

Socialism

versus

Anarchism

By Daniel De Leon

Socialism versus Anarchism

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PREFACE

Socialism versus Anarchism is one of those little gems of lecturing art, delivered upon “an occasion,” but which time inevitably makes a classic. The occasion which brought forth this pronunciamento by the Socialist Labor Party through Comrade De Leon was the assassination of President William McKinley at Buffalo, N.Y., by the anarchist Czolgosz.¹ The assassination of McKinley caused a veritable outburst of blind rage and petty persecution against individuals and organizations which professed to any kind of so-called radical “ism.” Open or covert attacks were made upon the Socialist movement, with that unerring class instinct which makes the ruling class and its henchmen scent in Socialism its real opponent and take every opportunity to attack it with the fervent though futile hope of wiping it out of existence. Outrages, by mobs or petty authorities, were committed against Socialists under the belief, real or assumed, that Socialists were Anarchists. Public outrages were stimulated and abetted by the capitalist press which in every city and state, in its usual glib, ignorant, or wilfully vicious fashion, confounded Anarchism with Socialism as if the two were identical and synonymous.

The Socialist Labor Party, the true representative of the Socialist Movement in America, saw itself compelled to make a plain and authoritative statement showing the difference between Anarchism and Socialism both in theory and practice. Section Boston of the Socialist Labor Party arranged a mass meeting with Comrade De Leon as the speaker.² In his usual calm and

¹ President William McKinley was shot on Sept. 6, 1901, by the anarchist, Leon F. Czolgosz, and died on Sept. 14. A brief but informative description of the assassin and his background can be found in Barbara W. Tuchman's *The Proud Tower, A Portrait of the World Before the War: 1890-1914*. (Macmillan Publishing Co., New York, 1962.)

² This is probably correct, but contradicts notices printed in the party's official newspaper, the *Daily People*, before the talk was delivered. According to the notices, De Leon was to speak “under the auspices of the State Executive Committee of Massachusetts.” (See, for example, “De Leon to Lecture in Boston,” *Daily People*, Oct. 5, 1901.) However,

logical manner, Comrade De Leon traced the doctrine of “physical force,” the so-called “propaganda of the deed,” to its last conclusion, showing that it played its role in history at an age when the individual, the leader, the king, the emperor, or whatever the one-man ruler might be called, was all, and the mass counted for nothing; showing how this “revolutionary method,” outgrown and outworn at this time, has stuck in the human conception to this day, theoretically fostered by that one organization—the Catholic Church—in which the Pope or the priest, that is to say, the individual leader, still counts for all and the mass counts for less than nothing;³ showing the stupidity, the futility in our day and age, of the methods and the tactics of the Anarchists; and showing, furthermore, how diametrically opposite to these are the methods and tactics of the Socialist Labor Party.

At the present moment we are again passing through a stage in history when it is convenient for the powers that be and for the subsidized press to misrepresent Socialism by confounding it with anarchy, often at this time giving it the new name, I.W.W. or syndicalism, or calling it Bolshevism or Spartacanism—painting these movements in the blackest colors. At the present moment a number of decidedly “shady” and incomprehensible bomb explosions have again brought the subject of anarchy very much in the limelight, which will beyond a doubt make it the subject of strong repressive legislation, upon the basis of which the legitimate Labor Movement will be made to suffer. Clarity of thought and reasoning, always necessary in the Socialist Movement, is, therefore, at this time more than ever imperative. We have no better and clearer concise statement of the position of the S.L.P. in opposition to anarchy and other criminal doctrines springing from the cellar or the dungeon than this little pamphlet.

advertisements for the first pamphlet edition of *Socialism versus Anarchism*, released in December 1901, state that the meeting at which De Leon spoke was held “under the auspices of Section Boston, Socialist Labor Party.”

³ A similar description of the relationship between the Pope and the Catholic laity can be found in John Cornwell’s 1999 “best-seller,” *Hitler’s Pope: The Secret History of Pius XII*. Having described a photograph of Pius XII standing with outstretched arms on a balcony high above a large crowd in St. Peter’s Square, Cornwell added: “This characteristic image of Pius XII...suggests several contrasts that distinguish the modern popes from their predecessors. The more elevated the Pontiff, the smaller and less significant the faithful. The more responsible and authoritative the Pontiff, the less enfranchised the people of God, including bishops, the successors of the apostles. The more holy and removed the Pontiff, the more profane and secular the entire world.”

In preparing this new edition for the printer, the Socialist Labor Party does so feeling that it is its strongest weapon against slander and the covert attacks launched by its hundreds of foes, open or secret. It is a book that should be in the hands of every man and woman in the land.

National Executive Committee,
Socialist Labor Party.

New York, June, 1919.

THE ADDRESS

Ladies and Gentlemen: The voices of those little ones⁴ induce me to introduce my own intended introduction with an observation of Victor Hugo's. On a certain occasion, when the French Revolution seemed to be in danger (and you understand by the French Revolution not the decapitation of anybody, but the overthrow of the Feudal System), more than one is said to have gathered courage, from hearing, while walking the streets of Paris, the little children singing "Ca Ira" ("It Will Succeed"). Victor Hugo, in his own peculiar language, said on the subject: "The voices of those children, that is the voice of the immense future." It matters not whether these children are aware that a Socialist Labor Party meeting is being held here or not. Let us take it as a good omen that the voices of these little ones echo, outside of this hall, the cheers that, inside, have greeted the introduction of a Socialist Labor Party speaker. (Applause.)

Before taking up my subject, allow me to make a few introductory remarks, which may, or may not, be necessary in this instance; or may be necessary only to a very limited intent; or possibly may be necessary to a very extended extent.

All those of you who remember the recent vulgar attacks upon the Socialist Labor Party on the part of the Republican press, which manufactured "Socialists," and put into their mouths cheers for the assassin of McKinley; all those of you who remember the equally obscene assaults by the Democratic press, which endeavored to connect Czolgosz directly with the Socialist Labor Party; all those of you who recollect the vulgar language hurled from the Protestant and Jewish pulpits, lumping Socialism and

⁴ A group of children on the street began to cheer when they overheard the ovation that greeted De Leon inside the hall. The children persisted for several seconds longer than the audience, and De Leon waited for the noise to subside before starting to speak.

Anarchism in one; all those of you who remember the immoral attitude struck by the Princes of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of this country, who, forgetful of their claim that they are “teachers of morality,” have, on the occasion of the Buffalo tragedy, resorted to the immoral act of falsifying the tenets and principles of Socialism; all those of you who remember the language of the politicians, Democratic and Republican, on this subject, may possibly expect of me that I am going, this afternoon, to hit back. Nothing of the sort. The sun hits not back against the dark clouds that may gather in its face; neither does the Socialist Labor Party.

The Socialist Labor Party, like all Truth, can bide its time; and in the meantime proceed serenely along its orbit. To hit back increases disorder because it increases animosity. I come not to hit back. What I come for is to enable those gathered here—to the extent that I can within the limited time that it is physically possible for a person to address you on so broad a question—to pick their own way; to give you tips, as it were, that may aid you in unraveling the complicated problem that this question of Anarchism brings up, that the shot of Czolgosz has raised into prominence.

Indeed, the great Social Question cannot be entered, perhaps, by a better gate than the gate which, not Anarchism suggests, but which the anarchistic forces of society try to raise as a barrier against the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Movement.

The Social Question has been justly called the great solvent, that great ocean, into which all the rivers of knowledge flow, and to which all the departments of intellectual upbuilding are tributaries. It is hard to say that this, that, or the other of the numerous sub-questions raised is the most important. I shall not say that the questions raised in the public mind by the word Anarchism are the most important; but what I do maintain is this: That this question involves a tactical issue, and that that tactical issue is to-day of the greatest importance.

With these preliminary remarks I shall begin, but yet I must bring in another little preliminary. It is suggested by a book review in one of the New York papers of this very morning. At the risk of advertising a very stupid book, and a still more stupid reviewer, I shall mention their names. I hold here the *New York Sun* of this morning. It contains a certain book review. The author of the book is a gentleman who has perpetrated before works of

this nature. His name is John Rae. He has written a book called *The History of Socialism*. God help Socialism and God help history! (Laughter and applause.) I have marked and picked out of this review three of the statements which the reviewer has taken and dishes up as choice morsels from Mr. Rae's book. These passages will serve me as landmarks during my address to you and will help me to make clear my argument. Let me read them.

The first is: Mr. Rae characterizes Anarchism as "the latest and most misshapen offspring of revolutionary opinion." I shall show you that Anarchism is not the latest, but, so far from being the latest, is the very oldest conception of a revolutionary movement. I shall show you that it is old, stale, and played out. (Laughter and applause.) I shall show you that it is the child of infant social organization. I shall show you that whatever manifestation of it we have to-day is purely an atavistic revival of an old, old idea.

The next statement that I think of importance to quote is this: He says: "The Anarchists of Boston," and I quote it because you are of Boston, "for example, are individualists; one of the two groups of English Anarchists in London is individualist"; and Mr. Rae (reading from the review) "points out that these individualist Anarchists are very few in number anywhere, and he maintains that the mass of the party whose deeds excite abhorrence on both sides of the Atlantic are undoubtedly more socialist than the Socialists themselves." I shall show you that he who connects Anarchism with Socialism commits in the domain of sociology as great a blunder as he who, in the domain of natural science, would say that the eagle belongs to the same species as the eel in the zoological scale.

The last clause in the analysis of Mr. Rae's book by this reviewer, that helps me out and that I will quote, is this: He says: "It is said to be a subject of speculative discussion among the Anarchists whether two members are sufficient to constitute an anarchist club. The dread of subjection to authority keep them disunited and weak. **A small group may concoct an isolated crime, but it can do little toward bringing about a social revolution.**"

Mind you, this is the opinion of the author, condensed by the reviewer, and is given as a pearl of thought. I shall show you that the man who wrote that does not know the first thing about history. I shall show you that these

individualistic outbreaks have accomplished wonderful revolutions in their time, but in days gone by. I shall show you that, as humanity progresses, individual acts wane in strength, and I shall show you why, to-day, they are simply flashes in the pan; consequently, that this wholesale denunciation of individualistic revolutions, individualistic shots and individualistic assassinations, as acts incapable of accomplishing great results, shows that these gentlemen have no conception of what Anarchism really means, or where it has its roots.

Now to the subject. Of course, whatever makes much noise is considered by the superficial observer as the thing. Now, particularly, with Anarchism, the noisy part of Anarchism is not the essence of Anarchism. One Anarchist who fires a shot, one Anarchist who throws a dynamite bomb, or one Anarchist who to-day assassinates a president, has his name flashed from one end of the country to the other to such an extent that people, who are themselves itching for notoriety, are so envious of him that they pass resolutions declaring that his name shall not hereafter be mentioned at all. Assassination is not an essential part of Anarchism.

You get assassination as a possible, but by no means an inevitable, incident of Anarchism. Anarchism does not imply homicide, however natural its development in that direction may seem. Anarchism is essentially a gubernatorial or governmental conception—a conception of government in social society.

A conception of government is a reflex of social conception; and that social conception in its turn is based upon, not what we would like, or what we would fancy to be the desirous thing, but upon what material conditions dictate. You take your present raspingly-noisy and unseemly Elevated in Boston, for instance; it is not what you would like; but it is a reflex of the condition of things and capabilities of the time; and that reflex takes tangible form in the best way people know and are physically able to meet a certain condition of things.

Now, what is the social conception that lies at the root of Anarchism? I can hardly illustrate Socialism better than by drawing clear the essence of Anarchism. With that as a background, then Socialism, the reason therefor, what it means and the tactics to reach it, spring naturally to the eye.

What, then, is that governmental conception that manifests itself as

Anarchism? What that social conception is the reflex of, I shall not start with stating. I shall mention some leading historic events, and thus enable you to answer the question yourselves.

Take one of the leading epochs in ancient history. We there come across a monumental being. His name has come down to our days; he has given names to cities; his sayings, his words, his conduct, have become proverbial.

That man was Alexander, named the Great. He built an empire that lapped over both sides of the Euxine; he conquered the formerly unconquerable Greeks; he spread eastward over the great empires of the Assyrians and Babylonians, or whatever names they had. His empire swamped Egypt, and raised the city of Alexandria, with all that it implied. That empire was the largest empire, properly speaking, using the word in a semi-technical sense, the largest the world had yet seen. Alexander was its head.

One day, Alexander died. What became of his empire? Immediately upon his death, it shattered into a dozen different fragments. Without Alexander the empire of Alexander came to naught. The death of that man was not brought on by homicide. His death is attributed to "a natural event in the course of nature." The fact that interests us most just now is what happened when that great Alexander died. What happened was the death of his empire. Leave that as one instance.

Now let us take up another series of events. It is one less palatable than the one just mentioned to the Jewish rabbis, the Protestant and Catholic pulpiteers, whom I referred to in opening. But that is not my fault; it is theirs. The series of events which I now propose to mention are taken from the Bible. You know that the elect of the Lord backslided very frequently. On one of these occasions they fell under the control of a wicked race called the Moabites. Thereupon they groaned under the yoke of the Moabites many long years.

Finally, in the language of the Bible, "God raised up a judge to Israel." His name was Ehud. He looked around, and saw the oppression of his nation, and made up his mind to put an end to the oppressors. How did he go about it? By warring against the Moabites? No. The king of the Moabites was a gentleman by the name of Eglon, described as "a very fat man." Ehud, who is described as "left-handed," provided himself with a dagger; hid it under his

garment; secured a private interview with Eglon, who was thrown off his guard seeing Ehud's right hand unarmed; and, suddenly using his left hand, grasped his dagger, and, in the language of the Bible, "thrust it into Eglon's belly," so that "the haft went in after the blade, and the fat closed upon the blade" and stuck fast.

Exit Eglon, not alone, but every mother's son of the Moabitic oppressors. With the death of King Eglon the rule of the Moabites was at an end as absolutely as if Ehud's dagger had transfixed every single Moabite in transfixing Eglon. That much for the claim of the review I have read from, that individualistic acts are barren of results.

Take another event, also from the Bible. It is a celebrated one, one that has passed into art, furnishing poets and painters with the subject for many a great production. It is the story of Judith and Holofernes.

King Nebuchodonosor, as he is called in the Book of Judith, allowed his eyes to roam around, and caught sight of the Jews, and decided to conquer them. Holofernes was appointed the general of that conquering army. He carried everything before him, and finally reached Judea with an army over a hundred thousand strong. With that he encamped near Bethulia. The Jews were hard pressed; the water had been turned away from them; talk of surrender began to be heard.

At that critical moment a woman stepped forth. She consulted no one; she confided her plan to no one, not even to the maid servant that she took along. She arrayed herself at her best, and sallied forth from the city towards the camp of Holofernes, before whose tent she soon arrived, the soldiers readily making way for her. In the beautiful language of the Bible, as near as I can recall it, "her sandals ravished his senses, and her countenance took his mind prisoner."

To make a long story short, one night, as Holofernes lay in the stupor of sleep on his couch, Judith took his falchion, cut off his head, and returned home with it. The decapitation of Holofernes was equivalent to the decapitation of every individual in his vast army. That army vanished as completely as the first thin layer of snow vanishes on the streets of New York when struck by the torrid sun of southern Europe; it vanished even more completely, leaving not a wrack behind.

This was a great result. It put off for many a hundred years the day when

the fiat of time was to be recorded, and the Roman emperor placed upon the ramparts of Jerusalem the stone effigy of a pig with impudently curled tail as the seal of Gentile subjugation of the Jewish Acropolis. A more “autonomous” or “individualistic” act can ill be conceived; nor one more fruitful of result.

Let us now take a long leap forward into modern history. You have watched contemporaneous events in France. “Paris,” down to a very recent date, stood for “France.” In the successive crises witnessed that country, whatever coterie of capitalist interests captured Paris captured France “for good measure.” And Paris stood for “the Government.” Whoever took the Government had the Nation.

Draw nearer to our own country. What is the spectacle presented on this head by our neighbor republic, Mexico? The railroads have in more recent date taken from revolutions the chance of success they once enjoyed. But until then, how stood it? The chieftain, or, say, the interests clustered around such a chief, who aimed at controlling the people, simply marched upon the capital. “The capital” stood for the “Government.” He who pocketed the Government, bagged the people.

And finally, stepping upon our own soil, and coming down to the immediate present, what is the spectacle that is being presented just now in our Empire City of Greater New York? A fierce municipal campaign is raging there between the forces of Capitalism, aligned along the lines of Fusion or “Reform,” on the one side, and the party in power, Tammany Hall, on the other.

What is it all about? Corruption—undeniable, openly admitted or silently conceded—is rampant in the municipal government. Do the “Reform” forces, with Seth Low⁵ as their fogleman, take the people of the city into account? Do they recognize that the precariousness of livelihood among the toiling masses, the racking nervous strain to “keep up appearances” among the shoddyocracy, the slipperiness of the foundation of their affluence among the plutocracy,—do they take into consideration that these popular conditions necessarily breed an atmosphere of social impurity, whose exhalations are bound to manifest themselves in governmental impurity and corruption?

Not in the slightest! The Seth Low column of fused Republican and

⁵ Seth Low (1850–1916), capitalist and former president of Columbia University, was elected reform mayor of New York City in 1902.

Democratic capitalists—granting for the nonce the honesty of their declamations—proceed from the principle that it is all-sufficient to decapitate Tammany Hall with the falchion of a “Reform Government” in order to establish governmental purity; with the decapitation of Tammany Hall it is expected that impurity and corruption in the city will have been decapitated,—aye, decapitated as effectively as the empire of Alexander the Great died when he died; as effectively as the Moabite oppressors of the Jews were stabbed to death by the dagger with which Ehud stabbed to death the Moabitic king; as effectively as the hundred and odd thousand soldiers of Holofernes were beheaded with the falchion that Judith cut off their general’s head with; as effectively as the France of the first half of this century was successively captured by the successive revolutions that captured Paris; as effectively as the Mexican people were bagged by the chieftains who pocketed the capital of the Republic;—mark you, as effectively, and upon the same principle, as the shot of the Anarchist Czolgosz was expected by him to kill capitalist domination by the killing of the President of the Nation. (Applause.)

No need of multiplying examples. The mental kinship of all these instances is obvious. From them leaps to view the identical governmental conception together with the social conception that it is the reflex of. And what is that? It is obviously the social conception that the people do not count in society, except, at best, as food for cannon (laughter and applause); that Government, accordingly, is something outside of, separate and apart from, and superimposed upon the people from above.

It is the chess-board conception of society. One may have all his men on the board, but if his king is checkmated, the game is lost. Your opponent may have pawns, bishops, knights, rooks and queen, but if you have crowded his king to where he must surrender, then all his bishops, his pawns, his rooks, his knights, and even his queen, go for naught. And that conception is the essence of Anarchism. (Cheers and applause.) All else in Anarchism are but incidents and results that flow from this central principle. (Applause.)

Now, then, as you may begin to perceive, this Anarchist conception of society and of government was natural enough, and in place, at a certain social stage. How much in place, and what sort of social stage, you may have an inkling from the illustration furnished by Alexander’s empire, and from

the effectiveness with which that conception of society was applied in the instances of Ehud and Judith, together with many other instances that these two readily suggest.

On the other hand, from the other instances cited, and the many more you can readily think of, together with the common experience of the declining effectiveness with which that Anarchist conception of society is applied, down to our own days, when its application regularly suffers shipwreck, as illustrated by the utter failure that attends and must inevitably attend all the “Purity Movements” that we have seen spring up periodically in the land,—from all this it will be clear that, from the social conditions in Asia Minor and Palestine, many centuries before Christ, to those of the United States in the Twentieth Century; from the days of Ehud and Judith to those of Czolgosz and Seth Low (laughter and applause), a steady change has been going on, until, to-day, the old Anarchist conception of government no longer fits with actual social conditions. (Applause.)

Now, then, what is the reason the Ehuds and Judiths succeeded, while, to-day, the Czolgoszes and Lows have failed, and will continue to fail? Before going to the bottom of the matter, and detailing the fundamental and remote, it is well to first point out the immediate reason.

The immediate reason is a sociological development pregnant with significance. It is this: For reasons that I shall presently take up more fully, the masses are stepping more and more upon the stage of history, and not as “supes” or scene-shifters, but as stars in the performance. (Applause.) They counted for naught—except as “supes” and scene-shifters under the industrial order when Ehud and Judith figured.

They gradually begin to count for more and more; the history of the principalities of northern Italy and the Hansa towns of Germany is interesting reading on the early stages of this transformation.

Under the modern industrial order, **the masses have grown into society**,—and not a few of the epileptic fits that capitalist society is being continually thrown into are the result of the attempt on the part of the capitalist class to ignore, while seeking to profit by, the change; of the efforts of that class to brace itself against the Niagara-like torrent of evolution that has removed government down and away from the skies and planted it on earth, and that marks it flesh of the people’s flesh, and bone of their bone,—part and parcel of, inseparable from, society. (Applause.)

The further back one traces the race, the fewer are concerned in the government; the fewer are so concerned, the more natural, because the easiest, is the system of effecting changes—aye, improvements—by “despatching” the government.

The further we move forward, the more intimate becomes the blending of “government” with the rest of society; in even step the system of “despatching” a government, whether by assassination or some newer method, grows more barren in results: To the Red Terror ever succeeds the White; the individually benign McKinley is succeeded by the Spiked Police-Club Roosevelt.⁶ (Applause.)

The Anarchist conception of government and modern social conditions is not the least of the glaring contradictions that capitalist-ruled society groans under. It foments civilization, and yet it incites to barbarism.

It is no accident, for instance, that Balthasar Gerard, the assassin of William the Silent, a leader in the Protestant Revolution (an interesting historic event in this connection that I hope I may remember or have time to touch upon later); that Jacques Clement, the assassin of Henry III. of France; that Ravallac, the assassin of Henry IV., also of France; and, coming down to the history of our own days, that Kullman, the would-be assassin of Bismarck; Santos, the assassin of President Carnot of France; Bresci, the assassin of King Humbert of Italy; Luechini, the assassin of the Empress of Austria; Algoncillo, the assassin of the Spanish Prime Minister Canovas del Castillo;—it is no accident that all of these, down to Czolgosz, are Catholics.⁷

⁶ Theodore Roosevelt (1858–1919), who, as vice president, succeeded McKinley as president in September 1901, advocated the use of spiked police clubs during his tenure as police commissioner of New York City in the 1890s.

⁷ Jacques Clement, the assassin of Henry III, was a Dominican friar. His deed was encouraged by the Catholic League of France. The *Encyclopedia Britannica* notes that the murderer was “regarded as a martyr and extolled by Pope Sixtus V, while even his canonization was discussed.” Ravallac, the killer of Henry IV, wanted to become a Jesuit. The Jesuits were the theological defenders of political murder, notably in the works of the Spanish Jesuits, Juan de Marina and Francisco Suarez. In a biography of Suarez, an American Jesuit summarized Suarez’ justifications of murder and concluded: “...no private person can take to himself the right to slay the king unless he were commissioned by the community or its lawful representatives [the Catholic League, for example!]. He will then be acting in the name of the State and on public authority. Likewise, when the [murder] sentence has been imposed by the pontiff [the Pope], the deposition and slaying can be achieved only by the person, or persons, appointed by him.” (*Man of Spain*, by Joseph H. Fichter, S.J., bearing the “Imprimatur”—“It may be printed”—of Cardinal Francis Joseph Spellman of New York, and published by Macmillan, 1940.)

It is no accident that these were all brought up by the Roman Catholic Hierarchy during the tender years which that same Hierarchy recognizes as the most important in shaping the future man's mind. I say it is no accident. Not, indeed, that the Roman Catholic Hierarchy makes it a practice of preaching assassination; not that. But that—unable, as it would seem, to free itself from its patriarchal and subsequent feudal habits, and becoming in our days the handmaid of the capitalist system of despotism—it instils into its pupils, not the to-day true and elevating principle that government is a reflex of social conditions, but the to-day false and degrading theory that social conditions are a reflex of government: a theory that by exaggerating the value of the individual act, by thus inflating the individual self-love, needs but to fall upon favorable soil to inevitably breed the assassin. (Prolonged applause.)

A great woman, George Eliot, has called the attention of the race to the following principle of investigation: “The important thing is not to find that in which things, seemingly alike, are unlike; the important thing is to ascertain that which things seemingly unlike have in common, or are alike in.”

The naturalist has proceeded on these lines. In establishing, for instance, the cardinal point of contact between a huge elephant and the wee little mouse, the domain of natural philosophy was immensely enlarged, and no slight insight was gained into the scheme of Nature.

And the naturalist has pursued this line further. He has not rested content with the examination only of the large types; after taking up such large formations as the elephant, the rhinoceros, the giraffe, etc., he turned his attention to the minute insect; and rich is the store of information thereby garnered.

The interrelation of animal life thus ascertained has been invaluable in the comprehension of life and evolution. I wish in this study of Anarchism to proceed upon the same lines. My investigation, so far, was confined to such huge formations as the Republican Party, the Democratic Party, the Capitalist Reformers, together with their Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant clerical varieties. These are all like elephants, rhinoceroses, giraffes, etc., in the sociologic menagerie of Anarchism. I now want to descend to the insect world of the same family. It will materially help to round up our information.

There is in the political domain of this country an insect known as

“Kangaroo Social Democracy.”⁸ (Laughter and applause.) Let us take a pin; let us stick that pin into that insect; let us hold it up and examine it. We shall find a striking connection between it and the elephant-like, rhinoceros-like, giraffe-like Anarchist creatures we have been sticking the scalpel into. (Applause.)

You will—all of you who are at all informed—agree with me that the golden dream of the Kangaroo Social Democracy is to capture the Socialist Labor Party. The mere existence; the posture; the activity; the high grade vitality; the mental, moral, and physical fibre of the Socialist Labor Party have been a veritable nightmare to the Kangaroo Social Democracy, to such a point that the Socialist Labor Party actually deprives the insect of all equipoise. The Kangaroo Social Democracy wishes fervently to capture, and, if it cannot do that, to kill the Socialist Labor Party.

With this end in view, what is the plan of campaign that the insect has adopted and pursues? Has it been to work upon and win over the Socialist Labor Party membership, or kill off THEM? No! All of you, approximately informed upon the subject, will agree that the plan the insect adopted and pursues was, which?—to kill off the Editor of *The People*! (Laughter and applause). Look at what passes for “literature” in their camp, and is issued as such by them; look at the word of mouth “agitation” they carry on. There is no capitalist class to be fought, no wage-slavery to be overthrown; there is only one “wicked man” to be killed off,—the Editor of *The People*. (Laughter.)

Whatever calumny could do, whatever chicanery could do, whatever backbiting could do, whatever malicious forgery could do, the insect has resorted to, with the view to kill off that one man, to whom it attributes headship in the Socialist Labor Party. In other words: the Kangaroo Social Democracy has acted obedient to the same notion that guided the Ehuds of old, and that guides the Czolgoszes and Lows of to-day, to wit, the Anarchist notion that by killing off an officer supposed to be clothed with headship, his

⁸ The reference is to an element originally within the SLP that tried to depose the party’s duly elected national officers by unconstitutional means. That effort, which culminated in the unsuccessful “midnight raid” on the party’s national and editorial offices, failed. The disgruntled element then left the SLP to start a new organization of their own. De Leon compared their actions to those of the “kangaroo courts” of the Civil War era, which would “jump town” when their lack of authority under the law became known to the local population; hence the appellation, “Kangaroo Social Democracy.”

organization is killed along with him, or falls a helpless booty into the hands of his slayer. (Applause.) In other words, the Anarchist tactics of the Kangaroo Social Democracy betray its Anarchist conception of organization, and brand it Anarchist. (Applause.)

The Socialist Labor Party is an organization of the Twentieth Century, and of Twentieth Century conditions. No man makes the Socialist Labor Party. (Applause.) It is the Socialist Labor Party that makes its men. And the truth hereof is exemplified at every turn by the shipwreck that attends every Anarchist attempt upon the sane, broad, practical and unflinching democracy of the Socialist Labor Party. (Applause.) Its officers have not dropped down into their positions from the sky. They are a product of the organization. (Applause.) Vain, because Anarchistic, is the imagining of whomsoever, who, aiming at capturing or killing off the organization, merely aims at capturing or killing off its officers. He who aims at capturing or killing off the Socialist Labor Party must address himself to the task of capturing or killing off the Socialist Labor Party itself. (Loud applause and cheers.)

Now, if you have followed me so far, looking from one end to the other end of the gamut,—from the basso profundo of the Democratic Party and the Republican Party up to the Catholic Hierarchy and the Jewish and Protestant pulpits, till you finally reach the penny-whistle treble of the Social Democracy,—you find written over all their faces, as clear as it is possible for a man to see who has eyes to see—ANARCHISM. (Loud applause.) Anarchism backward; Anarchism forward.

The difference between these and the outspoken Anarchists—in that the former imagine conditions can be changed by the mere capturing of governments, while the latter hold that conditions can be changed by the mere decapitations of governments—is a difference, not of kind, but of variety. They both belong to the same species, the mark of which is that conception of government—correct at one time, rendered less so from social cycle to social cycle, until to-day it is preposterous—that consists in holding that government is something outside, separate and apart from, the people. (Applause.)

Now, against that conception the Socialist Labor Party stands out alone in the United States. It says, to-day, at the present stage of civilization, there is no reform worth speaking possible by simply monkeying with the

government. You must educate the masses first. (Applause.) You cannot move faster than the masses move with you in this Twentieth Century. Aye, even in Russia the masses have a good deal to say. In some countries they are active forces, in other countries passive forces; but forces, social forces, they have become all the same.

Consequently the Socialist Labor Party cannot preach in one place a doctrine that it denies in another place; it cannot preach a doctrine in one place that is based upon one theory, and in another preach the same doctrine, backing it up by another theory; in other words, it cannot play the role of a double-faced siren, and indulge in the practices that one and all of the organizations—clerical and lay—which I have mentioned indulge in. You must take the individual and revolutionize him. The revolutionizing of the individual develops the necessary head which society requires to progress.

I think it was from this very platform that, a few years ago, in an address entitled *Reform or Revolution*, I treated this matter in detail.⁹ To run rapidly over the principles there laid down, they were as follows:

Under the social system where the tool of production is so small that every single man can operate it himself, he, under that social system, owns his tool, and, along with that, owns the product of his toil. If he started without implements of labor, he could easily acquire them. He was the architect of his own fortune.

Production at that stage had not a few satisfactory features; it had, however, a very unsatisfactory one. The individual producer could not produce enough to free him from that animal condition of having to grub for his material sustenance all his life. Man aspires to freedom from the necessity of worrying as to how he will live, or whether he will enjoy shelter. Man's ambition is to be free from that; and the potentiality of his freedom in that direction increases in even step with the perfection of the implements of labor.

Hand in hand with this development goes another. The more perfect the tool of production becomes, the more are men compelled to co-operate in production. I am almost tempted to have that blackboard brought forward to prove the point. It is a point almost subject to mathematical demonstration.

⁹ *Reform or Revolution* was delivered at Wells' Memorial Hall, but *Socialism Versus Anarchism* was delivered at the Paine Memorial Bldg. Both halls were in Boston.

Co-operation is the top-notch flower of improved machinery. Co-operation brings about a multiplication of the fruitfulness of labor many times more than the amount the individual could raise. If ten men produce a certain quantity individually, under the co-operative labor superinduced by the modern perfected machine they would produce, not ten times as much, but a hundred times more.

However free man may be, there are things he cannot rise above. He cannot rise above material evolution. He would like to fly to San Francisco to reach a sick friend's bedside, but he is compelled to submit to his physical inability to go any faster than inventive science makes it possible.¹⁰ Man is **compelled** to co-operate, so that the productivity of labor shall be so large that he can enjoy leisure and develop himself intellectually.

Old-time farming, individual farming, in Massachusetts was self-supporting after a style. The father plowed, and carpentered, and built the shanty, the mother and the daughter spun, and the boys as they grew up helped the father, unless they became peddlers like Huntington and grew rich by the merchant's process of selling both purchaser and goods. So long as they remained at home they could do the work among themselves.

The individualistic farmer was self-supporting, and consequently was exposed to all the evils that beset the beasts of the jungle. Those farmers alternated between a feast and a fast; in cases of drought or a failure in the crops, they had to suffer prolonged hunger. The work of these people was arduous and continuous, there was little time for educational development.

The histories of New England people, as written by Massachusetts writers themselves, picture the old-time intellectual expansion at a very low level. The songs they sang, the kind of music they performed, etc., etc., are all very suggestive. I suggest that literature to you for your edification. It was a low level of intellectuality, of course above a certain minimum. It told at all points of arduous, culture-nipping toil.

That changed by degrees with the introduction of the perfected machine, together with the increased productivity of co-operative labor that the improved system of production forced upon the people. The final aspect which the change brought on is that, to-day, no one man in the United States is any

¹⁰ This was two years before the Wright Brothers' first light at Kitty Hawk, N.C., in December 1903.

longer independent of all others. To-day, no one city, county, or state is any longer independent of any other city, county, or state.

The Massachusetts weavers could not work if the miners in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and as far west as Kansas, did not dig for coal; and the miners of Pennsylvania, Indiana, Ohio, and Kansas, could not work if the farmers did not produce grain; and the farmers could not do their work if the shoemakers of Massachusetts and other industrial centers did not furnish them with shoes; and none of them could exist if the great railroads of the country did not transport their products. To-day there is absolute co-operation.

Now, under such a system of production there must be a central directing authority, a government. As Marx puts it, a single violinist can be his own director. He raps himself to order, he puts his violin to his shoulder and sets his music to suit himself; he plays fast or slow, loud or otherwise, and stops whenever it suits him; but if you want an orchestra, if you want have that combination of tones that comes from co-operation and an even assortment of musical instruments; if you want the blending of the bass drum, the cornet, the cymbal and the flute with those of the violincello, then you must have an orchestra director. If you have not got a director, you may have a Louisiana Negro break-down, or something of that sort, but you cannot have musical harmony.

Likewise in this productive system of to-day. It is a large orchestra of production. In order to conduct this productive orchestra there must be a central directing authority. Under such social conditions, the central directing authority, the government, is like the skin on a man's body.

The thought occurs to me that it is not only the capitalist politicians, professors, and pulpiteers who are Anarchists. The quack advertisers also come under that category, intellectually. You may have noticed the advertisement of quack doctors, advising, for instance, the use of John Jones' Skin Ointment: "it will give you a beautiful complexion and remove all pimples."

True, it may remove the pimples from a certain spot of the body; but below the skin, it is as foul as ever and productive of fresh pimples. It is absurd to say that you can remove impurities in that way; and it is just as absurd to imagine that you can remove the modern ills that afflict a people by

either changing merely its government or decapitating the government altogether.

The nerves and muscles and veins and bones, of which this modern orchestra of production is made up, are aching, and the disease manifests itself in the ugly pimples that crop up on the surface of the skin—the capitalist governments, that reflect the conditions of society. The social nerves, muscles, veins and bones, do not ache because they do not produce enough. They ache because they are drained of the wealth they produce. They ache because all the advantages of their co-operative labor flow, not to them, but to a social abscess that has shaped itself within the body social. That social abscess is the **capitalist class**. They ache because not only are the advantages that flow from co-operative labor turned away from, but because these advantages are turned against them, straining them to the point of breeding nauseous impurities.

The mere change, or the mere abolition of the governmental pimple can, obviously, bring no improvement, whatever else it may do. False pretenses will not stand. Purity, no more than freedom, can come to a people from the outside. As those who would be free must themselves strike the blow, so must that social lever named “government,” to be used to establish freedom and purity, evolve from within.

People who have the Anarchist conception of government have not yet learned the lesson that every boy has learned who has climbed up a tree, and watched the eggs hatch in the bird’s nest, and seen the wings and the feathers of the wings sprout out of the body itself, until the bird takes flight. That boy knows that wings could never stand the bird to fly with it fastened on from the outside. They must grow from within. They must be a structural limb of the body. So, at all points, with “government.” (Applause.)

Consequently, to-day, arrayed against the whole clerical and lay Anarchistic conception of government, which, logically enough, produces such assassinations as the recent one in Buffalo, and to which such idiotic campaigns as the municipal campaign now on in New York are closely akin—arrayed against the whole pack stands the Socialist Labor Party. (Applause.) It says to the workingman: True enough, you must seek to capture the government, true enough you must aim at the overthrow of the present government, but not as either a finality or a starter. The overthrow of the

government you must aim at must be to the end of using the governmental power to perfect the revolution that must have preceded your conquest of the public powers. (Applause.) The initial revolution must be accomplished in your minds. You must have divorced yourselves from the habits of thought that have been used to your enslavement; you must have come to an understanding that you are the sole producers of all wealth. (Applause.) You must have been able to draw the logical conclusion that the capitalist class is a parasite on your backs. (Applause.) You must have raised yourselves to appreciate your high mission in the evolution of society, in that only the economic program of your class is able to abolish the slavery of the race. (Loud applause.) You must, in consequence, have first learned what use to make of the government, when gotten, to wit, to use it as a social lever with which to establish the Socialist Republic and install the government that our needs require and that civilization needs.¹¹

Accordingly, the Socialist Labor Party says not to the workingmen: Vote the Socialist Labor Party ticket. It explains to them why they should vote that ticket, and it adds: If you do not yet understand why, then, for heaven's sake, cast not your votes with us, because, when elected, the Socialist Labor Party, the government you shall have chosen, must, in order to be effective, be something, not outside, not separate and apart from you; it must be flesh of your flesh and bone of your bone; it must have **men** at its back. (Prolonged applause.)

There is a providential dispensation in what is going on. The question is often put in these days, whether perhaps this Czolgosz affair might not cause the vote of the Socialist Labor Party to go down. What of it? What would be the meaning of the vote's going down? It would simply mean that the men who leave the Party at this election, voted for it at the last election when they were not fit for the ranks of the Socialist Labor Party. (Applause.) It would mean that in that part of the structure for the emancipation of our people

¹¹ This was four years before De Leon had worked out the Socialist Industrial Union program. In his 1905 address on *The Preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World*, De Leon stated that if Socialist candidates triumphed at the polls their only task would be "to adjourn themselves, sine die." "Their work would be done by disbanding" the political state, he added, and socialism would be established by the Socialist Industrial Union, which would replace the state. De Leon's 1905 address is now published as *Socialist Reconstruction of Society*.

which the Socialist Labor Party is rearing, the ground had sagged. It would mean that the ground would have to be pounded harder to make a more solid foundation.

Yet all these things that happen are like sponges which the providential surgeon puts to the body to absorb the pus and all impurities that do not belong there. (Applause.) If the shot of Czolgosz takes votes from us, these votes never belonged to us. (Applause.) If a freak political movement comes up, and if anybody thinks he can make a short cut towards Social Revolution, let him try it and find out. He will come back to us, if he is worth having. (Applause.) If the Democratic Party comes out with a plan to “smash the trust,” and numbers of our previous voters go away toward them, I say, “Wayward, brothers, go in peace.”

One thing, however, the whole gamut of the Anarchist organizations—clerical and lay—in the land cannot do, and that is to cause the banner of the Socialist Labor Party to be lowered one inch. (Loud and prolonged applause and cheers.) The Party will carry on its work of education despite anything that may happen. It carries on that work encouraged by the knowledge that it IS making progress. It carries it on encouraged by the knowledge that the Revolution is being perfected in the minds of hundreds and of thousands of men in the nation.

The Party carries on its work of education encouraged by the knowledge that some day, somehow, something is bound to rip. And then, at that crisis, when the people, who have allowed themselves to be misled from Mumbo Jumbo to Jumbo Mumbo, will be running around like chickens without a head, there will be one beacon light in the land burning as clear in that darkness as it is burning 'midst the clouds to-day; one beacon, whose steady light will serve as guide; whose tried firmness will inspire confidence; and whose rock-ribbed sides will serve as a natural point of rally from which to save civilization. (Prolonged cheers.)

In conclusion, let me place on record a cheering fact that may be gathered from amidst the present chaos of thought that the country is in. You have seen during the last two months all the forces of Anarchism combining the great powers they wield to the end of exploiting the Buffalo tragedy. Their instinct guided them correctly. All the warring factions of capitalist society, whatever label—clerical or lay—they wore, joined in one common assault on

the Socialist Labor Party. From Barnegat to Puget Sound they fanned the sparks of rowdyism in the land, and sought to incite the populace to deeds of violence against the Socialist Labor Party.

And yet, despite all the forces of this mighty onslaught, they failed. Here and there and yonder, breaches of the peace were perpetrated against the Party. But the instances were isolated; they were in no manner commensurate with the efforts put forth to bring them on.

What signifies this wondrous manifestation? Negative though its significance is, it discloses the cheering fact that a healthy undercurrent is animating our people; it discloses the cheering fact that the ruling forces of Anarchism do no longer command the unqualified confidence of the masses; it confirms the estimate that, as our America was the land in which the death-knell of Feudalism was struck, so it will be here that the death-knell of Capitalism will sound, and the birth chimes of the Socialist Republic will ring. (Prolonged cheers and applause.)

QUESTIONS

At the close of the address, the chairman of the meeting, Mr. James A. Bresnahan, opened the floor for questions, and passed the gavel to the speaker. The following questions were then put, and answered by the speaker:

Mr. Abraham Brownstein (Social Democrat): The speaker made a remark in one part of his lecture which, it seems to me, contradicts certain statements which he makes in another part of his lecture. In one part of his lecture the speaker remarked “that all those who do not quite understand the reason why they have to vote for the Socialist Labor Party ticket, for heaven’s sake, let them not vote for it.” Now I will ask him, what does the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance¹² mean by forcing upon its members to vote for the

¹² The Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance was organized in December 1895 and was endorsed by the SLP shortly thereafter. The ST&LA, which acknowledged the class struggle and openly adopted the goal of socialism, merged into the newly organized Industrial Workers of the World in 1905.

candidates of the Socialist Labor Party, and if not, they are compelled to be thrown out of their job ? Now supposing that a certain trade is organized in the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, and a certain person does not believe in the doctrines of the Socialist Labor Party; he is naturally, according to the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, thrown out of that labor union, or is compelled to vote the Socialist Labor Party ticket.

The Speaker: I stated that when we address people for the Socialist Labor Party we tell them: “If you are not ready to accept our positions, for heaven’s sake, don’t vote our ticket.” Now he says, isn’t this in contradiction to a certain position which he calls attention to, namely, his declaration that we compel people who are members of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance to vote our Socialist Labor Party ticket, or get out. I am delighted he has asked that question. It furnishes one more proof that whoever tries to assault the Socialist Labor Party position must begin by furnishing himself with convenient premises by making false statements. (Applause.)

The gentleman has quoted my words correctly, but he has falsified the Constitution of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. There is no truth in the premises he has set up that we compel people in the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance to vote the Socialist Labor Party ticket. The charge, as made by the gentleman, is stale. It has been made often before from the same source, and it has been as often demonstrated to be false.

The position of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance is plain. It is this: In view of the fact that the Labor Fakirs run the trade organizations for capitalist, and therefore corrupt, political purposes, have themselves elected and announced as “presidents” and “secretaries,” and then appear on the capitalist political platforms as leaders in their bodies; in view of the fact that they try to get office in these trade organizations for the purpose of appearing to the politicians as having the membership of the unions in their pockets;— in view of these well-known facts, the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance declares in its constitution that no officer (**officer**, mind you) of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance shall take any active part in any political party unless it is the Socialist Labor Party. (Great applause.) Hold on, I am not yet through with this chap. Mind you, the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance does not say even to the officers, “You must vote the Socialist Labor Party

ticket.” It does not even say to the officers, “You must be a member of the Socialist Labor Party.” Not at all! The pledge amounts to saying to them: “We shall not allow you to officiate as candle-bearers for capitalist political parties by trafficking upon the prestige of your position as an officer of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance.” We do not say that an officer must be active in politics for this, that, or the other party; we do not say that he shall be active for the Socialist Labor Party; but the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance does say that if he is at all active for any political party, then his activity must be for the Socialist Labor Party.

Now see the difference there is between saying to a man, “You shall not be an officer of this organization unless you pledge yourself that if you are at all active in any party that party must be the Socialist Labor Party,” and compelling him to vote the Socialist Labor Party ticket if he desires to become a member of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, as the gentleman has falsely charged. It will be a cold day when any Kangaroo will catch the Socialist Labor Party in a contradiction. (Great applause.)

Dr. Harriet Lothrop: How about the history of the Protestant Revolution helping to illustrate the subject of to-day’s address?

The Speaker: I am glad to be reminded of that. The Protestant Revolution had no chance of making headway until the guild-masters had succeeded very materially in stripping their apprentices of very many of their privileges, which prevailed under the Feudal System, and were safeguarded by the Roman Catholic Church. Each trade was formed into a guild, and every guild was under the guild-master, who took apprentices. These apprentices were treated as “gentlemen’s sons.” They learned the master’s trade; they ate at his table, they enjoyed with him all the holidays of the Roman Catholic Church, of which there are fully one hundred a year; not infrequently, they wound up by marrying the master’s daughters.

Under that system the guild-master could not exploit his apprentices. Capitalism had no show. He began by chopping off their privileges, one after the other, until the apprentice sank to the level of a menial, and was relegated to the cook. In Dickens’ *Barnaby Rudge* you will get a fair picture of this stage in the apprentice system. In the popular ballads of the period the

apprentices complained that formerly they used to eat turkey, whereas now they never tasted the bird; that whereas formerly they were given “wine to drink, they had now to drink bilge-water.”

The gild-master having thus squeezed the apprentices down—both in starving them and in knocking more work out of them by taking away from them one holy-day after the other—grew wealthier. He was the capitalist in embryo. Before that, and during the early stages of this development, there were numerous “uprisings” against the “Red Harlot,” as the Protestants styled the Roman Catholic Church. But these uprisings, on the Continent and in England, all came to naught, bloodily so. It was not until the gild-masters had made sufficient progress on the lines of exploiting their apprentices, and had taken away almost all the Roman Catholic festivals from them; it was not until the point was reached when the gild-masters’ interests were, accordingly, arrayed against the interests of the Roman Catholic Hierarchy;—it was not until then that there was an economic, material foundation for the alleged religious movement named “Protestantism.”

The gild-masters were, of course, Protestants. A revolution had been accomplished in the ranks of the people. And thereupon Protestantism won out. The connecting point between this subject and the subject of this afternoon’s address is that the Anarchists on the theological field, especially the professional Atheists, imagine religions, meaning creeds, can be set up, changed or overthrown by cashiering parsons, priests, or rabbis. They have failed to learn the lesson taught by Socialism upon the relation there is between society and “government,” and learned by Socialism from the histories of creeds, the Protestant creed among the latest.

Another, perhaps still more comprehensive. illustration may be quoted. It is furnished by the Jews. The greatest prayer the Jews have, and the most remarkable prayer, at that, is not a prayer directed from man to God. It is a prayer directed from man to man. In that prayer they say: “Hear, oh Israel,” do not do this bad thing or that bad thing; do this and that good thing, etc. To what end? To the end that they may soon go to heaven? Oh, no! To the end that they may live long on this earth. And no wonder; that prayer, when originally gotten up, had a broad economic foundation.

At that time the Mosaic laws controlled, and under that system there was to be every five years a Jubilee; there were other larger Jubilees, and there

was to be every fifty years a Grand Jubilee. At that Grand Jubilee there was to be a complete readjustment of property. These Jubilees were a sort of vast and comprehensive bankruptcy law. Under that system there was a guarantee against perpetual and hereditary want. Accordingly, the Jewish people did not pray that they might die and go to heaven. In that prayer of theirs they admonished one another to behave well in order that they might live long.

But when, despite all the Jubilees, the Roman Legions came along, and mowed down men, gathered in all the wealth they produced, and carried it back with them to Rome; when that Roman patrician class turned the world into a Valley of Tears, then people turned their eyes towards heaven as an asylum. With that changed social order, a changed order of prayers arose; then the “Lord’s Prayer” made its appearance; then sprang up a new creed, the Roman Catholic creed, adapted to then existing social conditions. (Great applause.)¹³

Ferdinand Lassalle, a thinker of deep penetration, indicates that the Roman Catholic Curia itself is well aware of the historic foundation of its creed. In a magnificent passage of his great drama, entitled *Franz von Sickingen*, he introduces a dialogue between two dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Curia, one of whom, a Cardinal legate, observes that the danger lay, not in Luther, but in Erasmus and Reuchlin, who were awakening in the people a taste for a paradise on earth. He understood that the danger lay in economic conditions, backed by teachings, that should induce man to pray to God to keep him as long as possible away from heaven, so that he might enjoy the certain pleasures of a terrestrial paradise. (Applause and laughter.)¹⁴

Mr. Rizmann (Social Democrat): My question is that upon the theory that has been expressed this afternoon, that by killing the head of an organization it does not say that the organization itself is killed. Yet in the ancient history which we have heard to-day it is entirely different (laughter), and then the

¹³ This point is developed in Gustav Bang’s *Crises in European History*.

¹⁴ In Lassalle’s drama, the cardinal complains of the “spirit of the now and here on earth,” of the inspiration of a nobler humanity in the breasts of those who had been satisfied with a promise of the hereafter. He warns that humanism and science were raising an “evangel of man”; that is, concern for what happens on earth and for improvement of the human condition. (See Appendix.)

conclusion leads to that. (Laughter.) The speaker has mentioned that when you kill the Editor of the Socialist Labor Party paper, thereby you have also killed the Socialist Labor Party, because— (Laughter, and cries of “Sit down.”) I understood that the speaker said, that by killing the Editor of the Socialist Labor paper in some way, you may just as well kill the Socialist Labor Party. (Several voices: “Sit down.” Laughter.) I understood that the speaker said that. I wanted the speaker to explain how he contradicts himself in that by saying that to-day to kill the president of an organization does not affect the organization, and yet at the same time he mentions that by killing the Editor of the Socialist Labor paper you kill the Socialist Labor Party. (Laughter.)

The Speaker: Every man or woman present, who heard me say what this man says I said, let him raise his right hand. (No hand was raised.) Now all those who know that he is falsely stating what I said, please raise your hands. (Practically all the hands were raised.) This question also illustrates what kind of people rise up, with malice marked on their faces, against the Socialist Labor Party. One of them misquotes a printed statement, another has the impudence to declare, in your very presence, that I said things here which are just the reverse of what I did say. Your question has been answered by the audience. You will take your seat, sir. (Applause.)

Mr. Fred J. Boyle: The attitude of the Socialist Labor Party is well known on the armory question. Now, if a member of the Socialist Labor Party were elected to the city council of a city, and the question should come up of making an appropriation of \$15,000 for the police, what would be the attitude of the Socialist Labor Party on that question?

The Speaker: I do not know whether all of you are fully informed on what, no doubt, is back of this question. Let me, therefore, state what I consider the source of this gentleman’s question before I answer it.

In Haverhill, a man by the name of James Carey, a Social Democrat (Laughter. Applause from one person)—that solitary hand-clap is a good illustration of the popularity of Mr. Carey outside of a Democratic Party crowd. (Laughter and applause.) Now then, the person who has the intense

admiration of that lone man in this hall, voted for a \$15,000 appropriation for an armory in the city of Haverhill. Thereupon the Socialist Labor Party pitchforked him, and has never let up.

He first “explained,” saying that unless he voted as he did he would have been punished by the state laws;—that was shown to be false,

Then he “explained,” saying that, if he had not done as he did, the city of Haverhill would have been liable to a fine;—that false pretence was also knocked down.

Then he “explained,” saying that it was necessary that the appropriation should be made as a sanitary measure, for the old armory, he said, was in an unsanitary condition;—that crook’s “explanation” was also knocked down by showing that if the bullets that killed workingmen on strike were sanitary bullets, they were not any less deadly, and in the capitalist’s interest, than the unsanitary ones. (Laughter.)

Thereupon that paragon of duplicity and treason to the workers, after several other contortions, resorted to this, his latest “explanation:” “Look,” said he, “at the Social Democracy in Germany; see how the Social Democracy in Germany votes for appropriations for the sanitation of the German Army, and shall not I, a genuine Social Democrat, vote for appropriations for the sanitation of an American armory?” (Laughter.)

In other words, he dared no longer to lie; he now started to insinuate a lie. The lie here insinuated is that there is any point of comparison between the German Army and the American militia,—between the American militia, made up of young whipper-snappers, mostly sons of capitalists, who go into it for fun and for the purpose of killing strikers when they turn out, and a body like the German Army, which every man is compelled to join, and the majority of whom are workingmen. In the latter case the men are supported by that Army; they are taken from their trades and occupations and homes for three or four years, and of course it is necessary that the barracks in which they live shall be kept in a sanitary condition. But here, especially with the militia, it is quite different. Here we have a lot of youngsters who go into the militia, not because they are compelled to; the regiment does not give them a penny; it costs them money to keep it up, or keep themselves in it. There is no comparison between the two. Of course, we cannot favor appropriations for such purposes as that. (Applause.)

Now, by the light of this explanation, we can approach the question of appropriations for police. Nine-tenths of the policeman's work consists in protecting the property in the hands of those who have it—that is, the capitalist class, the robber class. That robber class has its property, not by reason of its having worked for it, but by reason of its holding the instruments of production, which enable it to sponge up the wealth produced by the workingman.

But the policemen have other duties besides protecting the capitalist class in the possession of its stolen property. They have to stand on the streets, and prevent blockades, and answer questions, and similar duties. The policeman there exercises a social function that large aggregations of people render necessary. In Boston, I suppose there are certain streets where policemen have to be placed in order to prevent blockades and to make passing safe.

In New York there are many such streets. For instance, in the neighborhood of City Hall in New York there are three or four streets on which two policemen must be stationed on both sides of the street. Those thoroughfares are crowded with numerous trolley lines and other vehicles of traffic. People would be killed right along if policemen were not stationed there all the time, to give the signal to vehicles when to stop or when to proceed, and protect foot-passengers. That is a social function. The whole of New York is represented there by that work.

Now, the question is, What would the Socialist in office do under those circumstances in matters of appropriations? I should say that, under those circumstances, the Socialist would look carefully into all the circumstances and see what the money is to be expended for. If the appropriation is demanded in order to put that policeman in proper woolen clothing during cold weather and proper thin clothing during warm, in order that he may be protected properly from the weather while fulfilling that useful social function, then I should say it would be the bounden duty of all Socialists to vote for such an appropriation.

If, however, the appropriation is demanded for the purpose of furnishing the police with a certain kind of brass buttons for their coats, those brass buttons to be bought of a certain patentee, the wife of a certain gentleman, who is a factotum of a Republican leader (this actually happened recently in

New York), then the Socialist Labor Party would vote NO. (Applause.)

Again, if the appropriation is to give the policemen night billies or “riot” billies—that is to say, to arm them against workingmen on strike—then it would be the duty of the Socialist Labor Party to vote NO, and NO forevermore. (Applause.)

Mr. A.H. Simpson (Anarchist): I would like to ask the speaker whether there are not high Anarchist authorities who would agree with the speaker that government is an outgrowth of conditions, and that education would be a means of extirpating that form of government? And I would like to ask the question, if he will not favor us with two definitions, one socialistic and one anarchistic?

The Speaker: The last part of the question shows to me that the gentleman has missed all I said about “government” as understood by Socialism. I certainly shall not attempt to give a coherent definition of what Anarchists understand under “government.” Their own utterances on the subject are too incoherent for that. They run all the way from the Ben Tucker¹⁵ notion of a chairman with autocratic powers, and from whose decision there is no appeal, to the vagaries and mysticisms of a headless body. (Laughter and applause.)

Mr. W.H. Carroll: I have here a copy of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. I would like to ask the speaker to read the portion which shows that it is false to claim one must vote for the Socialist Labor Party to be a member of the Alliance.

The Speaker: The passage in question is found in Section 3 or Article 10 of the Constitution of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance of the United States and Canada. It is as follows (reading):

Every general officer, every member of the General Executive Board, every officer of an affiliated organization, and every delegate to a national trade alliance, a district alliance, or convention of the Socialist Trade and Labor

¹⁵ Benjamin R. Tucker (1854–1939) was a “Yankee anarchist” and pacifist.

Alliance, shall, upon entering his functions, take the following pledge, which shall be read to him and subscribed by him:

“I regard it as a sacred duty of every laboring man, and especially of anyone who is trusted by his fellow wage-workers with a mission or position in the class struggle, to sever his affiliation, direct or indirect, with political parties of the capitalist class. I solemnly pledge my word and honor that I shall obey the constitution, rules and regulations of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance of the United States and Canada, and that, keeping always in view its fundamental principles and final aims, I shall to the best of my ability perform the task assigned to me.”

Mr. Abraham Brownstein (Social Democrat): I want to ask another—

The Speaker (rapping to order): You will take your seat, sir. I refuse you the floor. You have abused the courtesy of the floor when it was extended to you as the first questioner, by endeavoring to insinuate into the minds of this audience a false notion with regard to the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance Constitution. That was a discourtesy to this audience. (Applause.) It may not be the least of the tasks before the Socialist Labor Party to teach such as you the elemental principles of propriety in public assemblages. You will take your seat, sir. (Loud applause.)

Mr. John F. Coyle: Did not George D. Herron preside at a meeting in New York at which the Russian Anarchist Prince Kropotkin spoke?

The Speaker: I don't know. So many things happen with the Rev. Social Democrat Herron. (Laughter.) He has been flitting around, here, there and everywhere. He posed as a great hero, ready to suffer martyrdom, when the heroism consisted in dropping a poor wife, and the martyrdom consisted in taking up a rich one. Now that, owing to the use the capitalists are making of the Czolgosz incident, the Socialists are called upon to show their mettle, the Rev. hero is off to Egypt to inspect mummies. I don't know whether he presided at that Anarchist meeting in New York. But I know this about the Social Democrats in New York: In that city there was a notorious Anarchist, Justus Schwab by name, a flannel-mouthed ranter. He died early this year. Social Democrats were foremost among those who did him honor. The funeral

orator was a Social Democrat, one Alexander Jonas, who is on the staff of the German Social Democratic organ, the *Volkszeitung*. In the course of that funeral oration the Social Democrat Jonas eulogized the Anarchist Schwab, and apostrophized him: “Thou art a hero.”¹⁶

Mr. A.H. Simpson (Anarchist): Can you tell us when you ever heard Schwab make a speech? To my personal knowledge Schwab has been too weak to speak for the past five years, and has been a physical wreck. Now I ask you where you have heard him make a speech. He has been for five years too weak even to be heard in conversation.

The Speaker: To your “personal knowledge,” eh? Well, you are mistaken when you say Schwab had been for five years too weak to be heard even in conversation. During the months of January to June, 1899—that is not five years ago—Schwab was one of the leading shouters during the series of protracted sessions that took place in the *Volkszeitung* Corporation meetings, when the Schwab crew, mostly now Kangaroo Social Democrats, were trying to dictate to the Socialist Labor Party what policy it should adopt and how to conduct its own paper. I was present at those meetings. Spoke there. Had to speak in German. That was quite enough of a task upon my jaws. Now then, your Schwab, who you say was too weak to be heard in conversation for the past five years, made my task harder by constant interruptions and shouting at me. His voice was so far from being a “whisper” that I was constrained to turn on him at last, and, addressing him as a “Lager Beer Anarchist,” bid him keep order. (Laughter and applause.)

Mr. Frank B. Jordan: I would like to ask if it is an utter impossibility that there should be two Socialist parties in one nation.

¹⁶ The exact language used was: “When a learned man dies, whose significance escapes the masses, but who greatly benefited the world, then it may happen to be necessary to call attention to his merits. That, however, is not the case at the bier of Justus Schwab. Every one in New York, aye, everyone in the whole United States, knew him, knew who Justus Schwab was. Despite the vilifications and the slanders of the capitalist press, the picture of Justus Schwab penetrated through, and it stands, to-day, illumined as that of a hero of Freedom.”—*New Yorker Volkszeitung*, December 21, 1900.

The Speaker: Your question is too broad. It is not an impossibility in a country like France, where there is no such thing as a national election in our sense. For instance. In Lille there may be an election, and one in Nantes. But the candidates set up in Nantes are never voted for in Lille, and vice versa. Thus there may be a Socialist party in one place, and another Socialist party in another, wholly disconnected from each other's organization. The same thing holds good in Germany, Spain, etc. In none of those countries is ever a candidate run with the whole country as a constituency.

But that is not so in the United States. In the United States if there are two Socialist parties they would come into conflict necessarily every four years, at every presidential election. My answer therefore is that, in the abstract, it is possible in countries where there is no national constituency; it is not here in the United States. I shall go further, however, and say there are not in the United States two Socialist parties; there is but one—the Socialist Labor Party. (Applause.)

A Voice (no name): There are several people who are asking about the Socialist Labor Party as to just what it means, and they ask if the Socialist Labor Party works on the first command of God: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

The Speaker: I do not know just what this gentleman is trying to get at. If he means whether the Socialist Labor Party works on the principle of common politeness between man and man, and aims at the betterment of the race, that goes without saying. For the rest, the Socialist Labor Party has its feet planted upon the earth; its feet are not in the clouds, with its head down in the dirt. (Laughter and applause.)

Mr. A.H. Simpson (Anarchist): I would like just to put a question, in fairness, in answer to the gentleman. The socialistic theory is that the means of production, the instruments of production, should be in the hands of the people. Otherwise it is impossible to prevent exploitation of the people. Now I want to know if that is not precisely the Anarchistic doctrine as taught by Kropotkin, Reclus, and Malatesta? I mention them because these three Anarchists have preached that exact doctrine. I wish to know whether you do

not think that Kropotkin, Reclus and Malatesta teach those doctrines as absolutely as you and Marx do? In other words, I want to know if the difference between you and them is not the difference of political wire-pulling, and not, of principle? I wish to have you answer that question for the benefit of some Anarchists who are present—whether the communism of Karl Marx is not laid out in Kropotkin and other Anarchists? And we are under the impression that it is.

The Speaker: The question is this: Do not the theories of Reclus, Malatesta and Kropotkin embody the economics and doctrines of Socialism? And, further, whether the difference is not rather one of tactics—I would rather call it “tactics” than “wire-pulling.” My answer is: It is quite likely, nay, it is a fact, that Anarchists quite frequently crib Socialism; but in the same breath they fly off the handle with theories that positively fly in the face of the Socialist theories they had just proclaimed. In that they illustrate the felicitousness of the name they have given themselves; they bring themselves within the dictionary meaning of Anarchy—disorder.

As to Elisee Reclus, no one who knows what he is talking about will charge him with being a responsible man on economics or sociology. Reclus was a lovely character and an eminent geographer.

As to Malatesta, the least said of him the better.

And now, as to Kropotkin. He was recently in New York; delivered an address there. The *Daily People* had an article on the subject. The article placed two passages from that speech—one a Socialist, the other an Anarchist—in juxtaposition.¹⁷ The two passages were at fisticuffs. The Anarchist lacks the sense of synthesis.

Sticking to Reclus and Kropotkin, whether or not they desired to abolish exploitation of the people cuts no figure in determining the quality of Anarchy. When Caesar was assassinated, it was done to the tune of “Freedom,” and to the tune of “Freedom” did the avengers of Caesar slay his slayers.

Forty years ago, I venture to say it would have been hard to find anywhere north of Mason and Dixon’s line a Republican ready to do justice to

¹⁷ The article referred to is the *Daily People* editorial for April 2, 1901, entitled “Troinkapism.” (See Appendix.)

Jefferson Davis' abstract sincerity. Jefferson Davis wanted freedom. Lincoln wanted freedom. To-day Davis stands vindicated on the score of his sincerity. But the freedom Davis wanted was a very different thing from the freedom that Lincoln wanted. The difference was brought out, not by talking for "freedom," or talking of "what is freedom," but by dealing with the question of **how to bring that freedom about**. The method to bring about the freedom which Davis wanted could not bring about the freedom that Lincoln's party was after. Consequently, it made no difference what name Davis, however sincere, gave to the freedom he was after. It was put down.

Likewise with all those people—the Recluses and Kropotkins included—who talk about "freeing the people," "improving the people's condition," etc., and who seek to establish the point of contact between the concrete propositions of Anarchists and those of Socialism, on the ground that "both want the same ultimate end." That conclusion is an assumption. The historic instances just quoted prove it.

Who would not wish for human happiness? The question is not whether they are one as to ultimate wishes. The question is **HOW** do they propose to realize their wishes?

Take two trees—a pear tree and a crab-apple tree. Plant them two yards from each other. They both draw up nourishment from the same soil; they both live in the same sun; they both breathe in the same air; the same wind blows upon both; and yet upon the one tree you will see growing a splendid Bartlett pear, and upon the other you will find crab-apples. What is it that produces such a vast difference in the fruits that have drawn identical sustenance? It is the structural make-up of the two trees; their organizations.

The crab-apple tree produces a crab-apple, the pear tree can never produce a crab-apple; he who wants a pear will not put up with the lingo of the crab-apple. (Applause and laughter.) So it is with the structural composition of Anarchism and Socialism. Whatever the Anarchists' language may be on the "exploitation of the people," what determines the fruit of their tree is the structure of Anarchy, its conception of society. Now the fruit evolved, or strained, through that structure, is not the fruit that Socialism is after. We do not want it. (Applause.)

Indeed, we do not want it. And that we are right in not wanting it is not merely a theoretic inference of the reasoning I just presented. That we are

right in not wanting it may be judged from the difference of the attitude of Capitalism toward Anarchism and toward Socialism. Has anyone ever heard of the Capitalist class cultivating Socialism? No! For Socialism they have the correct historic instinct that it will be their death.

But how about Anarchism? The *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*, a capitalist paper of European experience, gave away the secret when it advised the Capitalist State to “cultivate the Anarchist larvae as a means of destroying Socialism”¹⁸ Capitalism may at times be incommoded by Anarchy, annoyed, irritated by it, like a restive broncho may irritate its master; but Capitalism knows its rule has nothing to fear from Anarchy, that the axe that will behead the Tyrant Capitalism is held in the powerful grasp of Socialism. (Great applause and cheers.)

¹⁸ The following is a faithful rendition in English of the language of the *Illinois Staats-Zeitung*: “We have always been of the opinion that it takes the devil to drive out Beelzebub with, that Socialism must be fought with Anarchy. The same as the corn louse and similar insects are driven out by setting against them other insects, that devour them and their eggs, so should the State cultivate and rear Anarchists in the principal nests of Socialism, and leave to the Anarchists the work of destroying Socialists. The Anarchists will do the work more effectively than either police or district attorneys.”

Appendix

FROM *FRANZ VON SICKENGEN*

The passage from Ferdinand Lassalle's Franz von Sickingen to which De Leon refers¹⁹ is as follows:

Cardinal. Do I deny it? Yet's *Luther* not the name!
Its source I spy in quite another spring.
The foe at our very breast lies nestled,
And we, th' Italian Princes of the Church,
We nourish it with our very blood.
Accursed be the Danite gift that us
The Moslem gave! When with the city's fall,
The city of Constantine, the fleeing Greeks
Arrived, transplanting, 'mong us spreading
The ruins of their Arts and Sciences—
That was the evil's start! With baneful fascination seized,
Upon its neck hung, God-intoxicated,
The Bembos, Medicis, the flow'r of all Italy;
The serpent young they suckled into strength;
And from th' eternal laws, with beauty's lines
Instinct, there flowed a sense of *Now* and *Here on Earth*. Of
A nobler mankind vague forebodings streamed
Into the breasts of the believers in *Hereafter*,
At first our handmaid, all the surer us to trick.
From Raphael's Madonnas there peers forth
Old heathendom's superb-divine grimace;
And swellingly a dispensation new
Is preached by Titian's flesh-tints! Out to all
The peoples went the impulse by us given—
In you its sanction finding. Reuchlin's struggles

¹⁹ See page 29, above.

Revealed at last the impulse new that moved the world.
Around you look! Say, who, of Luther, are the props ?
Was't among the friars' ranks this friar's quarrel
Its first breath drew, or found its first support?
The Huttens, Crotuses, Erasmus and Reuchlin—
'Tis they who greet it with a clam'rous joy.
The *Humanists* this great league styles itself,
By its own name its secret letting out.
A new *Evangel of Mankind*—behold
The kernel hidden in this Proteus that
Belligerent itself against us flings,
With Luther but its first and quickly vanished slough!
And just the pressure of our own resistance
Promotes the sloughing process. Slough is cast off after slough;
It waxes in the transformation; and it stands
There in the fi'ry glow of its own light!
Across the world it cries: "*'Tis I!*" The hearts of men it seizes;
Writes *Here on Earth, Fruition* on its banner;
Tears down the heavens; wildly roars through space
And time, each newly spied-out law of Nature,
Each find concealed in musty history
Into a bolt together welding, hurling
Into the holiest of our creed, and raising
An *Evangel of Man* with resoluteness
Against that of the *Son of Man!*
It then grows hot! Our pinions droop; from us
The peoples then their faces turn away
Towards the newly conquered bride—Reality,
With ardor rushing in her luscious arms.
Before *Fruition's* ruddy sun the dim
Star of *Beyond* grows pale, it fades away, then
Draws nigh the night of our theology!

TROKINKAPISM

The term Anarchy conveys no definite idea to anyone. To a very limited extent it might, could or would convey the idea of physical force, in other words, the idea of a method, leaving the end that is to be attained wholly in doubt. Bomb-throwing, homicidal Anarchy, however, is too infinitesimal either to define the whole thing by, or even devote space to the variety. After the bomb-throwing element in Anarchy is eliminated, there still remains “Anarchy,”—a thing wholly undefinable. How undefinable, and why undefinable was illustrated last Sunday by the lecture of the “Anarchist celebrity,” Prince Krapotkin, at the Grand Central Palace. Among other things, Prince Potkrakin said:

“We have on all sides of us very beautiful cities, magnificent palaces, and specimens of architecture that have been created through the labor of the masses, yet they have no part in their enjoyment. One hundred years ago a lifetime was needed in which to amass even moderate wealth, but now human genius has made possible a system of production that permits the amassing of enormous fortunes in a startlingly short time.”

Is that Anarchy? No, indeed! That is but a page, or a sentiment borrowed from Socialist science. It is put above rather loosely; but still it is recognizable as sound Socialist fact and reasoning.

Labor, and not idleness, is the source of all wealth. Consequently, the Working Class, which alone produced all the wealth, is alone entitled to the whole of it. It follows, as the night does day, that it is a usurpation of right on the part of any idler, i.e., capitalist, to presume to say he or his whole set, justly owns such wealth; and it is an injustice that the producers are not the enjoyers.

Furthermore, thanks to the modern system of production, a fabulous amount of wealth is to-day producible by man with few hours of toil; consequently, the one-time reason or apology for popular poverty is removed. Freedom from physical want has become a possibility.

Both these principles, embodied in the passage quoted from Prince

Kinpotkra are Socialist premises. From them the Socialist draws the conclusions:

First, that essential condition to civilization,—the capacity to produce with little labor the necessary abundance of wealth to afford to all freedom from arduous toil for material existence—depends upon the modern tool of production;

Second, the feature of the modern tool of production is the compulsion it puts man under to co-operate on a gigantic scale in production;

Third, co-operation implies organization;

Fourth, organization implies order, discipline, in short, as Marx puts it, man's emancipation from the trammels of his individualism, and his development into the capabilities of his species; and

Fifth, the Socialist Republic is the highest reachable social ideal of the human race, to-day.

These are inevitable conclusions from the given premises. Different, however, are the conclusions of Prince Krakipot,—if one can at all use the term “conclusions” in regard to him. He denounces Socialism. While applauding the modern machine, he repudiates the inevitable results therefrom. In other words, he preaches for a sun that imparts no heat, a winter where frosts are unknown, a human being with wings to fly, a world without the law of gravitation to hold it together, and obedient to which man must adjust his actions. Such are the gentleman's views. No wonder, after hearing him, one gets his name all twisted, and one's head buzzes with the noise of a kakophony whose name naturally suggests itself as Trokinkapism.

What is Anarchy? Get together large boulders of the noblest stones—marble, granite, porphyry, etc.; whirl them with force against one another; the ground will be strewn with detritus; take up a handful of that worthless dust of incoherent materials, themselves the product of far-apart and dissonant aeons in the world's history. What you would then see would at all points symbolize the “Philosophy of Anarchy,”—Trokinpaism, for short.

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