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EDITORIAL

TROUBLOUS TIMES AHEAD.

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THERE is abundant evidence of a violent reaction in capitalist circles against the sophistical and misleading attempt of the Civic Federation to reconcile the irreconcilable interests of employer and employee. This reaction has manifested itself in many localities in the organization of employers into federations, as a necessary preliminary to open warfare with the opposing organizations of employees. In other places the reaction has manifested itself in vigorous hostility—in the unscrupulous use of militia and courts and the summary lockout and discharge of employees.

The necessity for this reaction—for it is regarded as vitally necessary by those engaging in it—has been attributed to many causes by prominent capitalists. One set of these capitalists claims that the demands arising out of labor conditions in this country have so enhanced the cost of production that it is impossible for them to compete successfully in the markets of the world. Exports, say they, will therefore decline, and the commercial supremacy and economic prosperity of the country will thereby be imperilled.

These capitalists point to the alleged detrimental effects of trades unionism on the commerce and prosperity of Great Britain. They point out that these effects were only partly overcome by the crushing defeat of the great engineers' strike in the nineties and the recent Taffe Vale decision holding trades unions liable for strike damages. They proclaim the necessity of similar action in this country, arguing that the losses occasioned by a stoppage of industry will be more than returned by the beneficial results to the capitalist class, that will follow.

A second set of these capitalists claims that the “coddling” of labor “leaders,” involved in the continuance of the Civic Federation fraud, has given rise to an arrogance

among labor unions which crops out in illegal and arbitrary acts that violate the sacred principles of capitalism, such as the rights of property, of work, of the capitalist control of industry, apprentices, output, and other things too numerous to mention. Like the first set of their capitalist compatriots, this set points to the economic dangers entailed in such a policy and demands its reversal by a resort to organization on the part of employers, and a rigorous application of "law and order."

With the views of these two sets of capitalists converging toward decisive organization and action the battle for capitalist supremacy promises to be a comprehensive and bitter one. There are troublous times ahead.

The blame for this condition of affairs lies with the capitalist class itself. In order to capture the markets of the world and find an outlet for the products of its overcapitalized and trustified industries, the capitalist class of this country formed a treacherous compact with the labor "leaders," by means of which the Civic Federation was launched.

The Civic Federation was a success, as far as its commercial aim is concerned. But, in accomplishing this end the capitalist class created conditions which are now redounding to their injury. In order to dupe the labor unions and insure dividends on their overcapitalized industries the capitalist class raised wages in some industries and prices in all of them. This created such an increased cost of living that the increase of wages far from sufficed to meet the difference. The result has been a widespread disaffection and a demand for more wages that the labor fakirs could not ignore nor suppress. The results have been increased strikes, with the customary violence also increased.

Again, the labor "leaders," exerting the power of the influence growing out of their connection with the capitalist class in the interests of certain capitalists and against those of other capitalists, e.g., Mitchell and Hanna vs. Baer and others, precipitated a clash among the capitalists themselves. These labor "leaders" also used this influence against the capitalists themselves, in their own political and economic interests, with the result that there is a growing capitalist demand for their overthrow.

Thus the capitalist class created conditions within the working class, as controlled by the labor fakirs and the capitalist class, that made the reaction against the Civic

Federation inevitable.

The Socialist Labor Party views this reaction with philosophic calmness. Knowing that the interests of employer and employee are antagonistic and that to attempt to reconcile them is to attempt to reconcile the irreconcilable, it laughed at the wiseacres who pronounced the Civic Federation “a blow at Socialism,” and awaited the results, which are just as anticipated.

Though the Socialist Labor Party thus views this reaction, it also sees in it a favorable opportunity to disseminate the true doctrines on the relations of the capitalist and the working class; that is, it finds the opportunity a favorable one to spread the doctrines of Socialism.

Finding conditions so, it calls on all its members, friends and sympathizers “To work! There are troublous times ahead that only the truths of Socialism can right. On then with the propaganda of Socialism! On to the Social Revolution.”

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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