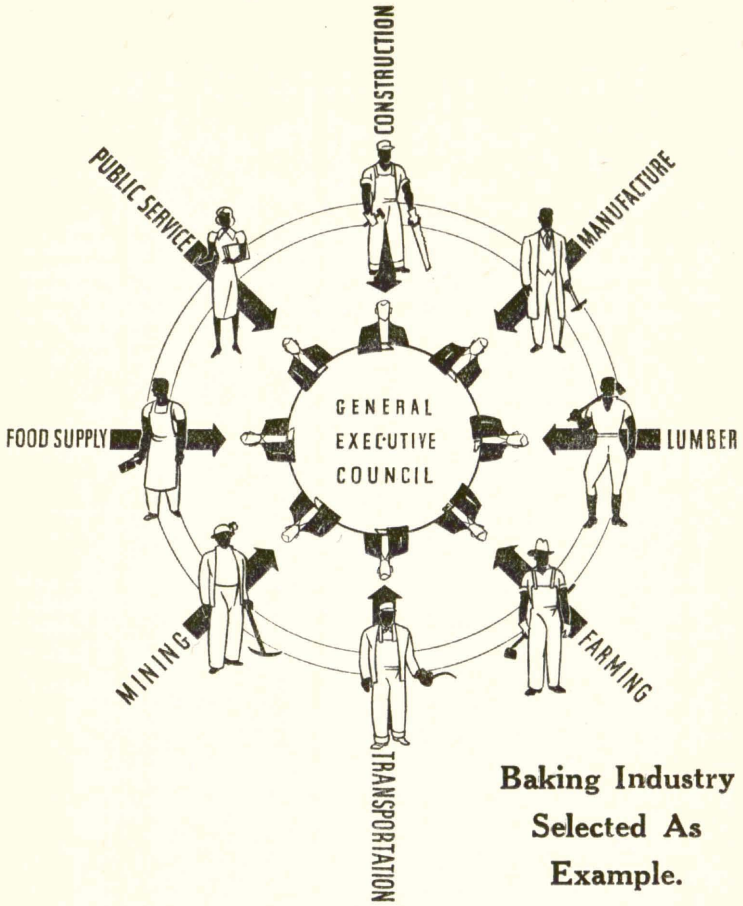
Under the Industrial Republic of Labor we can create order where anarchy exists today; we can have planned production without waste to the end that all may have the abundance modern technology makes possible.

"The basis of our political systems is the right of the people to alter their constitutions of government," said George Washington.

The Socialist Labor Party proposes that ours be altered to conform to modern economic conditions and to human needs.



18th Century Line of Representation



Baking Industry Selected As Example.

Line of Representation of the Socialist Industrial Union—Twentieth Century Democracy

The state lines will have to be wiped out; they will be wiped out. They have and are acting as a political scaffolding for the raising of the Industrial Republic, under which the dividing lines will cease to be arbitrarily geographic, and will be dictated by the nature of the separate industries wherever located, the industries becoming what the states now are and, like the states, forming ONE Industrial Body or Nation.

—DANIEL DE LEON

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