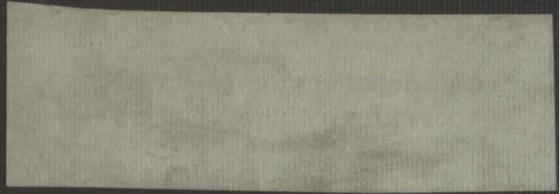


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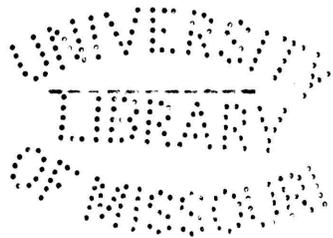


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AMERICAN SOCIALISM AND  
SYNDICALISM.

by

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AMERICAN SOCIALISM AND  
SYNDICALISM.

Another word with which we have to deal when studying the problems of industrial reform is "Syndicalism." As yet the word is but vaguely known and its connotation is still somewhat of a mystery to the general public. This new movement, which originated in France and like Socialism with no definite formula or unified creed, departs from the teaching of the conservative Socialists on the question of democratic action. Tho the word is not generally used in this country, still the basic principles which underlie Syndicalism are being advocated everywhere by the Revolutionary Socialists. This will be brought out more clearly as we study the more pronounced articles of faith of this strange movement.

The word "Syndicat," with its derivatives, has been used in France for some time. Unlike our English word which means an association of private individuals in conducting a financial enterprise, it means a union of workingmen.<sup>1</sup> The more recent French word "Syndicalisme" has acquired a more definite meaning, "and is now generally understood to denote the policy of the 'Confederation Generale du

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1. "Syndicalism and Labor." p 1. Sir Arthur Clay.



Travail,' the object of which is the destruction by force of the existing organization, and the transfer of industrial capital from its present possessors to Syndicalists, or in other words to the revolutionary Trade Unions." <sup>1</sup> "Syndicats Rouges" and "Syndicats Jaunes" are the two classes in which French Trade Unions are divided. The former have adopted revolutionary means to bring about the desired end and the latter resort to nothing beyond constitutional means to ameliorate industrial conditions. The general use of the word "Syndicalism" is understood to be the former method of activity.

#### CLASS CONSCIOUSNESS.

"The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle." <sup>2</sup> This struggle has been going on since the dissolution of primitive tribal society holding the land in common ownership. It has been a constant warfare between exploiters and the exploited; between employers and the employed; between oppressors and the oppressed. Out from this struggle has emerged a class consciousness which forms the basis Syndicalism.

The laborer is conscious of the fact that he is work-

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1. "Syndicalism and Labor." p.2. Sir Arthur Clay.

2. "Communist Manifesto." p 12. Marx and Engels.



ing with the tools which belong to another, the capitalist class, under whose orders he is driven to labor without cessation while these same owners of the tools live in idleness and ease. He is conscious of the fact that the product of his labor is sold upon the market for a price far beyond that which he receives as wages. This makes the owner's income so much greater than his wages that the appalling difference startles him. Such an evident inequality befalls the lot of every wage-earner and intensifies this class feeling. He is also conscious of the fact that wealth is being concentrated into the hands of a few: nine-tenths of the country's wealth now in the hands of but one-tenth of the population. These owners of wealth live in luxuriant idleness while a very large part of the wage-earners are able to procure only a bare subsistence; a day's idleness meaning starvation to thousands of them, and a month's "Shut-down" submerging millions beneath dire poverty and often death. He is conscious of the fact that by the sweat of his own brow his employer is <sup>a</sup> hoarding up millions while he is unable to lose a day's work without facing threatening poverty.

This theory of exploitation springs from the theory of value and surplus value. Stated briefly, value is



crystallized labor-time and surplus value is the value above the cost of maintenance, sustenance and perpetuation of laboring power. All value is created by labor but the labor is barely kept alive by his wages while the capitalist is ever growing richer. This appropriation of surplus value is considered by Marx as robbery. This increase because of the profit system and the private ownership of the means of production enhances the power of the capitalists, tho they are decreasing in number, for the centralization of capital enhances exploitation. The laborer is conscious of this and it appears to him as an atrocious inequality too destructive to his own personal freedom and livelihood to be meekly endured.

The laborer is also conscious of the fact that, because of the prevailing order of things, there is a large industrial reserve army constantly seeking work. This state of affairs gives rise to that deadly factor in the class struggle- the higgling of the market- which forces down wages to a minimum, even to the bare subsistence cost. This reserve is constantly increasing in number; exploitation thereby increases; and the laboring class is gradually becoming more and more oppressed.

Furthermore, the laborer is conscious of the fact that this increasing exploitation works for the downfall of the petit bourgeoisie, who become proletarianized, thereby increasing the number of the proletariat class. As capital



is becoming more centralized, it is evident that some must lose out in the competition. Those smaller business men who have not a sufficient amount of accumulated capital to tide them over ever recurring crises or thru severe periods of "cut-throat" competition are forced to relinquish their hold on the business class and join the working class.

.Not only is the laborer conscious of this increasing suppression which is nothing less than slavery to him, but he is also conscious of the fact that existing legal enactments have been, on the whole, in favor of the capitalist class. The laws upon the statute books of the various states as well as our national laws are whips in the hands of these capitalist slave-drivers. The courts, because of dependence, graft or habituated modes <sup>of</sup> thinking, are biased in favor of the employer. To secure justice at law seems so futile that the laborer has practically given up all attempt. Furthermore, all political activities are controlled by the capitalist class who, by means of political bosses, ward healers, bribes and other questionable methods, are able to elect that sort of a governing body which will listen and abide by their desires and commands. This complete servitude to a class so small in number yet so powerful, because of the ownership of the means of production, is by



nature rebellious to the freedom loving spirit of every wage-earner; and being conscious of this abject slavery in the midst of a free democratic<sup>c</sup> country, he longs to break the shackles of his slavery and come into his own personal rights, especially the right to own the product which is the result of his labor.

This class consciousness brings out the real nature of the class struggle. At the basis of this struggle is the profit system. The wage-earner realizes that in order to better his condition he must get a larger share of the profits resulting from the marketable commodities of his labor. The capitalist is concerned with profits also. In fact, this is his chief concern, for his power lies in his ability to accumulate capital, which is possible only by means of large profits. He is ready for any reform that will not cut into profits, but will fight most bitterly against any proposed reform which threatens to reduce profits. He will hire labor so long as labor is a paying investment: namely, that it will, with the other factors of production, entering in as cost, bring profit; otherwise he will refuse to hire labor. The struggle then is due to division of the profit accruing from labor's product. The Syndicalists are aware of this and make every attempt to strike at this vulnerable spot in the capitalistic system.



## TRADE UNIONS.

For more than ~~two~~<sup>a</sup> centuries the wage-earners have been keen to note that, by banding together in Trade Unions and by concerted action in demanding better wages and conditions, they were able to extort, tho partially at times, a higher rate of wages. At best, however, they have been able to increase wages but little and at infrequent times. With the increase of wages has come the "speeding-up" system or intensifying the laborer's toil. Or else the cost of living has increased and rents made higher, thereby making the new conditions often worse than the old. While the wage-carner may have increased his rate of wage thru "collective bargaining" or by means of "Conciliation or Arbitration," still the capitalists are often found to be uninjured by the increase and, relatively, profits are as great as before. The inequality still remains and the laborer continues to be an employee under orders from his employer who owns the means of production.

The "trade" and "craft" unions are further limited in their power. Not only have they learned that increased wages coerced from employers have been followed by a still greater advance in the cost of living; but they have seen



their own purposes defeated by other unions remaining at work while they were on a strike. They also saw that the invention of a machine would often bring an end to a "trade" union. The greatest weakness of the "craft" unions, as it appears to the Syndicalists and the Revolutionary Socialists, is the fact that these unions are not organized for the purpose of helping the great masses of laborers. They are confined to their own trade and accomplish little or nothing for the vast multitude of laborers who are not members of their union.

Because of these weaknesses of "craft" unions, the Syndicalists and Socialists, arrived at the conclusion that the only way to do away with the economic evils of the age was to destroy the whole wage system. It is argued that the profit system makes possible the economic wrongs, and the profit system could not exist a day if it were not for the wage system. Craft unions help to support the wage system. In the past members of "craft" unions have felt that there is an interest common both to the union and to the employer. Agreements are entered into with the employers which bind them down so that they cannot possibly strike for better wages or condition. The Syndicalists and Socialists cannot see any common interest; in fact, they contend for just the opposite idea, for they are conscious of the



fact that both the employer and the employee are fighting for the same thing: namely, profits.

### THE GENERAL STRIKE.

In order to do away with the wage system as a remedy which will assure complete deliverance from present economic slavery, it becomes necessary <sup>that</sup> ~~for~~ the ownership of the means of production, now owned by the capitalists, ~~to~~ pass over to the various groups of organized labor of the various industries. The growth of the machine process has divorced the worker from this control which he formerly had; and the wage system accompanying the new process has robbed him of his product. Syndicalism and Socialism intend to take the product which the capitalists now own in the form of property and make it the property of the community. Their <sup>2</sup> ~~method~~ method is the "general strike."

This idea ~~of~~ the "general strike" grew out of the experiences of the local strikes which the various craft unions carried on. As early as 1803, laws were passed in France forbidding and even punishing all kinds of coalition. In 1834, the law prohibited even twenty persons from forming an association. This readily proved to the workingmen that they were handicapped in the class struggle. Finally, the "International Association of Workingmen" was formed in



1864 by French and English workingmen. The followers of Proudhon, who believed in a peaceful change in social relations, which must be brought about by the efforts of the workingmen themselves, characterized the French wing of the Association. It died in 1868 but was revived in 1869 when it brought to the minds of the workingmen the idea of the "general strike" thru a strike movement which swept the country. The Franco-Prussian War, the Proclamation of the Republic and the Commune marked the destruction of this organization.<sup>1</sup>

This idea now heralded in France as a new weapon in the hands of the working class was deliberately considered in England as early as 1630.<sup>2</sup> The philosophy of the Utopian Socialism founded in England has all the thought of the Syndicalist movement: such as the conception of one big union, the decentralization of the capitalist power, the general reorganization of the society in the interest of the workers, the conduct of all industry by industrial unions, and the "general strike." While it loomed up for a time in industrial life with its threatening effect upon

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1. "The Labor Movement in France." p.39. Louis Levine.

2. "History of Trade Unions." pp 118-122. B.& S. Webb.



employers, it was soon brought low by means of the lockout and the courts. The leaders were arrested, tried and convicted, some of them sentenced to seven years transportation. The immediate effect was a complete failure, but the ultimate effect was the realization of a great many of their aims. <sup>1</sup>

The Haymarket riot of Chicago in 1896 demonstrated great possibilities by means of such a movement, and the French unions in convention assembled at Bordeaux in 1888 passed the following resolutions:

"Considering: That the monopolization of the instruments of labor and of capital gives to the employers a power which diminishes by so much only as the strike puts power in the hands of the workers;

"That capital is nothing if it is not put in action by labor; that, therefore, in refusing to work the workers would destroy by a single stroke the power of their masters;

"Considering: That the partial strike can only be a means of agitation and organization, the Congress declares:

"That the general strike alone, that is to say, the complete stoppage of all work, or, in other words, the social revolution, can lead the workers toward their emancipation." <sup>2</sup>

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1. "History of Trade Unions." pp 137-138. B. & S. Webb.

2. "The Labor Movement in France." p 62. Louis Levine.



All political methods formerly held by the Syndicalists seemed futile. The anarchists "denounced parliamentary action as 'pell-mell of compromise, of corruption, of charlatanism and of absurdities, which does no constructive work, while it destroys character and kills the revolutionary spirit by holding the masses under a fatal illusion.' The anarchists saw only one way of bringing about the emancipation of the working class; namely, to carry on an active propaganda and agitation, to organize groups, and at the opportune moment to raise the people in revolt against the State and the propertied-classes; then destroy the State, expropriate the capitalist class and organize society on communist and federalist principles." <sup>1</sup>

This idea is opposed by parliamentary Socialists who believe that in order to transform society from capitalistic to collectivist, the political machinery must be seized. To them the first thing necessary is to get hold of the political power of the State. Economic pressure was causing the workingmen to unite more and more and in view of the slow process which parliamentary efforts were making and in view of the seemingly impossible method of a general political revolt, the "general strike" became more and more popular as the solution to the problem at hand.

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1. "The Labor Movement in France." p 50. Louis Levine.



In America, the gradual development of unionism has been similar to that of France. "The Knights of Labor," organized in 1869, had for its one object the bringing together of all workmen into one big union. It did not provide for any industrial departments nor for craft locals within the unions. These craft locals are essential, for there are problems arising which the big unions could not solve and <sup>which</sup> must be solved by the locals. Because of this weakness the movement died in 1895.

"Industrial Unionism" took its place. Its motto is: "One big union for all workers in an industry; all industries in one big union." This union is ever active in behalf of the working class, causing agitation, boycotts and even "sabotage" in order to show their discontent <sup>with</sup> ~~for~~ the ~~present~~ existing order. "The Western Federation of Miners" is an example of this type of union. It was organized in 1892 for the purpose of bringing together all the workers in the industry of metal mining in the country including even the engineers, smelters and all others who work about the mines. Whenever a strike is declared, the entire union is called out; never does any part of the union strike alone while the other part continues to work. They never sign agreements with their employers. Its working in this coun-



try is well known, and as a result of their united action in strikes/they have established the eight-hour law for all the employers and have secured the minimum wage of \$3.00 per day. This is the principle of the "general strike."

William E. Trautman has prepared a chart which gives his suggestions for one big union. Believing that industrial inequality is the source of all other inequality in human society, he sees the necessity of a new social structure formed by the workingmen who are conscious of their mission in taking over and operating all the industrial institutions. The means of production and distribution must be taken from the hands of private owners and made the property of the working class as a whole. In order to accomplish this it becomes necessary for all workingmen the world over to form one big union along industrial lines. This is the preparation for the "general strike."<sup>1</sup>

Eugene V. Debs, the leader of American Socialism, saw that "craft" unions were fatal to class unity. "The old union movement is not only organized upon the basis of the identity of interests of the exploited and the exploiting class, but it divides instead of uniting the workers, and there are thousands of unions, more or less in conflict, used against

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1. See chart at the end of thesis.



one another; and so long as these countless unions occupy the field, there will be no substantial unity of the working class." <sup>1</sup> The history of strikes in this country shows that many of the strikes have proven futile because one "craft" union remained at work for the same employer while another "craft" union was fighting against that employer, thereby rendering aid to the capitalists in breaking the strike.

"The Industrial Workers of the World," which dates from 1905, has for its purpose the solidarity of the entire working class for the final struggle in the class conflict.

They are conscious of the struggle, and work on the avowed principle that there is nothing in common between the capitalists and the wage-earners. Their preamble reads ~~thus~~:

" Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work,' we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wage-system.'" "It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism." The abolition of the wage-system has become the aim of American industrial unions.

Attempts have been made earlier in the history of the class struggle to do away with the wage-system. As early as 1832 Robert Owen conceived of a national organization

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1. "Industrial Unionsim." p 8. Eugene V. Debs.



which would by one strike cause the capitalists to hand over the means of production, but thru failure to accomplish this he was compelled to try the "general strike." "Under the system proposed by Owen, the instruments of production were to become the property not of the whole community, but of the particular set of workers who used them. The trade unions were to be transformed in to 'national companies,' to carry on all the manufactures. The agricultural union was to take possession of the land, the miner's union of the mines, the textile union of the factories. Each trade was to be carried on by its particular trade union centralized into one 'grand lodge.'" <sup>1</sup>

Other attempts have been tried. The experiments of "Co-operative production", running thru three-quarters of a century, proved to the Christian Socialists that such enterprises demanded not only sufficient capital but also managerial ability as well as a thorough understanding of the market. Likewise the "Co-operative Consumers" plan has been tried in France, England, Italy, Germany, Denmark, Belgium and quite extensively in the United States, <sup>2</sup> but the wage-

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1. "History of Trade Unionism." p 144, B. & S. Webb.

2. "Labor Problems." pp 379-433. Adam & Sumner.



system in principle still remained. The competitive system whereby wages are kept down to a minimum could not be overthrown. The worker discovered that he was still working for another under orders and was receiving wages as before even tho the co-operative system brought millions of dollars to the working class.

Perhaps the Syndicalists and the American Socialists do not mean to do away with the wage-system altogether, but rather do they see merely the necessity of abolishing the present wage-system of working for capitalists who own all the means of production, and under the profit system which secures labor at a minimum cost because of the higgling of the market. We may well ask the question who will become the directors and overseers of the various industries under a co-operative or collectivist scheme? Who will decide when and how the work shall be done, and see that the decisions are carried into effect? Who will determine the amount of wages and who will set the price of the commodity? There must be some central power above the mere masses of workmen who will look after all these things. If such a body is needed, how do we know that they will not be prompted by the same human desires and habits which now mark the action of present employers and officials; and will they not give



rise to a new ruling class in a further cycle of industrial evolution?

However this may be, the abolition of the wage-system is the goal toward which the Syndicalists and American Socialists are pushing. The Syndicalists have adopted "direct action" as the only efficient means of attaining this goal. The democratic principle upon which the French Socialists work is repudiated by them as futile. The Socialists see the hope of success bound up in the possibility of securing a majority of voters to adopt their program. This is purely Marxian.<sup>?</sup> "The French Syndicalism was born of the reaction of the proletariat against Democracy." "They are not taken in by Democratic sophism that all men are equal. They despise the opinion of the unawakened, of the apathetic and faint-hearted masses. The free man, even if he stand alone, is superior to a servile crowd. His right to revolt is indefeasible." The conscious minority are driven to act without waiting upon the unenlightened mob. They have come to rely solely upon their own efforts to accomplish their purpose and to bring about the needed reform.

In America the principle of the Parliamentary Syndicalists marks the action of the main body of International



Socialists; tho there is a branch of Socialism which may rightly be called Syndicalists. These are the Revolutionary Socialists. Morris Hillquit, who is a fair representative of American Socialism, seems to be impressed with the principle of political action. He writes: "Socialism, like any other national political program, can be realized only when its adherents, sympathizers and supporters are numerous enough to wrest the machinery of government from their opponents, and to use it for the realization of their program." <sup>1</sup> "To be Victorious the Socialists will, therefore, in all likelihood require an absolute majority of the voters and of the population." <sup>1</sup> It is evident that his idea is to convert the people to the Socialist creed in order to gain a majority of voters to carry an election. Its propaganda, therefore, becomes the important activity of their movement and upon which the success of the movement depends.

This is not the method of the Revolutionary Socialists; that is, those Socialists who believe in "direct action." There has been a confusion of ideas as to the meaning of the term "Revolutionary," and thruout the country are found "Revolutionary Socialists" of two distinct types. There are are those Socialists who believe as did Marx that the

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1. "Socialism Up to Date." p.13. Morris Hillquit.  
Metropolitan, Sept. 1912.



revolution will be brought about by political action, the proletariat class becoming sufficiently strong to wrest from the capitalist class the machinery of government.<sup>?</sup> The revolutionary idea which the Syndicalists advocate is the anarchistic type and is gaining ground very rapidly in this country. "The time should be past for the mental attitude: 'Revolution is atrocious. Sir, there is no revolution.' Likewise should the time be past for that other familiar attitude: 'Socialism is slavery. Sir, it will never die.' It is no longer a question of dialectics, theories and dreams. There is no question about it. The revolution is a fact. It is here now. Seven million revolutionists organized, working day and night, are preaching the revolution- the passionate gospel, the brotherhood of man. Not only is it a cold blooded economic propaganda, but it is in essence a religious propaganda with a fervor in it of Paul and Christ...." <sup>1</sup>

Speaking in behalf of the "I.W.W." Debs made the following appeal: "And if you join this union in sufficient numbers, if you will build up this organization and give it the power it ought to have, if you rally to the standard of this revolutionary union- then, as certain as I stand before you, you will carry that banner to victory." <sup>2</sup>

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1. "Revolution." Cp. 31. Jack London.

2. "Class Unionism." p 32. Eugene V. Debs.



That victory is the emancipation of the laboring class from wage-slavery ~~and~~<sup>to</sup> become the new owners of the means of production.

The revolutionary nature of this organization<sup>t</sup> is so well known and recognized in this country that some states have taken legal action against it. John Speed Smith, chief naturalization examiner, obtained the cancellation of the citizenship of Leonard Olsson of Tacoma, Washington, a member of the "I.W.W." Judge Cornelius H. Hanford handed down the decision on the ground that Olsson was not attached to the principles of the constitution of the United States. As a result, members of the "I.W.W." will not be admitted as citizens in any court of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. It is evident to these men, who are deprived of the rights of citizenship, that the only possible method of securing their rights is by open revolution.

This anarchistic type is deemed not only an expedient but even a necessity. The labor<sup>er</sup>s are not blinded to the fact that the machinery of government is largely in the hands of the capitalist class and is used most ~~maliciously~~<sup>mischievously</sup> against them in the class struggle. They have likewise seen the judicial injunction used as a very effective weapon in the hands of the capitalist class and has outraged the feelings of the laboring class who feel that injustice



under such procedure has been meted out to them. "No weapon has been used with such disastrous effect against trade unions as the injunction in labor disputes. By means of it trade unionists have been prohibited under severe penalties from doing what they had a legal right to do, and have been specifically directed to do what they had a legal right not to do. It is difficult to speak in measured language of the savagery and venom with which unions have been assailed by the injunction, and to the working classes, as to all fair-minded men, it seems little less than a crime to condone or tolerate it." <sup>1</sup>

Besides all this, the laboring class of this country are conscious that the police power, state and federal troops, are used against them in any open warfare, regardless of the merits of the struggle. The the cause of a strike may be legitimate and just, still the laboring class have to meet this insurmountable obstacle of fighting against the police and civil troops controlled by the capitalist class. But feeling that victory is impossible thru any political revolution along democratic lines, the only way of obtaining the long cherished hope effecient way, appealing to the working class is the complete industrial revolution in the name of society to return to Society what rightly belongs to it.

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1. "Organized Labor." p 324. J. Mitchell.



The "Parti Ouvrier Francais,"<sup>1</sup> one wing of the Socialists party in France, which split in 1882, represented or claimed to be the orthodox representatives of Marxian Socialism. J. Guesde declared it impossible to carry out reforms in a capitalistic society and therefore adopted revolutionary methods to seize upon the political machinery of the country in order to use the machinery against the capitalist class in wresting from it the means of production. This political scheme of the Parliamentary Syndicalists of France and of the main body of Socialists in this country is judged to be a very slow method if at all a possible method in accomplishing the downfall of capitalism. The anarchistic Socialists who hold this view proclaim violently the necessity of economic action or industrial revolution as the only sure means of getting control of the means of production.

"Political action takes place in the limits of a capitalist system, and in itself does not suffice. It has an essentially reformistic or defensive character. Only labor union action, whether thru the general strike or insurrection, is in its nature revolutionary and capable of leading to the expropriation of the expropriators."<sup>2</sup>

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1. "The Labor Movement in France." pp 44-55. Louis Levine.

2. "Labor-Union Socialism and Socialist Labor-Unionism." p 51. William English Welling.



Whether political or economic revolution will be sufficient to accomplish the overthrow of capitalism is therefore a divided question among Syndicalists and Socialists. The fact remains the same, however, that a revolution is necessary. A series of reform measures within the present capitalistic society seems quite useless in the long run. Capitalists must be coerced by some revolutionary means, whether political or economic, until economic equality is secure for the entire working class.

The tendency in this country is toward this anarchistic revolutionary method to destroy the capitalist system. While the main body are endeavoring to get a majority in the political arena, still they entertain the possibility that it may be necessary TO USE REVOLUTIONARY ECONOMIC Action and even physical force after they have obtained a political majority. Such theory of industrial evolution is quite tenable in analysing the rise of new industrial order.

There is a class of Socialists and Syndicalists, Tom Mann a representative, who believe that by a chain of succeeding reforms whereby hours of labor are shortened, out-put restricted and conditions of labor improved, the laborer will finally come to receive all that he produces. Many of our American Socialists hold this idea but the vast majority have no faith in such a program; nor can they



see any ~~per~~<sup>per</sup>manent effect for economic freedom and equality resulting from any reforms made in favor of the working class. It isn't State capitalism they want and just such reforms tend toward that direction. With all the temporary reforms granted by the privileged class, the fundamental error remains the same; namely, private ownership of the means of production while the method of production is social. The increase of wages, shorter hours, old age pensions, employer's liability, insurance or what not under a capitalistic regime will not give to the working class what rightly belongs to him, the whole of the product which is the result of his labor. Nor will such reforms do away with the profit system and bring about economic equality. Whatever concessions are made to the wage-earners, the same old system of wages remains. The utter overthrow of the capitalist system is the only effecient aim <sup>and</sup> ~~which~~ can be accomplished only by revolutionary means.

What good then does "sabotage" do toward bringing about this industrial change? Do Syndicalists feel that a whole-sale use of this method of destruction will so intimidate the employers that they will meekly surrender their position in favor of the laboring class? This form of "direct action" has become very common in this country. Pouget, the French trade union leader, got the idea from some Italian laborers



at Bedford, Massachusetts. When they found that their wages were reduced ten percent, they returned to work with their shovels cut off by one-tenth. Its significance is "for <sup>small</sup> ~~bad~~ pay, <sup>small</sup> ~~bad~~ work." The significant remark in England is: "Go Canny! Don't hurry." Since labor is considered as a commodity by the employers, if they pay cheap for it let them receive cheap work or an inferior commodity. The term has come to mean any action whereby dissatisfied workmen would mutilate the product of their labor as to injure the employer's business, or to commit any act of destruction to the tools of production as to cut into the employer's profits.

In this country "sabotage" has assumed such gigantic proportions as to take little heed of human life altho the Syndicalists who adopted this method of guerrilla warfare were opposed to any action which might result in the loss of human life. Perhaps the McNamaras, who were the agents of the Structural Iron Workers, did not intend to destroy life. Perhaps they were so intoxicated with the thought of success thru this means so thrilling as to appeal to the nature of men that the loss of human life was a very unimportant item in the warfare. The passive form of "sabotage"- the scheme of slow work- does not have the immoral effects upon the country as do the overt acts of destruction.



Because the workingmen find that strikes are failures on account of courts and armies used against them in any attempt to right their wrongs, "sabotage" becomes more popular. Restricted in their public assemblies and in giving expression to their felt wrongs coupled with other restrictions, the laboring class is irritated into such acts of violence. The chartist convention of 1839 had a heated discussion as to whether physical or moral force should be used and Feargus O'Connor advocated most strenuously the use of physical force. John Most of this country, an anarchist, brought about a division in the Socialist camp and lead off a large following who adopted his idea of physical force which culminated in the Haymarket episode of Chicago in 1886. The following statement seems to indicate that Debs agrees with Hillquit as to method, tho it is a known fact that he is an ardent advocat~~er~~ of the "I.W.W." He says: "If I regarded the class struggle as a guerrilla warfare, I would join the anarchists and practice as well as preach such tactics. I am opposed to sabotage and direct action. The very nature of them adapt them to guerrilla warfare, to the bomb thrower, to the mid-night assassin. If sabotage and direct action, as I interpret them, were incor-



porated in the tactics of the Socialist party, it would be at once a signal for all agents, provocateurs and police spies of the country to join the party and get busy.--- With the sanctioning of sabotage and similar practices the Socialist party would stand responsible for the deed of every spy or madman, the seeds of strife would be subtly sown in the ranks, mutual suspicion would be aroused, and the party would soon be torn into warring factions, to the despair of the betrayed workers and the delight of their triumphant masters."

As a further view of the Socialist party, the following has been adopted as a part of the constitution:

"Section 6: Any member of the party who opposes political action or advocates crime, sabotage or other methods of violence as a weapon of the working class to aid in its emancipation, shall be expelled from membership in the party."

Whatever form of "direct action" occurs, whether it is the strike, boycott or sabotage, the principle involved is that of coercing the employer to grant demands made upon him. Not only are demands made against the capitalist class but also against the State. The Syndicalists feel that the State controlled by the capitalist class is used to defend the privileges of that class. The principle of true democracy holds that all citizens are equal before the law and



that there are no classes in the State. Such a theory of democracy held by the Syndicalists is quite incompatible with the present day forms of democracy. This accounts for all sorts of press agitations, public gatherings and demonstrations constantly arising in utter protest against the State.

All "direct action" against the employers and the State is preparing the working class for the inevitable struggle. Immediate reforms are helpful for the time being until the laboring class can become completely unionized. Methods of "sabotage" develops the class consciousness. The final struggle will assume the form of the "general strike." Immediate victories such as shortened hours of work, increase of wages, better conditions and the like are intermediate steps to final victory. "Irritation" strikes help in spreading the class conscious ideas. All is preparing the way for the "general strike." "What the Syndicalists are after is to use this weapon on a large scale, actually to change the state of society itself. We shall prepare the way as rapidly as possible for the 'general strike' of national proportions." This will be the actual social and industrial revolution. The workers will refuse to any longer manipulate the machinery of production in the interest of the capitalist class, and there will be no power on earth



to compel them to work when they thus refuse." <sup>1</sup>

While strikes on a large scale have failed in the past, it remains to be seen what might be the outcome of such a strike covering so large a territory. The Belgium strike of recent date attracted world-wide attention as an attempt at a "general strike." For ten days the strike kept industry and commerce at a standstill. The Socialists wrested from Parliament equal suffrage. The strike was peaceful and quiet. Every concerted act made by the laboring class, the failure may follow, is the means of disseminating the pregnant ideas of the class which will eventually become the predominate ideas upon which the new industrial structure will be built. This strike demonstrated the power of the laboring class when in a "general strike."

#### CRITICISM.

This Neo-Marxianism, built upon the theory of social revolution that "in the course of development every social system contains those material conditions which shall effectively give rise to a new social order," has in many respects departed from the old political theory of Marx. These new conditions are not merely technique, but also include the new political, moral and legal ideas evolved

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1. "What Syndicalists are After." Tom Mann.  
"Syndicalist." Jan. 1912.



from the old order. The progress of Socialism can be hastened, then, by direct action or violence only as these acts spread more rapidly these new evolved ideas. The proper development of these new ideas must be fostered by a process of education pointing to the time when such new moral forces will become sufficiently powerful to break the old shell of capitalism and begin the new life of collectivism. All that unionism can do at best is to carry on the process of development; and rightly should unionism continue its specific duty until this educational training of the proletariat become sufficiently strong to make the great change in the social order.

Too often, then, the idea of "direct action" becomes the immature fancy of small unions. Too much mob psychology has been interpreted as class consciousness. The strike of the American Railway Union as well as the recent strike in London are striking examples of deliberate organization upon more intellectual plane in contrast to so many strikes carried on ~~by~~ mob psychology. Both are means of spreading the new ideas, but the more intellectual type brings greater results with less waste of energy.

Existing institutions reflect the habits of thought of that age. If present institutions are condemned as wrong or



unjust, it is evident that man's thoughts are changing. The once sacred rights handed down to us are now being harshly criticised and even condemned as unjust. We do <sup>not</sup> hesitate to question the right of private property any more than we hesitate to criticise the human action of a judge sitting on our supreme bench. In the change of emphasis in ethics from the criterion of individual self-realization to that of social self-realization has come the change in ideas as to right and wrong.

The new ideal of democracy gradually permeating the whole life of civilized peoples and reflecting this new criterion is the vital force for the social and industrial evolution. Men are not to be used as means to an end in order that gigantic industrial institutions might be built up, colossal fortunes made in the name of individual self-realization, or enormous commercial enterprises erected as the end of all national activity. Men are to be treated as ends in themselves, all things else subordinated to their development. They are to realize self as a social being, and institutions are useful only as they assist in this process of his development. This new ideal of democracy is the leaven in the social and industrial life of a nation.

While both classes are fighting for a larger share



of the profits, accruing from the marketable products, both are fighting upon a different principle or idea of rightness. The business institutions have so habituated the mode of thinking among business men that they believe ownership in private property with all its attendant institutions <sup>is an</sup> are inherent rights. The laboring class are affected by these same institutions in altogether a different way. He is conscious of inequality which limits freedom. The social distinctions of all countries are ~~based~~ to be based on economic distinctions. The laboring class in recognizing this fact is aroused by his own consciousness with a desire for economic equality. It is easily discovered that economic inequality is traceable to existing institutions, especially those of property rights. These institutions, therefore, handed down from previous generations and accepted somewhat blindly as just, are carefully analyzed and criticised in order to ascertain whether they are of permanent value; or are the ~~fundamental~~ cause of so much sorrow and misery due to economic inequality. Coming to the conclusion that the private ownership of property with its attendant institution - the wage system - is the primal cause of all economic inequality, and wishing quick deliverance from subserviance to these unjust institutions, the working class are consciously attempting to overthrow the existing order.



This strong desire for and insistence on economic freedom by the suppressed class is the psychological force at work in society. This psychological force brings about a change in the mode of thinking and ~~there~~<sup>re</sup> emerges a conflict of ideas on rightness and justness. The old ideas of right are well established by existing institution sufficiently protected by accompanying forces. The new evolving ideas of right have not found any permanent expression in institutions. The methods adopted by the laboring class are temporary expedients which reflect but partially the trend of thought. The survival of ideas in the struggle will determine the line of further progress.

How these ideas of right came into existence is an interesting question. The line of evolution which society takes is not the old doctrine of "laissez-faire" as held by Spencer. That there is some unseen force to work out these problems to their ultimate end which will be for the progress of the human race, while man looks on with no power to help or hinder is quite untenable. Nor does the Darwinian theory of the "Survival of the fittest" seem to be satisfactory for that doesn't get us anywhere. It is evident that these new ideas evolved out of the old industrial order which gave rise to economic inequality and perhaps we will have to fall back on Bergson's theory of "Creative Evolution"



and state that intuitively these new ideas arise. M.Sorel, the great French Syndicalist Leader partially accepts this view. Suffice it to say, the ideas are present among the laboring class and are rapidly changing their whole mode of thinking.

Tho we may not agree with Sorel that this idea for economic freedom as a "social myth" of Syndicalism may be called a religion, we are compelled to accept the fact that the desire for economic freedom is the great force now at work in society and will eventually reconstruct the whole social and industrial fabric. When this desire shall have been fully attained, the old forms and institutions will necessarily have to be transformed to fit the new mode of thinking. While the desire is in the process of being attained, expedients will be used and methods adopted which will hasten the realization of the desire.

Acts of violence, "direct action" or "sabotage," cannot change the whole capitalist system. The new ideas of economic equality and freedom must become sufficiently strong as to completely overpower the opposing ideas. This manifestation of supremacy will appear in the form of a political revolution when the class consciousness will have been sufficiently awakened thru educational activity. The phys-



ical power which some delight to talk about, based largely on the philosophy of Nietsche, hardly seems feasible. The transforming of present institutions now representing the habituated thought of the capitalist class into new institutions as representing the habituated thought of the working class will gradually come about thru social and economic enlightenment.

In criticising the Syndicalist movement, then, we must decide upon the rightness or wrongness of these new ideas concerning private property, capitalist system, wage system and kindred subjects now undergoing a change in human thought. The trend of thought, barring all differences of personality, seem to assure a better equality, a purer freedom and a more compatible democracy. The old economic structure must crumble by virtue of its own inherent weakness. The abstract principles of justice, freedom and equality remain as the goal toward which social and industrial evolution moves. These principles themselves are ever receding as man's thoughts develop. The outworn institutions will be replaced by those new institutions in harmony with the new mode of thinking. Such has been the process of all change and such will be the process in the present struggle.

Syndicalism is but one expression of this new mode of thinking. American Socialism gives evidence to the rise of new ideas. Like all schemes, Syndicalism and Socialism will change with the ever changing stream of thought.



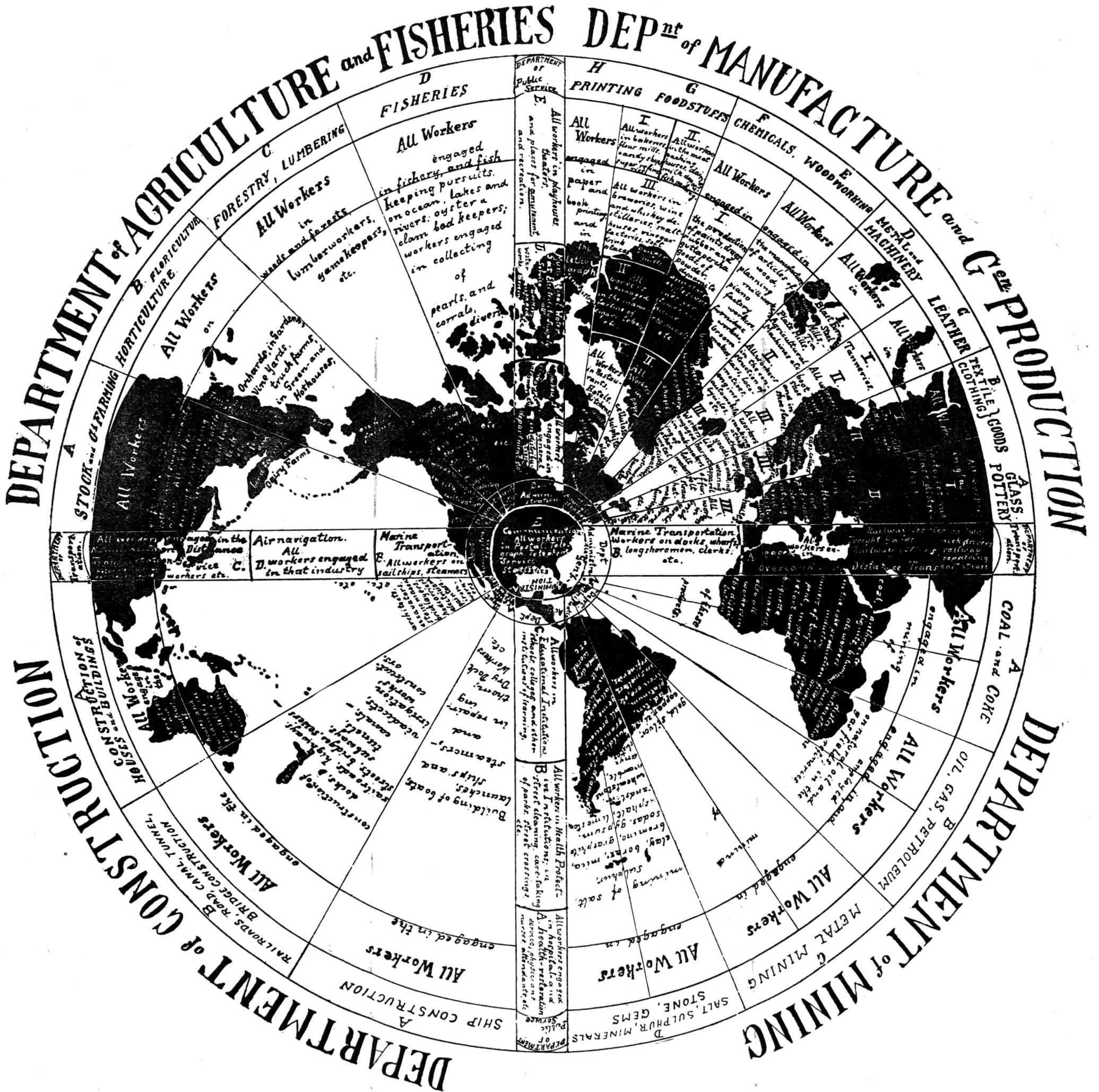
Society is dynamic, not static. The involuntary industrial relationships in which men enter for livelihood and upon which is built society's institutions, are ever changing. The legal and political superstructure built upon these relationships, as well as the the social consciousness or what is known as public opinion, are likewise undergoing constant change. We have reached that stage in the course of progress where a change in industrial relations is demanded because of these changed ideas of justice, freedom and equality. When these industrial relations change, then the whole superstructure will likewise undergo a complete transformation. This is the coming revolution for which the Syndicalists are ardently working.

The old order must develop those material conditions which are necessary for a new social order. The present industrial relationships built upon capitalistic methods of production give rise to antagonistic forms of industry in methods of production and ownership. At best, Syndicalists and Socialists can hasten a political revolution which will wipe out this antagonism by instituting collective ownership to harmonize with social production. This is what Syndicalism has as its goal. In aim, then, it is in harmony with American Socialism, varying as to methods for the attainment of the goal.



This common aim is the next industrial change in the process of evolution. Economic equality and justice will be more fully realized when this change comes about. Syndicalism in method will hasten the coming change. American Socialism, both types of the revolutionary, will be active forces in hastening the final struggle. Just how far away that is no one knows. The great unrest of the present and such determining forces now operating in the social and economic life seem to indicate its rapid approach. Suffice it to say, American Socialism and Syndicalism are creative forces in the present industrial evolution.

# ONE BIG UNION



## THE STRUCTURE OF THE INDUSTRIAL SYSTEM

A labor organization to correctly represent the working class must have two things in view.

First—It must combine the wage-workers in such a way that it can most successfully fight the battles and protect the interests of the working people of today in their struggle for fewer hours, more wages and better conditions.

Secondly—It must offer a final solution of the labor problem—an emancipation from strikes, injunctions, bull-pens and scabbing of one against the other.

Study the Chart and observe how this organization will give recognition to control of shop affairs, provide perfect Industrial Unionism, and converge the strength of all organized workers to a common center, from which any weak point can be strengthened and protected.

Observe, also, how the growth and development of this organization will build up within itself the structure of an Industrial Democracy—a Workers' Co-Operative Republic—which must finally burst the shell of capitalist government,

and be the agency by which the workers will operate the industries, and appropriate the products to themselves.

One obligation for all.

A union man once and in one industry, a union man always and in all industries.

Universal transfers.

Universal emblem.

All workers of one industry in one union; all unions of workers in one big labor alliance the world over.

For a better study of industrial arrangements portrayed in the above Chart order "One Big Union," by William E. Trautmann, sent postpaid on receipt of ten cents.

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