

**SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY**

**PRICE  
FIVE  
CENTS**

# **WHAT IS SOCIALISM**



**ANSWERING QUESTIONS  
MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED**

## WHAT IS SOCIALISM?

### *Answering Questions Most Frequently Asked*

"What is Socialism?" "What will we use for money [under Socialism]?" "What will be the incentive?" "What can Socialism do about unemployment?" "How can you get along without capital?" "Is government ownership Socialism?" "How will Socialism prevent war?" "What is the difference between Socialism and Communism?" "Why do the radical parties always fight among themselves?" "Aren't the present [pro-capitalist] unions better than nothing?" "Why haven't you organized the Socialist Industrial Union?" "Shouldn't we try to get something now [reforms] while waiting for Socialism?" "What is Ultramontaniam [Roman Catholic Church in politics]?" "What about the capitalist press?"

These and many other questions frequently asked by honest inquirers are answered lucidly and concisely in this pamphlet. The thirty-six questions and answers do not cover the entire subject of Socialism nor are the answers complete, but enough is said to enable the inquirer to grasp the fundamental aims and tactics of Socialism. The literature of the Socialist Labor Party deals with all these and many more questions authoritatively. The serious student, stimulated by the answers given here, will wish to pursue his studies to the point of a complete understanding of the vital subject of Socialism. A free catalogue will be sent on request.

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# What Is SOCIALISM?

**Answering Questions**

**Most Frequently Asked**

1958

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## FOREWORD.

Socialism is a science, the fundamentals of which are easily grasped by the worker. Once they are grasped, the worker may apply the fundamentals to the solution of the problems facing his class as readily as the engineer applies his knowledge of physical laws to the problems holding up his work of construction.

The worker who has not completely grasped the fundamentals of Socialism, however, is confronted with daily questions that require answers. This pamphlet is an attempt to anticipate those questions, is made up of questions and answers asked and answered at Socialist meetings. The attempt is necessarily a partial one only. It is hoped that it will, nevertheless, help aspiring students of Socialism to understand the application of Marxian methods as they make a more systematic effort to study the one science that can bring order out of social chaos.

Studying Socialism is not a hard task. The readability and the easily understood logic of the answers to questions in the pamphlet are a fair example of the ease with which the primers on Socialism by Marx, Engels, De Leon and other Socialist writers may be studied. A suggestion worth following by the new reader of Socialist literature is to follow a course of study based on De Leon's "What Means This Strike?," "Reform or Revolution," "Burning Question of Trades Unionism," "Socialist Reconstruction of So-

ciety," and "Fifteen Questions," in the order mentioned. These reasonably priced pamphlets will build up an understanding of the role of classes, of the economic exploitation of the working class by the ruling class and of the Socialist program for the building of a classless society in which the useful producer will receive the full product of his labor. They may be followed by Marx's "Value, Price and Profit," by Engels's "Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State," by other works by Marx, Engels and De Leon, and, of course, by the large number of pamphlets published by the Socialist Labor Party on assorted topics.

The suggestion offered is one that should be followed by every worker. The little effort required will compensate itself in increased understanding of society, in the realization that a program is available for the attainment of genuine freedom and prosperity.

Understanding and realization are not substitutes for organization and achievement. The interest manifested by the purchaser of this pamphlet is wasted unless it leads to a conviction that "something" must be done. The "something" is more than academic, must have concrete application in action if the knowledge gained is not to be prostituted and the fate of the working class left undecided.

Another step leading from the interest shown in reading the questions and answers in this pamphlet is the regular reading of the WEEKLY PEOPLE, official organ of the Socialist Labor Party. This step should be taken simultaneously with that of the more formal study suggested above. A regular feature of the WEEKLY PEOPLE is "The Question Period." This and other features will resolve the questions rising in the minds of serious workers as they watch the

“progress” of capitalism and as they study Socialism.

The “something” takes shape! The knowledge gained must be passed on to fellow workers, to all who will listen. The Socialist Labor Party is organized for the purpose of passing that knowledge on in an organized fashion. Those whose interest in social understanding and betterment is founded on sincerity and exact knowledge must, inevitably, be drawn to the task of aiding the Socialist Labor Party in the greatest task ever faced by men. That it is the greatest task ever undertaken requires no elaboration. The Socialist goal of realizing peace, freedom and plenty for all mankind, as opposed to the capitalist goal of perpetuating a society that insures war, slavery and poverty, presents unfettered minds with no indecision, offers them but the chance to raise the species above the capitalist present.

Socialism, with the light it casts around and within man, alone can cope with these problems. Like the sea that takes up in its bosom and dissolves the innumerable elements poured into it from innumerable rivers, to Socialism is the task reserved of solving one and all the problems that have come floating down the streams of time, and that have kept man in internecine strife with man.

—DANIEL DE LEON

## GENERAL QUESTIONS ON SOCIALISM.

### What Is Socialism?

“Socialism is that social system under which the necessities of production [factories, tools, land, etc.] are owned, controlled and administered by the people, for the people, and under which, accordingly, the *cause* of political and economic despotism having been abolished, class rule is at an end. That is Socialism, nothing short of that.”

This is the terse definition given by the great American Socialist pathfinder, Daniel De Leon. To it we add this:

Socialism is the only social system under which the worker will enjoy the full social value of his labor. Modern technology and science have made it possible to produce an abundance for all with a minimum of toil. By working not more than four hours per day, four days per week, and certainly not more than 200 days per year, the worker will receive not less than what \$10,000 will buy today. He will enjoy security from want and fear of want, a measure of personal liberty such as he has never known, and, not least, leisure for travel, play, and cultural pursuits. Socialism will mean a full, useful life.

Socialism is the next higher form of social organization which *must* supersede capitalism if we are not to

sink into the mire of fascism. It is the coming classless society of peace and plenty for all.

## What Will We Use for Money?

Under Socialism the worker will receive a labor-time voucher from his union showing that he has worked a certain number of hours. This time-voucher entitles him to withdraw from the social store as much as he contributed to it. In other words, it will be exchangeable for things which have an equal amount of labor time congealed in them, or which took an equal amount of labor time to produce.

It is a perfectly simple task, for example, to calculate the labor time required to produce a pair of shoes, or a tennis racket, or a suit of clothes. It takes 92 man-hours, we are told, to produce a Ford automobile. Under the capitalist system, in which the worker is exploited of five-sixths of what he produces—leaving only enough for him to keep himself in working condition—he is lucky to pay for a Ford automobile in 24 months. Under Socialism he would pay for it with vouchers representing 92 work-hours, or the labor of a few weeks.

Money—i.e., gold and silver, coined and bearing the imprint of governments, or currency representing gold and silver—will disappear when the system of commodity production is abolished. With the rise of a system of production-for-use, labor-time vouchers, which the worker to whom they are issued may exchange for goods, will take the place of money. Instead of burying gold in a vault and standing guard over it, we will use it in the arts and industry.

## What Will Be the Incentive?

The implication of this question is that we have incentive today. Actually capitalism crushes any real incentive, except the "incentive" to be "clever," "pushing," and to "get ahead" by stepping on the other fellow. Often capitalism gives workers the "incentive" to soldier on the job lest they work themselves out of it. The "incentive" it provides for the capitalist is not incentive which benefits society. It is, essentially, the same "incentive" which stimulates the pickpocket to his nefarious activity.

On the other hand, if the worker is supposed to have incentive today—when he receives only about one-sixth of his product—he will have six times that much incentive under Socialism when he receives it all. But under Socialism incentive will not consist exclusively of material reward, bountiful though this will be; it will consist also of the moral and spiritual satisfaction of doing one's *chosen* work well, and of the knowledge that one's labor, instead of enriching a parasite, benefits society.

Capitalist "incentive" is the product of the dog-eat-dog character of capitalism. Socialist incentive is the beneficent product of cooperation. The former hobbles progress; the latter stimulates it to limitless growth.

## What Can Socialism Do About Unemployment?

Capitalism has proved its inability to cope with the problem of unemployment. While it is true that a stupendous war takes up the slack, this "solution" is obviously a ghastly and a temporary one. In peacetime capitalism cannot prevent mass unemployment. It can-

not prevent the so-called labor-saving machine from being, in reality, the *labor-displacing machine*.

A permanent solution lies in the conversion of the privately owned means of production, which are operated for the benefit of the owning class, into the collective property of the useful workers, to be operated for use. Involuntary unemployment will be effectively banished when the means of production are socially owned and used to produce things to supply the needs of the producers. New machinery will no longer kick workers out of their jobs; instead, it will kick hours out of the working day.

Not only will every adult member of society, who is able to work, have a job, but all will have a choice of jobs. Socialism will not try to drive square pegs into round holes. Workers educated as chemists, let us say, and ambitious to work as chemists, will not be driven by economic necessity to take a job in a filling station or on an assembly line. Every union will welcome recruits for all tasks. Just as new machines become a blessing by reducing the length of the working day, so a larger working force will lighten the burden on all.

Socialism is the nemesis of unemployment.

## **How Can You Get Along Without Capital?**

When the workers organize politically and industrially to take over all the means of production and make them society's collective property, the factories, mills, mines, railroads, etc., *will cease to be capital!* A steel plant is not capital because it is a steel plant. For a steel plant to be capital there must be a mass of propertiless workers who, having no tools of their own, are compelled to sell their labor power. Capital presupposes the existence of this propertiless class of wage workers.

Socialism does not intend to destroy the industries; it intends to destroy their present capitalist character. Under Socialism, which abolishes classes, the industries are merely instruments of social production. The tools, plus access to raw materials, plus our cooperative labor, are all we need to make this country an earthly paradise.

With these under our collective control we can "get along" very nicely.

### **Is Government Ownership Socialism?**

Government ownership, or the nationalization of utilities and industries, as it is sometimes called, is not Socialism. Common or collective ownership of industry in a Socialist society of free workers, in which exploitation of man by man is impossible, is one thing. But State ownership of industry in a class-divided society, in a society where the State is nothing more than an instrument by the means of which the economically dominant class maintains its power to exploit the worker, is another and quite different thing.

Being exploited through a bunch of politicians differs little from being exploited by privately owned corporations. In capitalist Canada, for example, one railroad system is privately owned, the other government-owned. The workers on both systems are exploited equally. It is reformers and would-be Socialists who spread the fiction that government ownership means Socialism. If this were true, then totalitarian Japan would have a considerable degree of "socialism" because its utilities, railroads, telephone and telegraph, and many of its industries are government-owned.

To attain Socialism the workers must make the

means of production their collective property, abolish the class State, and administer production through democratic bodies elected from the industries.

## How Will Socialism Prevent War?

It is now generally established that, in the words of Woodrow Wilson, "the seed of war in the modern world is industrial and commercial rivalry." Each capitalist nation exploits its workers of the major part of their product. It is unable to sell, or otherwise use up, this surplus, a part of which must be disposed of in the world markets. But the world markets are constantly contracting while the capacity to produce commodities is expanding. The result is trial by arms between the competing nations. "There was never a war at arms," said the late General Hugh Johnson, "that was not merely the extension of a preceding war of commerce grown fiercer until the weapons of commerce seemed no longer sufficiently deadly." (World Peaceways broadcast, 1935.)

Socialism, which means production of things for use instead of for sale, will remove the cause of modern war. Surpluses resulting from exploitation, and the imperious necessity to export them to prevent internal collapse, will no longer exist. Instead, exchange between peoples will be *planned* exchange of *planned* surpluses. Economic and cultural intercourse between people will, under Socialism, receive a real impetus and the barriers raised by vested interests in every capitalist nation will be broken down.

War is inevitable in the capitalist premises. Socialism uproots the cause of war. There can be no real and enduring peace without Socialism!

## **What Is the Difference Between Socialism And Communism?**

There is no difference between Socialism and Communism. Both terms designate a society in which the means of production are collectively owned and democratically managed by the producers. There is, however, a great deal of difference between Marxian Socialism and the pseudo-communism advocated by the so-called Communist party. The former is based on science; the latter is a shameless distortion of Marxism.

"Socialism" and "Communism" were terms used interchangeably by the founders of scientific Socialism, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. The "Communist Manifesto," which was written by Marx and Engels in 1847 (published in 1848), was so named because at that time, due to the activities of the Utopian Socialists of the Robert Owen era, the term "Socialism" denoted the very opposite of Marxian science. Subsequently, the Utopian Socialists were forgotten and both Marx and Engels thereafter used "Socialism" as the preferred term in their writings.

## **But Don't They Have Socialism in Russia?**

Socialism presupposes a condition in which (1) the wage working class is in the majority; (2) an abundance is producible; and (3) the mode of production is socialized. At the time of the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 the wage workers in Russia were only about seven per cent of the population, the peasants being in the overwhelming majority. Economically, as well as socially, the nation was just emerging from feudalism. Finally, agricultural products made up a large propor-

tion of Russia's output and the Russian farms were run almost exclusively along the lines of individual production. In short, the material conditions for Socialism did not prevail. As Lenin pointed out to those who argued that Socialism could be immediately established:

“Socialism is impossible without large capitalist technique constructed according to the last word of science. . . . subjecting millions of people to the strict observance of a uniform standard of production and distribution of products. We Marxists have always said this, and it is hardly worth wasting even two seconds in arguing the point with people who do not understand it. . . .”

The Bolsheviks set up a Dictatorship of the Proletariat under which the material conditions for Socialism were to be built. Subsequently, as nearly everyone knows, the so-called Dictatorship of the Proletariat degenerated into a dictatorship of the Stalinist hierarchy. Yet, even Stalin admitted on March 4, 1936, that “Communism [i.e., Socialism] has not been achieved in the Soviet Union so far.”

Finally, Socialism presupposes the abolition of the State (a coercive force). The State still exists in the U.S.S.R. Much must be done before Russia achieves Socialism. Above all, the Stalinist bureaucracy must be cleared out, and, along with it, the coercive apparatus of the State. In its place the workers of Russia must set up an Industrial Union Administration, or, as Engels put it, an “administration of things.”

## Won't a Scheming Bureaucracy Get Power As It Did in Russia?

For the Socialist revolution to succeed in America, the workers must organize into Socialist Industrial Unions to back up their victory at the ballot-box. The workers in the industries, through their democratically elected representatives, will be the new government. Instead of the jobs being controlled from above, as is the case under the Stalinist dictatorship in Russia, the rank and file of workers will control administrative and managerial posts. They will elect their foremen, and management committees, just as they elect their representatives to the Industrial Union Congress. *Hence, the very basis of bureaucracy, viz., power to dole out jobs and patronage, will not exist.* Moreover, under a Socialist Industrial Union Administration, where the collective rank and file have supreme democratic power, their officials will be removable from office as easily as they are raised to office. The Socialist Industrial Union is the instrument whereby the workers guarantee to themselves complete democratic control.

The Socialist Industrial Union is the instrument whereby the workers achieve the Twentieth Century democracy, an industrial democracy.

# ON THE SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY.

## What Is the Socialist Labor Party?

The Socialist Labor Party was founded upon the principles of Scientific Marxian Socialism in 1890. It has never deviated from these principles nor compromised them for temporary gain. It holds, with Marx, that the approaching Social Revolution must be accomplished by the enlightened *working class* and cannot be accomplished by a minority at the head of unclassconscious masses. To the end of educating our fellow workers to their mission and in the methods of achieving the goal of the Industrial Republic of Labor, the Socialist Labor Party has conducted a tireless campaign of agitation and education. It is the one and only exponent of Socialist Industrial Unionism through which the American workers must and will back up their Socialist ballot and which will become the framework of the new administration—the Industrial Union Administration. The Socialist Labor Party is the only bona fide and uncompromising Socialist organization in America.

## What Will Happen to the Socialist Labor Party When Socialism Is Achieved?

The mission of the Socialist Labor Party is:

1. To agitate, educate, clarify the issue and lay bare the true nature of the class struggle;
2. To place the issue of collective ownership

squarely before the people by adopting a platform based on this single demand and by nominating candidates to contest political offices; and, finally,

3. To complete its mission the moment its candidates are elected by declaring the political State adjourned *sine die* and by *itself disbanding*.

According to the Biblical tale, Samson destroyed himself when he destroyed the Temple of the Philistines. Except for the fact that Samson was blind and the Socialist Labor Party has its eyes wide open, the parallel holds. Instead of taking office *to govern*, the candidates of the Socialist Labor Party will take office to abolish political office. It captures to destroy, in the same sense that a conquering army captures, only to destroy, the fortifications of the vanquished foe, though blood and treasure were poured out to secure possession of these fortifications. The political State is the robber-burg of capitalism. Instead of holding this robber-burg, the Socialist Labor Party will dismantle it *and turn the reins of government over to the General Executive Board of the Socialist Industrial Union*. The party of labor has no place in the Industrial Republic of Labor. It is the Socialist Industrial Union which is the permanent organization—the framework of the new social order.

## **Why Hasn't the Socialist Labor Party "Gotten Anywhere" in Fifty Years?**

If this question means: Why isn't the Socialist Labor Party a big party? The answer is simply that no revolutionary party which will not compromise for the sake of temporary advantage is ever big—*until economic and political conditions cause the political tempera-*

*ture to reach the boiling point.* By compromising, by political trading with the enemy, it is possible to acquire numbers, but large numbers so gathered are like the sand of the desert, which is gathered in heaps, and is straightway blown away again. For example, there is the so-called Socialist party, which once polled more than a million votes. The New Deal stole its reforms, and with its reforms abstracted its following. The S.L.P., on the other hand, in the words of Daniel De Leon, "seeks not to corral a mob that can be scattered; it seeks to form an army that will be irresistible."

This question stems from a failure to understand the mission of a revolutionary Socialist party. This mission, briefly stated, is to develop a workable program, and prepare the workers for the consummation of the revolutionary act. The Socialist Labor Party *has* developed that program, the only program whereby the American workers can effect their emancipation. Moreover, to carry on its work of agitation, education and organization, it has built the most solid, Spartan, self-disciplined Marxist organization in the world. Its literature—the result of decades of effort—is impressively advanced, lucid and coherent. Finally, its record for integrity, unswerving rectitude and resolute perseverance has won for it a deep and abiding respect.

The conditions which will make a social change, or social revolution, imperative in America are developing rapidly. The Socialist Labor Party cannot "make" this revolution. The Socialist reconstruction of society must be consummated by the workers. The Socialist Labor Party shows the way.

## What Is the Difference Between the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Party?

The so-called Socialist party is a party of reform; the Socialist Labor Party is a party of revolution. The Socialist party tinkers with effects; the Socialist Labor Party attacks the cause. The Socialist party fatuously believes that numbers are of first importance, irrespective of how these numbers are recruited; the Socialist Labor Party holds that numbers, though important, are impotent unless recruited on a sound program. (*Vide* the German Social Democracy and German Communist party which, together, polled thirteen million votes in 1932, yet were not so much as a matchstick in Hitler's path. This massive following was recruited through reform baits and reform promises — *not* on a sound program for the abolition of capitalism.)

To the uninitiated the Socialist party and the Socialist Labor Party may appear to be "after the same thing." To the uninitiated the nutritious mushroom and the poisonous toadstool look much alike. By equipping oneself with a little elementary knowledge it is a simple matter to distinguish between the mushroom and toadstool. With a little elementary knowledge it is also a simple matter to distinguish between the goals of the Socialist party and the Socialist Labor Party. The former seeks political office and the preservation of the political State; the latter (the S.L.P.) seeks the abolition of the political State and the substitution thereof of the Socialist Industrial Union Administration. In other words, the Socialist party aims for a modification of capitalism; the Socialist Labor Party for its complete overthrow.

## **What Is the Difference Between the Socialist Labor Party and the Communist Party?**

The Communist party (U.S.A.) is nothing more, and nothing less, than the Jesuitic and pliant tool of the Soviet Union's Foreign Office. It has its feet in America but its head is in Russia. It alters its course as the Soviet Union alters its foreign policies, and as Moscow allies itself now with this group of capitalist powers, now with that. It has shown itself capable of coldly and brazenly sacrificing the interests of the workers, and even of collaborating with and defending the capitalist exploiters, when its Moscow masters so order.

In contrast to the thoroughly discredited Communist party, the Socialist Labor Party cleaves to Marxian principle. It is consistent, scientific and forthright, refusing to lower itself to subterfuge, to underhanded methods of double-talk. Its program is not an importation from another country. Its program is the result of the application of Marxian science to the political and economic conditions of America.

No one knows the aims of the Communist party—least of all the so-called Communists. Their aims today may be reversed tomorrow should Stalin change his mind.

The aim of the Socialist Labor Party is now, and always has been, the abolition of capitalism and the substitution therefor of the Socialist Industrial Republic. Its methods are in keeping with that fixed and lofty aim.

## **Whom Have You Got for Leaders?**

The movement which is destined to emancipate the working class cannot consist of a dumb, driven (or led) herd. It must be an enlightened, classconscious working

class. The "leaders" of such an enlightened mass are merely spokesmen who express the aspirations and aims of the workers. Of such spokesmen the Socialist Labor Party has trained and is training legions.

A movement which depends upon "leaders" is a movement lost. If the workers can be "led" to their emancipation, they can as easily be led into a worse form of slavery. Those who hold that "you've got to have leaders" would do well to ponder that "leader" is English for the German word "*fuehrer*." The "leader principle," in short, is a thoroughly totalitarian principle.

## **Why Does the Socialist Labor Party Attack Those With Whom It Disagrees?**

The Socialist Labor Party doesn't go out of its way to "attack" anyone. To paraphrase De Leon:

The Socialist Labor Party shoots straight ahead, or rather it runs along the tracks laid down by the Social Revolution. If anybody is hit, it is because he crosses that track, or bucks with his head against the train. Trains never go out of their way to hit a cow. It is the cows that go out of their way to hit the train. That is what happens when someone is hit by the S.L.P.

When the Socialist Labor Party hears someone misrepresenting Socialism, or teaching that 2 plus 2 equals 22, or justifying wretchedness and want amidst plenty, or defending the system which breeds poverty and war—when the Socialist Labor Party hears someone expounding these iniquitous principles, it is going to hit them. Don't be alarmed at this. Be alarmed if it *fails* to hit them. If the Socialist Labor Party failed to hit them, it would mean it was off the track.

## Why Do the Radical Parties Always Fight Among Themselves? Why Don't They All Get Together?

This question carries with it the implication that the Socialist movement would be stronger if all the "radical parties" united into one big party. The implication is based on a false and fatal assumption. That assumption is that size, instead of principle and program, is the paramount factor. Yet, if anything was proved by recent history in Europe it is that mere numbers, organized without regard for Marxian program and principle (even though lip-service is paid to these), are impotent. Mere numbers can neither achieve Socialism nor block the reaction.

To unite the Marxian Socialist Labor Party with the reformist Socialist party and the anarcho-reformist Communist party, for example, is much like pouring a pint of clean water into a gallon of dirty water. Such a mixture would be disastrous to the clear-cut, militant, scientific program of the S.L.P. and would create a "party" of factions "united" in name only.

Before the Bolshevik Revolution, several so-called "radical" parties contended for leadership. Even some Bolsheviks believed an effort ought to be made to "get together" with the other parties. Lenin dissented vigorously from the suggestion that the Bolshevik party "put forward a slogan that will unite all," saying: "I will tell you frankly that the thing I fear most at the present time is indiscriminate unity, which, I am convinced, is most dangerous and harmful to the proletariat." And on another occasion he said: "What I fear most is the heaping together of heterogeneous groups and then call that thing a party."

The party which is to carry on the arduous work of Socialist education and organization must, in the lan-

guage of De Leon, "be fearless, merciless in its logic, intolerant as science, narrow as truth alone can be. It can be none of these if it compromises as much as a hair's breadth; in other words, it cannot perform its work if it is structurally loose."

Finally, even were all the "radical" parties "united," the resulting conglomeration would still be small. The overwhelming majority of the American workers are outside all these parties. It is from this mass, still dominated by capitalist politics and capitalist ideology, that the Socialist movement must recruit to build the organization capable of storming and carrying the political robber-burg of capitalism.

## **How Are You Going to Bring About Socialism?**

The Socialist Labor Party cannot bring about Socialism. The mission of the Socialist Labor Party is to show the way. The working class must do the rest.

To bring about Socialism, the workers must organize in accordance with the economic and political conditions prevailing here in America. First, they must organize politically to demand, through the peaceful means of the ballot, that all the means of wealth-production become the collective property of society. (Refusal to submit the issue to the will of the majority automatically outlaws the movement as an advocate of "physical force and violence" and reduces it to a conspiracy. Moreover, it would be stupid, as well as dangerous, to so refuse because we have the right, under the Constitution, to alter our government, or abolish it "and set up new safeguards" to protect our welfare and happiness. The amendment clause of the Constitution, as Abraham Lincoln pointed out, is the peaceful

“substitute” for armed revolution.)

Secondly, the workers must organize a force to back up their ballot and prevent a pro-capitalist reaction. That force can only be the Socialist Industrial Union—the organization of the workers along industrial lines and on the basis of the class struggle. The Socialist Industrial Union is made mandatory by the facts of production. Workers run industry from top to bottom. They are in a perfect strategic position to take possession, lock out the capitalist class and continue production without interruption, thus averting the chaos that would otherwise ensue. The Socialist Industrial Union is the workers’ power!

Finally, the Socialist Industrial Union becomes the framework of the Industrial Republic of Labor which will supersede the capitalist political State.

This is how the workers, living in a highly developed capitalist republic such as the United States, must bring about Socialism.

## ON UNIONISM.

### How Does Socialist Industrial Unionism Differ from the C.I.O.?

The C.I.O., like its progenitor, the A. F. of L., is a bulwark of capitalism. Its leaders have acknowledged this. As Van A. Bittner, C.I.O. director, put it: "A strong, well-disciplined union is the only thing that is going to preserve the American [capitalist] system. We are *preventing* a revolution, *not* causing one." The Socialist Industrial Union, on the other hand, aims openly at the abolition of poverty- and war-breeding capitalism and for the establishment of the democratic Industrial Republic of Labor.

Politically, the C.I.O. demeans itself in accord with its mission of preserving private ownership, i.e., by herding the workers into the capitalist political fold. Socialist Industrial Unionism calls upon the workers to unite into a party of their class to demand, through the peaceful means of the ballot, that the instruments of production become society's collective property.

Lastly, the name "Congress of *Industrial* Organizations" is a misnomer. Like the A. F. of L., the C.I.O. has both out-and-out craft union, as well as so-called "industrial union," affiliates. And the "industrial unions" divide the workers as effectively as the unions based on crafts. They accomplish this by splitting the workers along plant lines and by separate plant agreements.

Socialist Industrial Unionism organizes all the workers in each industry (including the unemployed of that industry) into a single industrial unit. It consolidates all the workers in all the industries into one mighty Socialist Industrial Union. The C.I.O.-A. F. of L. Siamese twins of capitalism disunite the workers and are five sore fingers on a hand—fit only to shoo the flies away from the face of capitalism. The Socialist Industrial Union is a clenched fist capable of striking the blow for emancipation.

### **Can't the Present Unions Be Made Over?**

The A. F. of L., C.I.O. and Railroad Brotherhoods are controlled by well-entrenched bureaucratic machines which grow stronger in the measure that the rank and file is shackled with contracts. In most cases they are shot through with corruption and in many cases are run by gangsters and racketeers. To attempt to "bore from within" these organizations, with the idea of "capturing" them and transforming them into Socialist organizations, is fatuous. Experience has shown that the "borer from within," who bores to this purpose, soon bores his way out. Most of those who claim to be "boring from within" are doing nothing of the kind. Instead, they are "snoring from within" and form no real opposition to the faker leadership.

The policy of the Socialist Labor Party is to strike at fake unionism from the inside and from the outside. It knows that unless the rank and file understand and accept the aims and program of Socialism, no amount of "capturing" will do any good. It recognizes the welter of pro-capitalist unions, with their rival "jurisdictions," and the vested interests of their officials, as

redoubts of the capitalist class *which must be smashed*. Instead of wasting time trying to "make over" the jerry-built unions of capitalism, the workers must build the new union which is the nemesis of capitalism—the Socialist Industrial Union.

## **Aren't the Present Unions Better Than Nothing?**

The present unions stand as a bulwark of capitalism. By miseducation, intimidation and, above all, by exercising control over the workers' jobs, they discourage the rank and file from organizing in accord with their class interests. They are the lightning rods of capitalism which serve to run the revolutionary lightning into the ground. If they were smashed, would the alternative mean "nothing"?—no protection for the workers against the never-ending encroachments of capital?

As Daniel De Leon disclosed so brilliantly in "The Burning Question of Trades Unionism," the unification of the workers is an instinctive act. "As sure as a man will raise his hand by mere instinct to shield himself against a blow, so surely will workingmen, instinctively, periodically gather into unions. The Union is the arm that Labor instinctively throws up to screen its head."

The present pro-capitalist unions are not *better* than nothing—they are decidedly *worse!* If there were no fake unions to divert labor's wrath into harmless channels and divide them against themselves, the workers would be free to follow their instinct and organize genuine working class unions aiming for the emancipation of their class.

## How Can the Socialist Industrial Union “Lock Out” the Capitalist Class?

In 1937 a group of workers in a Michigan powerhouse went on strike. It wasn't an ordinary walk-out strike; nor was it a sit-down. Instead of walking out or sitting down, the “strikers” ushered the non-striking officials of the plant out of the gates and continued to produce electric power. The next week *Time* magazine commented, saying the Michigan power workers had given the American workers “an object lesson in peaceful revolution.”

It is true that these workers were making trifling demands, that they were not revolutionary. But that is beside the point. The point is that they used their economic power by staying on the job.

The Socialist Industrial Union, in backing up the Socialist ballot, will “take possession” by locking out the capitalist class and their reactionary agents. But it will do more than “take possession”; it will also continue operation without interruption, thereby averting the chaos that would surely ensue if the nation's economic machinery suddenly were halted. In every shop, mine, plant and mill in the land, the management committees, already elected in anticipation of this event, would take over the affairs of direction and supervision, while the higher Socialist Industrial Union councils would immediately prepare to function. By the act of taking possession and locking out the capitalist class, the workers assert their complete control over the means of life—and, in an orderly, civilized manner, institute the Industrial Republic of Labor.

## Why Haven't You Organized the Socialist Industrial Union?

It is self-evident that the workers cannot be organized to abolish capitalism until they *want* to abolish capitalism. The revolution must first take place in the minds of the workers. In other words, the *idea* must precede the actuality.

The Socialist Industrial Union cannot be built little by little. To attempt to build it little by little would subject a few workers to the concentrated fury of the entire capitalist class. The Socialist Industrial Union must be a mass movement arising from a *general* disillusionment with capitalism. If anything is certain, it is that this general disillusionment is coming. Our task is to see that the forces thus released are intelligently united to accomplish working class, and human, emancipation.

## ON REFORMS.

### Shouldn't We Try to Get Something NOW While We're Waiting for Socialism?

The German workers wasted *their* time trying to get "something now." It was with reform baits that the German Communist party and the Social Democracy recruited their mass following. To get votes and followers they promised everything from more unemployment insurance for the workers to cheaper fertilizer for the peasants. But when the crisis came in 1933, the mass following, recruited by reforms, could do nothing to stop the reaction. They had no program.

The capitalists know the value of reforms in diverting the workers. In 1936 President Roosevelt advised his class: "Reform if you would preserve." Which is a softer way of saying: Throw the workers a few sops. Put a little padding under the saddle. That will take their minds off Socialism.

The late General Hugh S. Johnson understood the importance of reform sops. In a *Saturday Evening Post* article he wrote: "We must see to it that some 40 per cent of our people do not sink to beggary—if not for human sympathy, then for the sake of our own jolly old skins and the maintenance of our political institutions."

It is logical for the capitalists to dole out reforms; reforms prolong their system. By the same token it is illogical for a party of Socialism to waste the time of

the workers in the futile task of patching up the old outworn system. The experience of the workers in France, Germany, Italy, and other European countries has shown that to demand reforms in an era of revolution is to invite reaction. We say, with De Leon:

"In America, where capitalism and Socialism face each other without any feudal encumbrances, a party of Socialism has no business to tinker with 'reforms.' 'Reforms' only tend to sweet-scent the capitalist rule. For Socialism in the United States to bother with reforms is like washing the garbage before dumping it into the can. Away with the garbage of capitalism."

Waste time trying to reform decadent capitalism and you'll "wait" for Socialism in vain.

## **But Hasn't the New Deal Done Some Good with Reforms?**

The Socialist Labor Party holds that every reform granted by decadent capitalism is a concealed measure of reaction.

This goes for the reforms of the New Deal.

New Deal reforms were designed to prolong the outmoded system of capitalism. Early in the New Deal (October 5, 1934), the San Francisco *News* observed:

"...Mr. Roosevelt has not threatened private property, nor is there any indication that he will....

"He has spent a good deal of public money for the relief of the needy, but this is a protective measure, so far as property is concerned....

"His New Deal presents at least a gambling chance of saving the system of private property for another generation or so. A really shrewd and sagacious de-

votee of property interests would whoop it up for Mr. Roosevelt and urge him a little more to the left."

On August 15, 1934, in an address delivered in Paris, France, Harry L. Hopkins affirmed that "the Administration is making an honest and sincere effort to bolster up capitalism."

The extreme suffering of some workers here and there may have been temporarily relieved by New Deal reforms. This no one denies. For the workers *as a class*, however, the reforms have failed utterly to banish insecurity and want. Everyone knows that had it not been for war there would still be an army of unemployed numbering from twelve to fifteen millions, or more. Measured against the incalculable harm capitalism is doing today, any trifling "good" claimed for New Deal reforms fades into nothingness.

New Deal reforms raised false hopes which are today being dashed. Nor could it be otherwise. Capitalism has reached that point in its decadence where it can no longer improve the condition of its slaves within their slavery. Its attempts at reform become concealed measures for prolonging labor's subjugation.

## ON FASCISM AND REACTION.

### What Is Fascism?

One of the old Bolsheviks aptly defined Fascism as: "The iron hoop around the collapsing barrel of capitalism."

We concur in this definition. Fascism, or totalitarianism, is an instrument for perpetuating capitalist rule and for prolonging the privileges of the capitalist class. Wherever it has raised its ugly head it has had the support of the big bankers, big merchants and big industrialists. The records of profits, etc., in Fascist countries show that the big capitalists have been its main beneficiaries. Their business has been "controlled" and their gluttony curbed in some cases, but these measures are designed to *protect* capitalist property from the excesses of the capitalist class, not to destroy it.

Fascism is a form of decadent capitalism. It is capitalism without the mask of democracy. It is an attempt to save capitalism from its own internal contradictions through economic controls. It is a despotic instrument for effecting the total subjugation of the working class.

### What Has the S.L.P. Done to Lick Fascism?

The S.L.P. has done more to lick Fascism than any other organization in America. We make this claim, advisedly, because the S.L.P. is the only organization which directs attention to the *cause* of Fascism and

which resolutely attacks that cause. The S.L.P. has shown that Fascism comes from *within*, not from without. It has demonstrated with irrefutable logic that Fascism is an excrescence of capitalism and that the only solution to the Fascist menace is the abolition of capitalist rule.

Long before the word "Fascism" was invented, the Socialist Labor Party warned the workers that "whenever a revolution is pending and, for whatever reason, is not consummated, reaction is the only alternative." We gave that reaction the apt name "industrial feudalism." After the Fascist coup in Italy the Party's warning became even more insistent. And when the Nazi movement was being belittled by the self-styled liberals and reactionaries (1929-1932), the Socialist Labor Party identified its *fuehrer*, Adolf Hitler, as a modern Cuckoo Peter bent on leading the German workers to their undoing—with the formidable backing of German capitalism.

Again, during the years when our present "patriots" were applauding Mussolini for "making the trains run on time," and doing a clandestine business in arms with Hitler, the S.L.P. kept up its attack tirelessly, always keeping before the workers the capitalist-reactionary character of Fascism. Anyone who cares to may thumb through the files of our official organ, the WEEKLY PEOPLE, and find there ample substantiation for these assertions.

Today the Socialist Labor Party is attacking the cause of Fascism with ever-increasing vigor and resolution. Undaunted by tremendous odds, it is carrying on its work of education and agitation, teaching the American workers the means whereby to avert Fascism in this country by uprooting its capitalist cause.

## Don't You Think We Ought to Forget All Political Differences and Concentrate On Licking "Hitlerism"?

To "forget all political differences" would be nothing less than fatal. To "forget all political differences" would be to surrender to the very forces which produce *Hitlerism*. To "forget all political differences" would mean giving decadent capitalism carte blanche to do its worst. And right here we say, if there are those who fatuously believe the American capitalists would not do precisely what the German capitalists did, when drastic measures are necessary to save the capitalist system, they are utterly blind to realities.

The late Huey Long—himself a would-be dictator—once said: We'll have Fascism in America some day, but "when we get it we won't call it Fascism—we'll call it anti-Fascism."

To the Socialist Labor Party totalitarianism is thoroughly obnoxious—and it is equally obnoxious whether it is an imported or a domestic product. Moreover, as the S.L.P. has pointed out on numerous occasions, you can lick a hundred Hitlers, but you cannot lay *Hitlerism* by the heels until capitalism is destroyed.

Finally, look at the capitalist class. You will not see the employers "forgetting all political differences." On the contrary, they are taking full advantage of the war situation to attack Socialism and strengthen their own entrenched position. They are plotting ways and means of choking off the voice of Socialism, and of keeping its candidates from appearing on the election ballot. They are spending millions in spreading the vile falsehood that Socialism—the quintessence of democracy—means dictatorship. And they are spending millions

more to spread the deadly lie that peace and progress are possible under decadent capitalism.

To retreat, and surrender the field to these forces, would be nothing short of catastrophic. It would be the most costly retreat in history. Whoever else chooses to retreat, the Socialist Labor Party will not.

## What Is Ultramontanism?

Ultramontanism is hierarchal politics ambushing it self behind religion. William Gladstone, the great 19th century Liberal Prime Minister of England, described the same phenomenon as "Vaticanism." The term, "Ultramontanism," however, has been generally recognized to be of greater descriptive worth, for it includes in its meaning not only the point of origin but also the world-wide scope of the politics.

The "Catholic Encyclopedia" defines Ultramontanism as a term "used to denote integral and active Catholicism, because it recognizes as its spiritual head the Pope, who, for the greater part of Europe, is a dweller beyond the mountains (*ultra montes*), that is, beyond the Alps." In properly interpreting this definition it must be remembered the "spiritual" leadership of the Popes takes in political leadership as well. This was expressly stated by Pope Boniface VII in his Bull, *Unam Sanctam*, issued in 1302, and has been consistently repeated in later pronouncements. The "Catholic Encyclopedia" summarizes this Bull thus: "Under the control of the Church are two swords, that is, two powers, the expression referring to the medieval theory of the two swords, the spiritual and the secular. . . ."

## What Are the Aims of Ultramontanism?

Ultramontanism seeks the perpetuation of private property and class rule. It seeks to concentrate these in its own hands. It seeks to stave off the inauguration of the Socialist society. It seeks to enslave the workers mentally and physically.

In their Encyclicals the Popes make no secret of their aims, devoting the main emphasis of their pontifications to the sanctification of private property and class rule, to denunciations of Socialism and democracy. Much ado is made of Ultramontanism's religious cloak and social program. The two following quotations from the Encyclical, "Socialism, Communism, Nihilism," by Leo XIII, expose these, substantiate the position of the Socialist Labor Party on Ultramontanism.

"...she [the Church] cheers and comforts exceedingly the hearts of the poor, either by setting before them the example of Christ who, being rich, became poor for our sake, or by reminding them of the words by which Jesus pronounced the poor to be blessed, and enjoined them to hope for the reward of eternal bliss. *Who then does not perceive that herein lies the best means of appeasing the undying conflict between the rich and the poor?*"

And this on the "social program" of the Ultramontanes: "Finally, as the confederates of Socialism are sought mainly among [the workers]...who, wearied out by sheer hard work, are more easily entrapped by the hope of wealth and promise of security, it seems expedient to encourage associations [later: "The most important of all are workingmen's unions."] for handicraftsmen and laboring men, which placed under the sheltering care of religion [that is, of Ultramontanism ambushed behind religion], *may render the members*

*content with their lot and resigned to toil, inducing them to lead a peaceful and tranquil life."*

## **Who Are the Ultramontanes?**

The Ultramontanes include the Pope, the hierarchy of Cardinals, Bishops and other prelates, the lower clergy who carry out the political and economic orders of the "spiritual head" of the Church, and such other politicians as work with these for some or all of the aims of Ultramontanism. These latter include politicians of all religious and political professions, all heartily in favor of the Ultramontanes' assistance on behalf of property and property interests, some hesitant at accepting the full logic of Ultramontanism, the absorption of all property and power by the hierarchy, but part of the machine, nevertheless.

## **What Are the Weapons of Ultramontanism?**

Its chief weapon is the mental straitjacket used for controlling minds. The religious use of this weapon is described by Pope Leo XIII as "the best means of appeasing the undying conflict between the rich and the poor." The "educational" use of the weapon, reserved by the Church as its exclusive function in these words of Pope Pius XI, "And first of all education belongs preeminently to the Church. . . .," is designed to produce subjects "loyally submissive to constituted civil authority," whether that authority is republican or monarchical, constitutionally representative of the people or totalitarian as in Italy, Germany, Spain, etc., the one test being the "legitimacy" of that authority by reason

of its compliance with the Church's teachings on property and class rule.

The Ultramontanes use other weapons. They bring pressure on public officials for the enactment of legislation that will increase their power and control. They threaten newspapers, radio stations and other organs with boycotts if these disseminate news, however true, that publicizes the methods and aims of Ultramontanism. They organize civil service workers, policemen, war veterans, etc., into groups of nominal religious character for political purposes. They seek, as in Portugal, to induce the rulers to accept the "Christian" corporate State that keeps the entire population organized to docility.

They use force, urge the State to use force. Examples of this are the late Monsignor Belford's demand that Socialists be shot "like mad dogs," the forcible and bloody repression of the Austrian workers in February, 1934, the war of decimation against the Spanish people, and this "Christian" harangue reported in the *New York Times* of November 24, 1936, a harangue, it may be added, that German capitalism, Italian capitalism and the French and Spanish Ultramontanes, Petain and Franco, acted upon. "It is time to abandon a defense against communism and adopt an offensive," said Father Bichlmaier, a Jesuit priest high in the confidence of Cardinal Innitzer of Vienna. "If spiritual weapons will not achieve what we want we must no longer wait on events, but unite the masses to fight with arms and ammunition in their hands against Bolshevist atheism. Let there be no more discussion of delay—now is the time for deeds."

## ON THE CAPITALIST AND SOCIALIST PRESS.

### What About the Capitalist Press?

The capitalist press represents vested capitalist interests. Newspaper editors express the views of capitalists generally, and those of their own employers in particular. Capitalist newspapers represent investments of capital—some of them huge investments. Hence the capitalist press is of, by and for capitalism, and the capitalists as a class. Here are a few realistic comments on the capitalist character of the press by candid non-Socialists:

“Both press and radio are, after all, ‘big business,’ and even when they possess the highest integrity, they are the prisoners of their own beliefs.”—Temporary National Economic Committee of the 76th Congress.

“Newspapers fail almost totally to provide a channel for the study of social problems. Obviously, they discuss social problems, wars, crime, prostitution, alcoholism, but in treating these subjects the chief aim of the newspaper is to shock the reader, not to inform him. Newspaper articles are a series of shocks. There is no continuity to the discussion. Only the comics in the newspapers are continuous. And I think it is a credit to the intelligence of the American people that they predominantly turn to the funnies first. In regard to the ability of the American press to inform about so-

cial problems, newspapers are 99 per cent worthless.”—Yale sociology professor, quoted in *Waterbury Sunday Republican*, December 4, 1949.

“Pressure from advertisers is not the chief reason that newspapers so generally favor . . . employers rather than workingmen. Newspaper owners are themselves businessmen and employers. They have labor troubles of their own, and it is natural for them to sympathize with other employers involved in strikes. In all matters of public policy they tend to reflect the point of view of the social and economic class to which they belong.”—From “Our Changing Social Order,” a textbook by Ruth Wood Gavian, A. A. Gray and Prof. Ernest R. Groves. This passage was deleted from later editions of the book.

“Any newspaper in any American town represents a considerable lot of capital for the size of the town. The owners of newspaper investments, whether they be bankers, stockholders of a corporation, or individuals, feel a rather keen sense of financial responsibility, and they pass their anxiety along to newspaper operatives whether these operatives be superintendents known as managing editors, foremen known as city editors, or mere wage-earners known as editorial writers, copy-desk men, reporters or what not. The sense of property goes thrilling down the line. It produces a slant and a bias that in time becomes—unconsciously and probably in all honesty—a prejudice against any man or any thing or any cause that seriously affects the right, title or interest of all other capital, however invested. It is not the advertising department that controls the news. Newspapermen may lean over backward in their upright attitude toward the obviously unfair demands of advertisers and the moronic prejudices

of subscribers, and still may be poor miserable sinners when they discuss problems affecting the stability of institutions that are founded entirely upon the economic status quo."—William Allen White, late publisher of the Emporia (Kansas) *Gazette*.

## **Why Should Workers Read the Weekly People?**

Because the WEEKLY PEOPLE is a workers' paper, published in the interest of the working class. Because it publishes news of vital importance to the working class. Because it analyzes that news from a Marxian point of view. Because it proves that the reform plans of the capitalists cannot work, that the problems of society can be solved only by the inauguration of Socialism. Because the WEEKLY PEOPLE offers the De Leonist program of Socialist Industrial Unionism, the one program that can bring into being an era of peace, freedom and plenty.

## 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.

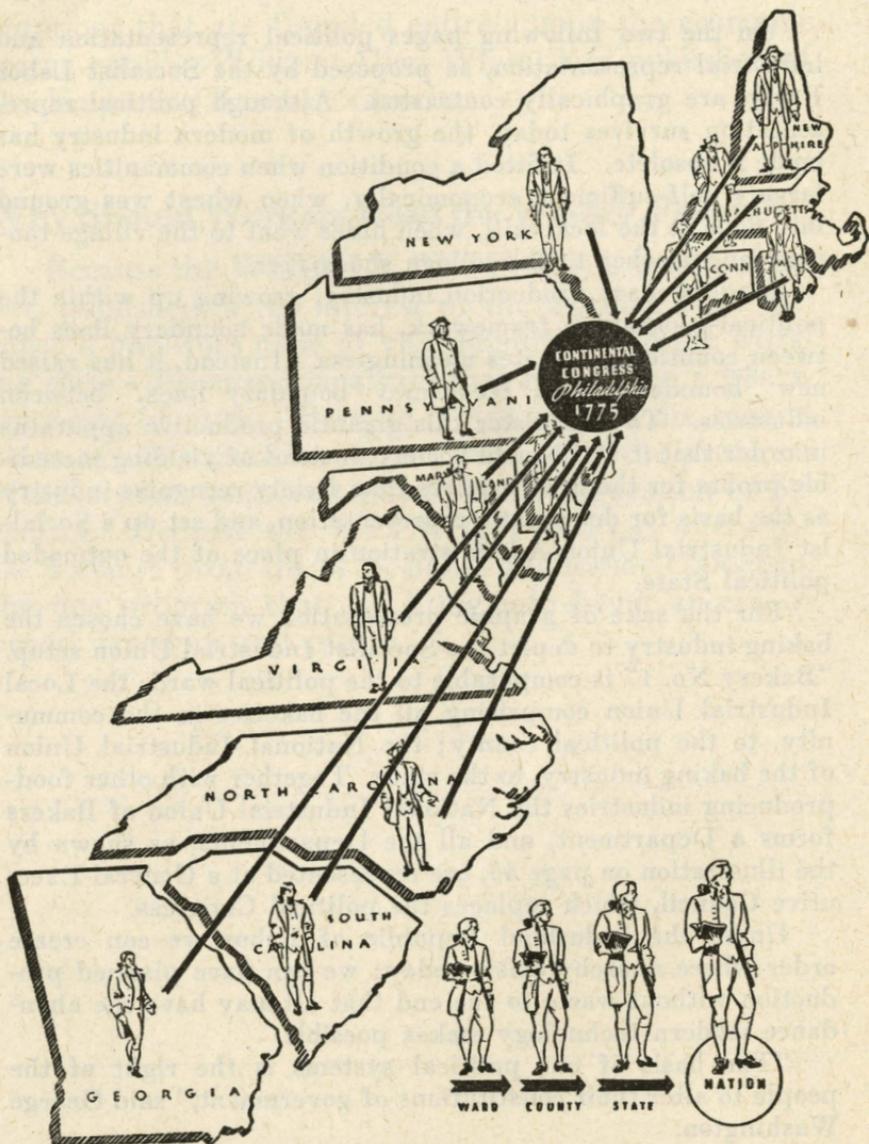
Modern mass production industry, growing up within the political-geographic framework, has made boundary lines between counties and states meaningless. Instead, it has raised new "boundary lines," economic "boundary lines," between industries. To administer this gigantic productive apparatus in order 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.

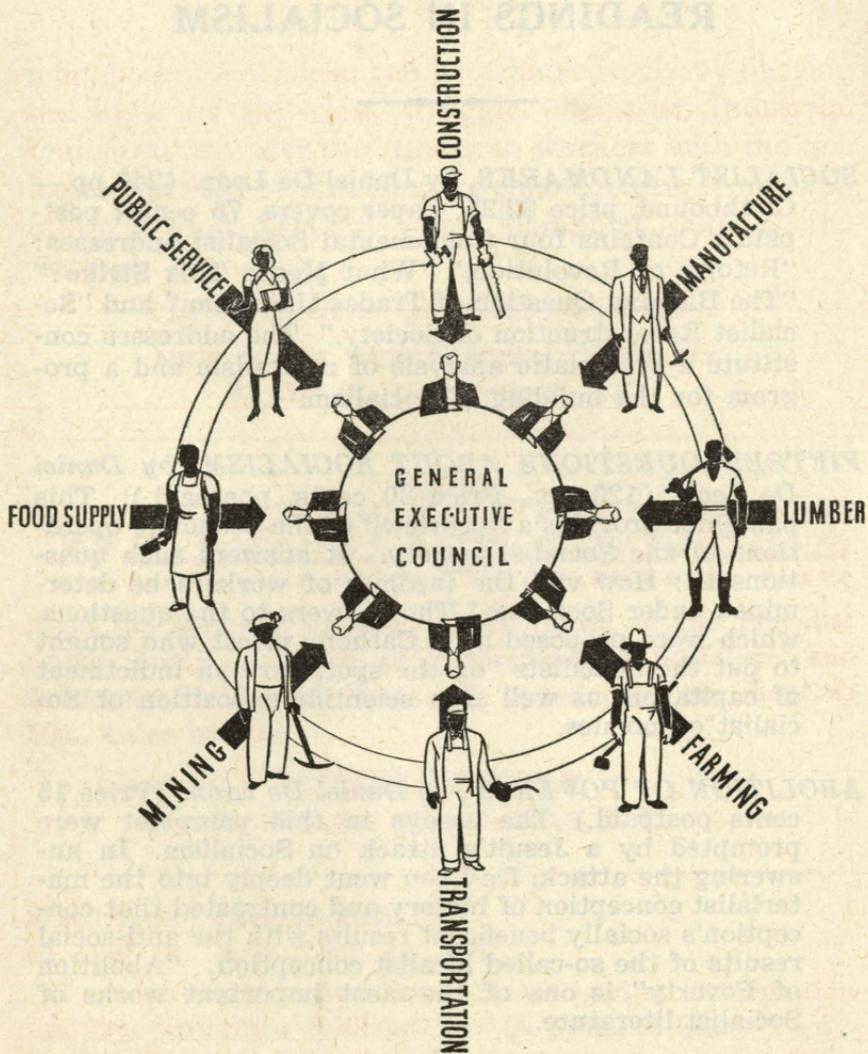
Under the Industrial Republic of Labor we can create order where anarchy exists today; we can have planned production without waste to the end that all may have the abundance modern technology makes possible.

"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



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

## READINGS IN SOCIALISM

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*SOCIALIST LANDMARKS*, by Daniel De Leon. (240 pp.—Clothbound, price \$2.25; paper covers, 75 cents; postpaid.) Contains four fundamental Socialist addresses: "Reform or Revolution," "What Means This Strike?" "The Burning Question of Trades Unionism," and "Socialist Reconstruction of Society." The addresses constitute a systematic analysis of capitalism and a program for the building of Socialism.

*FIFTEEN QUESTIONS ABOUT SOCIALISM*, by Daniel De Leon. (120 pp.—Price 30 cents, postpaid.) This pamphlet provides a "preview" of the economic operations of the Socialist society. It answers such questions as: How will the incomes of workers be determined under Socialism? The answers to the questions, which were proposed by a Catholic priest who sought to put the Socialists "on the spot," are an indictment of capitalism as well as a scientific exposition of Socialist economics.

*ABOLITION OF POVERTY*, by Daniel De Leon. (Price 15 cents postpaid.) The essays in this pamphlet were prompted by a Jesuit's attack on Socialism. In answering the attack, De Leon went deeply into the materialist conception of history and contrasted that conception's socially beneficent results with the anti-social results of the so-called idealist conception. "Abolition of Poverty" is one of the most important works of Socialist literature.

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