
After the War — What?

by C.E. Ruthenberg

Serialized in *Socialist News* [Cleveland], vol. 4, whole no. 210 (Dec. 7, 1918), pp. 1-2; whole no. 211 (Dec. 14, 1918), pg. 2; whole no. 212 (Dec. 21, 1918), pg. 2; whole no. 213 (Dec. 28, 1918), pg. 2; whole no. 214 (Jan. 4, 1919), pg. 2; whole no. 215 (Jan. 11, 1919), pg. 2. Volume 5, whole no. 217 (Jan. 25, 1919), pg. 2; whole no. 218 (Feb. 1, 1919), pg. 2; whole no. 219 (Feb. 8, 1919), pg. 2; whole no. 220 (Feb. 15, 1919), pg. 2; whole no. 221 (Feb. 22, 1919), pg. 2.

I. Smashing the Halo of Capitalism.

The cannons which crashed upon the battlefields of Europe for more than four years have destroyed something else besides human lives and human treasures. They have destroyed the faith of many millions of people in the industrial order which existed when their death music began.

During the first half of 1914 the people of Europe and this country moved placidly along the rut of an accepted industrial order. In each country the dominant class owned the natural resources and industries and used these to create wealth, not for the enjoyment of the whole people but to amass fortunes for themselves. In carrying on this process they paid a mere subsistence wage to the workers; they worked them as long hours as possible; they turned them out of their jobs when the ups and downs of the industrial system created a situation which made it unprofitable for them to produce. Unrest existed and industrial conflagrations persistently burst forth, but a few people besides the Socialist minorities in each country had any hope or desire to fundamentally alter this industrial system.

Though widespread changes were taking place in the form of industrial organization, the general principle of private ownership of industry and operation for profit was unchallenged in the minds of the masses of the people. They had come into a world in which this system existed; they had no experience with any other organization of the productive powers of mankind and generally were even ignorant that any other system of production than that we know as capitalism

had existed upon the earth. There was consequently a sort of halo about the existing order, and it was difficult to induce men to even think about the possibility of a better organization of their productive powers and a more just distribution of the wealth they produced. Hence, while many smarted under the wrongs and injustices of the existing order, the possibility of an early change seemed rather remote.

The halo of capitalism has been smashed by the war. Under the pressure of wartime's needs all the sacred principles without the observance of which the capitalists maintained and made the masses believe, the industries could not be kept running, have been thrown into the discard. Private initiative has been superseded by government direction; private management has been thrown out bodily and the government has taken control; price-fixing, the most horrible slap at orthodox capitalist economics, has become a government function; in place of the unorganized, helter-skelter production of private business, which has no objective except profits, the government has coordinated industry to achieve a definite end.

The halo of our industrial system is gone. It is no longer a sacred thing, which must not be meddled with because of fear of the consequences. The iconoclasm, generated by a desperate need, has ruthlessly set aside the fetishes it worshipped and dealt with it in a manner that must bring tears to the eyes of the writers of its classic apologies.

Men have found that the industrial order under which they live is not the permanent and unchangeable thing they thought it to be. They have seen far-

reaching changes made overnight, as it were. They have seen what they were taught to believe were the most fundamental principles of our industrial system, upon which their happiness and prosperity rested, set aside without any dire consequences. Out of this has grown the demand for reconstruction and the hope of a better world.

This demand for reconstruction after the war, not of the old industrial order, but an industrial system based upon new principles, and which will wipe out the manifest injustices of the old, is as widespread today as was the placid acceptance of the old before the war.

It finds its expression in the carefully worked out program of the British Labour Party, which carries with it so deep a sense of the consciousness of powers of those who framed and stand behind the program; it is expressed in the Russian revolution and the effort to reconstruct society upon a new basis in that country; it finds its way into the newspapers, the periodicals, and public utterances, both in Europe and here, and comes to the surface in such personal expressions as that of Charles W. Schwab, who said that the workers will rule the world.

The demand for that reconstruction which will produce a new social order is not, of course, without opposition. The capitalists, who have so long profited through the old system, too, want reconstruction — but by reconstruction they mean the rebuilding of the industrial system which existed before the war, with the retention of only such minor changes as have proven to be of advantage to them.

The capitalists of this country realize how much their class privileges as exploiters has been weakened by the industrial action the government has been compelled to take. They realize, however, that a mere vague demand for reconstruction which will produce a new industrial system, without a definite program and with no powerful organization behind it, can be controlled and misled. They are, therefore, organizing to make the period of reconstruction serve their ends.

During the spring of 1918 a powerful organization of businessmen called a convention at Chicago, to which school boards of various cities were asked to send representatives and to which politicians and public men were invited, so that its ideas in regard to reconstruction might be disseminated through the schools

and other mediums of influencing public opinion. Thus the privileged class is already seeking to create a public sentiment which will enable it to establish its system of exploitation on a firmer basis than heretofore. With the great forces it can bring into play to shape public opinion — the schools, the press, the pulpit, and politicians — the danger that it will succeed is great.

In order to realize their desire, the men and women who hope that out of the bloody struggle that has devastated the world a finer civilization will come, must clearly fix in their minds those things in the old order that were evil and unite upon a common program that will forever end these evils in the reconstructed society that is to be built when the war is over.

It is the hope that the following articles will help to make clear the sources of the injustices of capitalist society and point the way to the principles upon which the new social order must be erected, that they are written.

II. What Shall We Change?

The widespread discontent with the existing industrial order which is manifesting itself in the many voiced raised for reconstruction on a new basis has its origin in concrete evils of this system. It is not a vague feeling of unrest rising out of general conditions but the result of sharp, stinging experiences.

What are these experiences of the masses of the people which have given rise to discontent and generated the demand for a different system of production and distribution? Without an understanding of what is wrong and the sources of these wrongs it is impossible to formulate a reconstruction program which will end the evils from which we suffer. It is necessary that we have a clear understanding of what is evil and whence its source if we are to take intelligent action to remedy the situation.

It will require very little effort to summarize the things that are wrong — things which we are all familiar with and which we will readily recognize from our own experiences.

Certainly, among the first of the things that are wrong and must be righted, we will set down the great uncertainty in regard to securing the necessities of life. From this uncertainty only the favored few are free.

This uncertainty has always existed in the life of man, but it is of a different character today than it was a century ago. Then it was a question of producing enough to supply the needs of mankind. When people went hungry it was because sufficient food was not produced. The failure of crops or production in some other field brought on a scarcity and consequently there was misery and suffering.

The problem is of a different character today. We have solved the problem of carrying on agriculture, the widespread system of transportation we have organized, the wonderful machinery of production we have built, have freed us from the danger of lack of food, clothing, or houses to live in because of the inability to produce them.

Even in wartime, with millions of men withdrawn from productive work and great demands upon our resources by other countries, we have been able to supply our needs.

We have solved the problem of production. We can produce all that is needed to supply the necessities of life, as well as some of the comforts of life — education and the opportunity for recreation — to all the people. The annual production in this country even under the present system of waste and duplication is \$50 billion, or \$2,500 for every family of five in this country.

And yet all but a very few are not sure of their livelihood!

Today work may be plentiful and the opportunity to earn a living easily secured. Tomorrow the factory doors may be slammed in the face of the workers and they find themselves out on the streets facing hunger and starvation.

This is not only true of the factory workers. It applies to the mechanic and bookkeeper alike. The salaried executive is in equal danger with the wage-worker.

That this is not theory we can easily satisfy ourselves by dwelling for a moment upon what happened to the masses of the people in the winter of 1914 and the spring of 1915. Millions of workers were discharged. Suffering, even hunger and starvation, were broadcast.

That this is not an isolated instance we can readily prove by reviewing the recurring hard times of the past: 1914, 1907, 1893, thus we can go back

through the last century.

Not only are there these periods of general calamity, but in ordinary times there is always the fringe of the unemployed, the unneeded workers, who cannot secure the opportunity to earn food, clothing, and shelter.

Furthermore, the individual worker is always at the mercy of his employer. He may have served long and faithfully, but he is never sure that on the morrow he may not lose his job.

The plain fact is that a numerically small group of people, the capitalists, who own the machinery of production and the natural resources of the country, have the masses at their mercy. They can take from them individually, and collectively for a time, their opportunity to earn a living. They are the industrial masters and the workers industrial serfs.

Reconstruction which does not change these conditions and assure to the workers the right to earn a livelihood at all times is reconstruction which means nothing to the workers of this country.

General insecurity, however, is not the only evil of the old industrial order. It does worse things than that to the American people.

A few years ago the President of the United States, under authority of an act of Congress, appointed an Industrial Relations Commission. All the elements in this country were represented in the membership of this commission — the owners of the industries, the workers, and the so-called “public,” which, of course, does not exist as part of the other two classes. The commission visited every section of the country. It granted hearings to all who desired to appear before it.

After a year of investigation a majority of the commission wrote a report on industrial conditions in the United States that should have shocked the people into action. This report contained conclusive evidence of the need of fundamental reconstruction of our industrial system.

Dealing with the wages of the workers in this country and the cost of living, the report said:

It was found that the incomes of two-thirds (64 percent) were less than \$750 per year, and almost one-third (31 percent) were less than \$500, the average of all being \$721. The average size of these families was 5.6 members. Elaborate studies of the cost of living made in all parts of

the country at the same time have shown that in all the very least a family of five persons can live upon in anything approaching decency is \$700.

Here we have evidence from a government commission that in ordinary times the wages of one-third of the workers are in a worse condition than even the minimum which the commission estimated was necessary to provide for a standard of living only "approaching decency."

The opposite of low wages are big profits. The result of our industrial system under which the workers get low wages and the capitalists big profits are pictured by the commission in the following paragraph:

We have, according to the income tax returns, 44 families with incomes of \$1 million or more, whose members perform little or no useful service, but whose aggregate income, totaling at least \$50 million per year, is equivalent to the earnings of 100,000 wage workers at the average of \$500. The ownership of the wealth of the United States has become concentrated to a degree which is difficult to grasp. The "Rich" 2 percent of the people own 60 percent of the wealth. The "Middle Class" 33 percent of the people own 35 percent of the wealth. The "Poor" 65 percent of the people own 5 percent of the wealth. This means that a little less than two million people, who could make a smaller city than Chicago, own 20 percent more of the nation's wealth than all the other ninety millions.

Since the Industrial Relations Commission report was written in 1915 things have not changed for the better. If there has been any change, it has been for the worse. Wages have risen when expressed in money, but the cost of living has risen faster, leaving the workers of the country in a worse position than three years ago. The man who wrote the statements above was recently quoted as estimating that the result of the war had been further concentration of the wealth of the United States, so that now the "Rich" 2 percent owned 70 percent of the wealth of the country.

The results of this unjust distribution of the wealth produced by the people of this country is written large over our civilization. The slums and poverty stricken districts of our industrial centers shout it to the high heavens. The records of prostitution and crime expresses it in our social statistics.

Changes in our industrial system which continues the arrangement through which the wealth we produce is heaped into the laps of the few will be reconstruction from which the workers have nothing to gain.

Another phase of our industrial system that de-

serves our attention is the industrial conflicts which it generates.

During the 5 year period preceding the entry of this country into the European war one great uprising of the workers after another took place.

First came a strike of the 20,000 mill workers at Lawrence, Massachusetts. When their demands were examined it was found that they ran something like this: We work long hours, we give our health and strength in the work of producing wealth, but we do not receive in return enough wages to put back into our bodies the strength we work out of them. And they cried: "Give us more bread. Give us decent homes to live in. Give us the opportunity to educate our children."

The scene changed to West Virginia and the same cry — "more bread, better homes, and better education for our children" — was voiced by the miners on strike there.

At Akron, Ohio, in the strike of the rubber workers, in the Michigan copper miners' strike, in Colorado during the coal miners' strike, in the struggle in the Mesaba iron range of Minnesota, and in hundreds of lesser struggles, there rang out the eternal cry of the workers for "more bread, better homes, better education for our children."

And what was the answer to these workers received when driven to desperation by low wages, long hours, and bad working conditions and they resorted to the strike in order to secure relief?

At Lawrence it was the policemen's clubs and the militiamen's bayonets. At Paterson the scum of the earth in the shape of private detectives from the strike-breaking agencies were used against them. In West Virginia an armored train opened upon the tented villages of the miners with machine guns in the middle of the night. At Akron it was the police and a "Citizen's Alliance" armed with pick axe handles. At Calumet and Hecla the miners were brutally beaten and even murdered by the armed guards of the mine owners. In Colorado, men, women, and children were massacred at Ludlow.

In each instance the cry for more bread, better homes, and better education for the children of the working class was answered by calling in the armed power of the government — city, state, or national — or the private army of the owners of industry, recruited

from the hoodlums and gangsters of the slums, to drive the workers into submission to the terms of the capitalists.

The ruling class of this country would like the workers to forget these things. The wave of working class revolt that is sweeping Europe has made it feel shaky and it is using soft words to lull the workers to sleep. But once it again entrenches itself, once again it feels itself safe, it will throw off the mask and we will have more Lawrences, West Virginias, and Ludlows.

The Industrial Relations Commission charged that certain capitalists had established in the industries they controlled an industrial feudalism that enabled them to rule like feudal barons of old. The industrial conflicts of the past were symptoms of this feudalism. If reconstruction is to mean anything to the workers, it must wipe out this industrial feudalism forever.

III. Can the Profit System Remain?

Are the evils which we find about us the result of some fundamental wrong in our industrial system or are they unrelated issues, each of which must be solved separately?

Do insecurity, low wages, and industrial strife grow out of some basic maladjustment of the existing system of production or does each have a separate cause for which we must find a separate remedy?

These are the questions which must be definitely answered before we can hope to successfully build a social order that will end these evils. The answer can only be found through critical examination of the existing industrial order. We must challenge capitalism to prove its right to continue in existence.

The first test which we should apply is an examination of the purpose for which it exists. Here is a vast industrial organization with ramifications in every nook and corner of the country and tentacles which touch our lives in every phase of our activity. What is its purpose? Why does it exist? What motive drives it forward?

We know that the object of the activities of men during the period of more primitive organization was to supply themselves with the necessities of life and such comforts as were obtainable. They hunted, fished, tilled the soil, and at a later period, carried on such

primitive industry as existed among them to provide themselves with food, clothing, and shelter. Is that still the purpose of industry? Are Armour & Co., Swift & Co., or the United States Steel Corporation merely associations into which men have entered to better supply themselves with food or steel?

These questions answer themselves. We know without further investigation that the business organizations of our day do not exist primarily for the purpose of supplying human needs. Their purpose is to make profits for their shareholders. If they cannot make profits for their shareholders, they go out of business. They are interested in producing wealth as a means of securing wealth for the limited number who share in their profits. The motive which drives the vast industrial machine which has grown up under capitalism is the desire for profits. The work of supplying human needs has become a mere incident to the process of realizing profits.

The evils of the present social order — insecurity, low wages, and industrial conflicts — are the product of an industrial system in which the supreme purpose is the taking of profits.

The present industrial system divides the people of this country into two classes. Anyone with a grain of common sense will have to admit that. There are people who work for wages and those who employ wage workers. There are the people who own the industries and those who must go to the owners of industry or their representatives for the opportunity to earn a living.

The ownership of industry is the source of the power of the profit-seeking class. It gives them control of the opportunities of the masses to secure the necessities of life. The millions of men and women in this country who are dependent upon the wages they earn for a living are economic serfs. They have not won the "inalienable right to life, liberty, and happiness," because their opportunity to earn the necessities of "life, liberty, and happiness" can be taken from them by the owners of industry, and is taken from them whenever the owners of industry are unable to make profits for themselves from the labor of the workers.

The institutions of the United States have in the past assured some measure of political democracy to the citizens of this country, but the right to elect political officers is a poor consolation when the more

fundamental right to earn a living is controlled by an irresponsible class in society with not other interest in production than to make as large profits as possible.

The power to hire and fire the workers, to give and take away the opportunity to earn a living, carries with it the power to compel the workers to work for such wages as will leave the capitalists a profit from their labor.

The business of making profits is shrouded in great mystery by the capitalists. They seek to make the workers believe that it is through some occult power that they make the processes of production yield them profits and build up great fortunes for them.

There is no mystery about the source of profits. The capitalists do not create wealth out of the air in juggling with industry. They make profits because they purchase the labor-power of the workers for less than the value of the goods the workers produce; that is, they do not pay the workers the full value of their labor. There is no other way of making profits out of industry.

The lower the wages for which the capitalists can purchase the labor-power of the workers and the longer their hours of labor, the greater will be the capitalist's profits. Naturally the capitalists pay the lowest wages at which they can induce the workers to work. Since they are in a position to deny the workers the opportunity to earn a living if the workers do not accept their terms, they have been able to keep the wages at the point where they yield the workers a mere subsistence, or even less than a mere subsistence, as pointed out by the Industrial Relations Commission.

The industrial conflicts which are part and parcel of the capitalist system are the direct outgrowth of this situation. The workers naturally seek to increase their wages and reduce their hours of labor. They endeavor to secure for themselves more of the wealth they produce and better working conditions. The capitalists resist. They see their profits menaced by the workers' demands. The workers organize their power and refuse to work unless their demands are granted, and we have a strike with all its accompaniments of stopping of production, misery and suffering for the workers, and rioting and bloodshed when the capitalists bring in their private armies and detectives, gunmen, and strikebreakers, or call in the armed force of the government to assist them in forcing the workers

into submission.

The existing industrial system is a huge profit-making machine, which has no relation to the happiness and well-being of the masses of the American people. It does not exist to bring them "life, liberty, and happiness." In practice it results in drawing away from the millions of producers the bulk of the wealth they produce and in heaping this wealth in the laps of the relatively small class which owns the machinery of production, and in this process its by-products are generally insecurity, low wages, and industrial conflicts, thus making happy, healthy lives impossible for the masses of the people. If the work of reconstruction is to result in a better world, its aim must be the abolition of the profit system.

IV. Collectivism and Reconstruction.

Since an examination of the profit system leads inevitably to the conclusion that its continued existence is incompatible with any proposal to reconstruct our industrial system so as to assure the happiness and well-being of the masses, the question naturally follows: what form of organization will enable us to reach that goal?

The answer to this question must be found in the evolution of the capitalist system, for industrial changes are not the result of schemes devised by individuals, political organizations, or legislative bodies and by them applied to industry, but result from the development of the means of production, which development makes the changes necessary. The only safe procedure in working out the principles to be applied in the work of reconstruction is to study the development of the present industrial system and thus learn what solution of our problem the tendency of this development points to.

If we follow this plan, one striking development of industry, which has been going forward during the last half century and which has been tremendously accelerated during the past 25 years, comes to our notice at once. Industry as we know it in the last century started with small workshops, which grew into large factories. These in turn developed into great manufacturing plants and the latest stage of development has been the combination of these manufacturing plants into so-called "trusts" which practically con-

trol the production of the particular commodities they are engaged in manufacturing.

This growth, which is still going on, has come to pass in spite of the fact that the governments of the various states and the nation have at times used all their legal machinery to stop it. The government has “dissolved” trusts, only to find them flourishing in some other form. In spite of all the activities of those whose economic interests were threatened by their growth, these great industrial organizations today dominate the industrial life of the country.

There are people foolish enough to believe that “trusts” are the product of the brain of men like Rockefeller or the elder Morgan, who planned an organized them for their own aggrandizement, and that hence, it is possible to destroy them and return to the era of competition between the smaller industrial organizations of a quarter of a century ago. These persons are ignorant of the industrial evolution which brought great industry into existence.

The trusts are the product of the same forces which have developed the cultivation of the soil for agriculture from turning it from a crooked stick to plowing with a five gang tractor plow. The trusts are the latest stage of development of man’s productive power, which stretches back through the centuries to the earliest weapon or tool that man invented. They represent a higher and more efficient form of organization of our productive power.

Along with the development of great industrial units in the various fields of production there has come into existence the control of interrelated industry by groups of capitalists. Thus we find coal mines and the railroads which transport the coal in control of the same group of capitalists. We find the United States Steel Corporation owning its source or raw materials and its steamship lines and controlling railroads through related groups of capitalists.

The Pujo Committee of the House of Representatives showed some years ago that through the machinery of interlocking directorates a small group of capitalists dominated many of the leading industries of the country.

Once we recognize the tendency in industrial combination and integration, the line of future progress is clearly indicated. Under the present system of private ownership these combinations are instruments of

more efficient exploitations of the masses of the people. They make of the capitalists who control them an industrial oligarchy with almost unlimited power over the lives of the people. No people can be free nor achieve happiness that permits such power to exist in their midst.

Since we have not found it possible, and it is not even desirable that we break up industrial combinations which give this great power to the capitalists, the only alternative open is that we transfer to the masses the power which the capitalists now have by virtue of their ownership and control of industry. Collective ownership is logically the next step in the development of industry.

Collective ownership of industry alone, however, is not a remedy for our industrial problem. Merely to invest the ownership and control of industry in our federal government and to administer it through a bureaucracy at Washington would not enable us to reach the goal of our work of reconstruction. Such an arrangement is entirely compatible with the continued existence of the profit system and the exploitation and oppression of the workers.

If collective ownership is to solve our problem of reconstruction, it must come hand in hand with industrial democracy and the abolition of the rewards of mere ownership — rent, interest, and profit.

V. War Measures and Socialism.

Before attempting a further discussion of the form that the ownership and management of industry will take in the reconstructed industrial order of the future, the presentation of some additional facts to support the argument that collectivism is the only solution of the problem is in place.

Socialists have contended for many years that the development of industry tended toward collectivism. They have argued that private ownership and production for profit was inconsistent with the highest development of efficient production.

Their arguments were laughed at by the capitalists and their supporters. The latter endeavored to make the people believe that collectivism was a mirage and a dream and could never be realized. They said private initiative and private management alone could assure the successful carrying on of the work of production.

Every reader of these pages will remember having read some book, pamphlet, or newspaper article, or heard a speech by some learned professor, holding the collectivism which Socialism proposed up to ridicule and scorn. Collectivism was impossible, it was argued, it was un-American and would never be adopted in this country.

The war has answered these scoffers at Socialism. It has completely vindicated and justified the Socialist argument.

Every nation engaged in the war has been compelled to adopt collectivist measures. The nations at war found that privately controlled industry, unrestrained in its greed for profits, was unworkable. The evils and weaknesses of privately controlled industry could be tolerated in times of peace. Its waste and inefficiency made it a danger in time of national distress, and it was thrown overboard wherever it affected the conduct of the war.

We need not go to England, Germany, or France for examples of wartime collectivism. They went deeper than we did only because they were in the war longer.

But here in the United States we have gone far enough to prove that the Socialists were right in their criticism of privately owned industry and the defenders of capitalism wrong.

We began our excursion in the realm of collectivism even before our entry into the war. In 1914, after the opening guns of the struggle in Europe had been fired, marine insurance rates offered by private companies on shipments to Europe went so high as to be prohibitive, or no insurance could be secured. Private business being afraid to write insurance, the shipping interests appealed to the government to enter the marine insurance business. Congress promptly rushed through the necessary legislation and the Marine Insurance Department was established. Since then the government has been making millions out of a business that private capitalists were afraid to enter.

After this country entered the war we went forward in the same direction fast and far.

To prevent the starvation of the poor and the consequent unrest, the government was obliged to take control of the distribution of food out of the hands of private business and establish a Food Administration. Food distributors were licensed by the government. Dealers that did not adhere to its regulations had their

license revoked and could not continue business. Government control of food companies still remained in business.

The Fuel Administration, controlling the price and distribution of coal and other fuel, followed close upon the establishment of the Food Administration. One of the interesting phases of private business brought to light by Mr. Garfield's department, which vividly illustrates the limitations of privately controlled industry, was the situation in regard to coal shipments. Mr. Garfield found that mines in one state were shipping coal to another coal mining state, whereas mines in the latter state were shipping their coal to the state from which the industries of their home state were receiving coal. In place of the mines of each state supplying their home market, thus reducing freight charges and railroad traffic, shipments were crisscrossing because of some advantage, in the shape of additional profits to the private owners of industry — either buyer or seller. A similar instance of the waste of private business was developed in the consignment of specific cars of coal from certain mines to specified plants. In place of all the coal of a certain grade shipped to a city being handled as a unit and distributed to the customers with the smallest delay and expense, as was later done under the Fuel Administration, a specified car had to be found, possibly in the middle of a long train of cars, switched out, taken in some instances to the most distant part of the city over the lines of two or three railroad companies, and there delivered to the consignee. The result of this practice was long delays, coal shortages, and waste and inefficiency, all of which was eliminated by a small dose of collectivism.

Public ownership of railroads, long agitated, seemed a long way off before the war. It required only a few months of wartime needs, which did not dare risk the wastefulness of private business, to put the railroads in the hands of the government. Competing railroads put the interests of the private owners above the question of moving goods and passengers from place to place in the cheapest way. They sent goods by roundabout routes to keep them on their own roads or those controlled by the same interests. Two competing roads dispatched passenger trains from the same place to the same place at practically the same hour, when one train could have carried all the passengers comfortably. Private ownership and operation for the

profit of the private owners stood in the way of many improvements, which have since been effected by the United States Railway Administration.

The express companies have followed the railroads into the hands of the government. The telephone and telegraph companies were taken over. In the latter case we are told that the government can save over \$100 million yearly in operation charges by using telephone wires for both telephone conversations and messages, which is technically entirely feasible, and by combining the two telegraph companies. The only reason for maintaining a Western Union and Postal Telegraph system and a telephone system besides is because three sets of owners made profits from the companies. Certainly we could not get a more graphic illustration of the methods and motives of private business.

The enormous business of ship construction the government has undertaken is another illustration of the possibilities of collectivism.

But all of this, food and fuel administration, railroads, express companies, telegraph and telephone system under government control, and shipbuilding, is only part of the collectivist activities of the government during the war. Through the War Industry Board the government directed and controlled the work of every industry, even though still in the hands of their private owners, which was related in the work of producing munitions of war. The government determined what should be produced. It directed the installation of new machinery and plant extensions.

Production in the United States during the war became, so far as war materials were concerned — and the sweep of war industry was far and wide — no longer a private affair, carried on by capitalists primarily for their private profits and with no other concern but their private profits. Profits there were — greater profits than the capitalists ever enjoyed before — but the initiative was no longer theirs. A greater power, driven by a greater need, stepped in and directed the operation of industry.

Industry was brought under government control and the result was a great industrial machine, controlled by a bureaucracy at Washington, which drove forward, not in the helter-skelter way of old, but with a definite purpose.

No longer can the capitalist tell us when we de-

mand collectivism in industry that collectivism is impossible. We have had it. Not in the form we want it, it is true. It was collectivism controlled by a bureaucracy, not a democratic collectivism — not industrial democracy. But if it is possible to organize a great bureaucratic industrial machine for the purpose of carrying on war efficiently, why is it not possible to build up a democratic collectivism for the purpose of supplying human needs in peace times?

Is the business of making the lives of the people more secure, brighter, and happier not of as great importance as the business of making war efficiently?

Wartime activities of the government have justified the Socialists' attack on private business. The period of reconstruction must bring that democratic collectivism for which Socialism is contending if it is to be reconstruction in the interests of the people.

VI. Lessons from War Measures.

Most people have passed through an experience like this: They have decided that the accomplishment of a certain purpose was desirable, but found in their minds seemingly great obstacles to carrying out their plan, which, however, quickly disappeared when they boldly adopted a course of action.

That the theoretical objections raised against the Socialist proposal that the people take over the industries of the nation, similarly evaporate into thin air once the decision is made to Socialize industry, is proven by our experience during the war.

One of the stock questions before the war, which every Socialist speaker answered many times, was: How are you going to take over the industries?

The persons asking this question were often convinced of the desirability of collective ownership of industry, but the question "how are you going to get them" seemed to make the desired goal an impossible dream. Others, opponents to Socialism, asked the question because they considered it the most difficult objection for the speaker to meet.

The question was always answered, if in no other way, then by the answer: "When we get ready to take over the industries we'll just take them."

While that does not sound convincing, in practice it has been proven to be the very thing that has been done.

When the government decided to take over the railroads, it just took them.

The great obstacle which seemed to stand athwart the path of government control disappeared before a simple legislative act. Congress conferred upon the President the power to take control of the railroads of the country, the President set the date when government control would begin, and — presto, change! — the thing was done. The railroads continued the performance of the work of hauling freight and passengers without hitch or hindrance.

When the administration decided to take over the express companies, it just took them; when it decided to take over the telegraph and telephone lines, it just took them.

It may be argued that the railroads, the express business, and the telegraph and telephone lines were taken over by the government under different circumstances than will obtain in the establishment of the democratic collectivism that Socialism proposes. The railroads were taken over with the promise of their return to their owners in a definite period after the war. The same terms apply to the express companies and the telegraph and telephone companies.

What the government has promised to do does not effect the fact that the transfer of control was accomplished without the slightest difficulty. The terms on which industries were taken does not alter the possibility of transferring control from private owners to the government, or an industrial organization of the workers, without the least disturbing the operation of the industry in question.

While at present it looks as if the railroads, express companies, and telephone and telegraph lines would be returned to their owners, a simple, little legislative act on the part of Congress would convert the present government control into government ownership without the slightest disturbance of the industries involved.

The question of what kind of compensation, or no compensation, for the owners could be decided in the same manner. If a Republican or Democratic Congress decided to keep these industries, the compensation of the stockholders and bondholders would no doubt be generous. A Socialist Congress might decide to give the stockholders and bondholders Liberty Bonds as compensation and then tax the bonds out of

existence in ten years or thereabouts; or it might decide that inasmuch as the workers of the United States built the railroads out of materials produced by other workers, and inasmuch as the government originally paid for building of many of the railroads through unrepaid loans and land grants, and inasmuch as the workers have paid for them several times over in the profits they contributed to the stockholders and bondholders who exploited their labor-power, it would just keep them.

The latter course might involve Congress in some complications with the Supreme Court, but such complications would not be difficult to overcome if Congress represented the will of the majority of the people.

In any event, there is no longer any question “how are you going to take over the industries?” to offer as an objection to Socialism. When enough workers support the program of Socialism it will be carried into effect. The Wilson administration has shown easily it can be done.

Other questions that bothered the opponents of Socialism a great deal, judging by the frequency with which they were asked, were what is to become of the men of superior brains and ability who are running the industries and how are you going to induce them to work when the industries are collectively owned?

Mr. McAdoo, while United States Railway Administrator, answered these questions. He fired the railroad presidents. They were costly ornaments unneeded for the operation of the railroad system. He put United States Railroad Regional Directors in their places, supplanting two or three and sometimes more presidents with one regional director. In place of the princely salaries of the railroad presidents, the regional directors receive the moderate salaries of government officials.

The men of supposed “superior brains” at the head of great industrial organizations are, as a rule, in the same position as the railroad presidents. They do not contribute anything to the work of production carried on by these industries. At best their work consists of carrying on the competitive struggle against rivals and of devising shrewd schemes through which the workers can be mulcted of more of what they produce. At worst, they are costly figureheads, drawing fortunes as salaries and rendering no service even from the standpoint of the profit system.

The actual task of carrying on the work of production and distribution is in the hands of lesser officials, who are paid salaries for the work they perform, and not because they hold dominant financial positions. These workers will be ready to place their skills at the disposal of the people, when the industries are collectively owned as will the workers whose labor is more largely physical — as they now are doing in the case of the railroads, express companies, and telegraph and telephone companies.

The wastefulness of industry carried on by private owners for profit has already been hinted at in the discussion of the reasons that compelled the government to take over the operation of the railroads and establish a coal administration. Some of the capitalist newspapers reported, with charming naiveté, the possibilities in this direction at the time the government assumed the control of certain industries. The expected saving of \$100 million yearly through the combination of the telephone and telegraph service and operation as part of the postal system, is one instance already mentioned. The consolidation of railroad ticket offices is another. In place of 10 or 25 ticket offices maintained in each large city under private control, the government established one United States Railroad Administration ticket office. The resulting elimination of waste and increase in convenience has brought the astounded newspaper supporters of private ownership for profit to a realization of what collectivism can accomplish. Yet the Socialists have been using the wastefulness of capitalism as one of the arguments for the socialization of industry for a quarter of a century.

The things that the government has done in carrying out its program of wartime government control is merely a drop in the bucket compared to the possibilities in eliminating waste through collectivism. Production for profit has established an industrial system in which probably less than half of the productive energy of the workers is used in work necessary to supply the necessities and comforts of life to the human family. The larger part of the work done under this system is wasted effort in the competitive struggle for profits and great wealth for the few. Only these few gain anything from this labor, which is offered as a tribute on the altar of capitalism. The elimination of this waste, which the war measures of the government

proved that collectivism will accomplish, means more of the worthwhile things of life to the masses of the people.

VII. Labor and Government-Controlled Industries.

Wartime necessity has compelled the capitalists of this country to acquiesce in many measures which they had previously fought, but probably the most bitter pill they have had to swallow is the recognition that they have been forced to accord to organized labor.

The great capitalists of this country are the most savage enemies of everything that smacks of unionism. The United States Steel Corporation declared open warfare against the workers' organization and set out to exterminate them in the steel industry. The great food distributing companies, centering around the Chicago stockyards, took a similar position in relation to the workers employed there. In those industries in which the unions had gained a foothold there were continuous efforts to wipe out their organizations and the workers were obliged to carry on a constant struggle to maintain their unions.

The important principle at stake between the workers and their employers was the question whether the workers should have a voice in determining the conditions under which they worked through collective bargaining. The employers maintained that the determination of wages, hours of labor, and working conditions was their private prerogative and that they would deal with the individual workers only in deciding these questions. They refused to recognize the right of the workers to organize and through their organization express their collective will in regard to these questions.

Many a long and bitter struggle has been fought between the workers and their employers over the question of collective bargaining. It was a vital point of issue. The capitalists have been ready, in many industrial struggles, to concede higher wages and shorter hours of labor, but have balked at recognizing and dealing with the workers' organizations.

The reason why the capitalists considered the recognition of the union as the crucial point is not difficult to grasp. Recognition of the workers' organization involved recognition of the fact that the work-

ers collectively have a right to participate in the management of industry. This right the capitalist refused to concede. They took the position that the conduct of industry was their private affair in which they would not permit any outside organization to interfere and maintained that position with all their strength. They saw clearly that it was but a step from participation of the workers' organization in the decision of questions relating to wages and hours of labor to participation in the general management of industry. Once the principle of the workers' right to participate in management was recognized there was no telling how far the encroachments of the workers, on what the capitalists considered their private prerogative, would go.

The stern necessities of wartime compelled the capitalists to agree to the adoption of a principle which they had previously bitterly fought.

The peculiar developments of modern war place a premium upon uninterrupted production. The great armies which each belligerent must raise require the marshalling of all the productive powers of the nation to equip them and furnish them with supplies. This need enhances the value of the labor of the workers. The governments involved in modern wars cannot permit the interruption of production through struggles between employers and workers. It must prevent, so far as is possible, the eruption of the struggles which in peace times periodically stop production.

It can accomplish this in two ways: through coercion of the workers or through coercion of the employers.

Coercion of the workers — compelling them to accept conditions against which they have been fighting, brings in its train consequences as serious as non-interference in the struggle between the employers and the workers. Workers who have been compelled to accept conditions which they fought against will not work with good will. Production is bound to suffer as a consequence and coercion of the workers in war-times fails of its purpose.

Thus we find that the coercion which the government exerted has of necessity largely applied to the employers. They were compelled to grant higher wages, shorter working hours, and, to them the most serious concession, recognize the principle of collective bargaining.

The decision of the War Labor Board, the gov-

ernment board which passed upon conflicts between the workers and their employers, in the case of the Bethlehem Steel Co., is a typical instance. The decision is particularly noteworthy because the Bethlehem Steel Co. has always been among the industrial organizations most hostile to organized labor. The decision was thus reported in the *Christian Science Monitor*:

The decision grants the workers the right to organize and bargain collectively, orders the revision or complete elimination of the bonus system now in operation at the plant, the revision of the piecework rate for some 5,000 machine shop workers in conformity with one of the scales now being applied in the War and Navy Departments; applies the basic 8-hour day with payment of time and a half for all overtime and double time for Sundays and holidays, and provides for just overtime payment to pieceworkers; calls upon the company to pay men and women alike when performing the same work and to allot women no task disproportionate to their strength. It provides that the piecework rates shall be revised by the plant management cooperating with committees of the worker and representatives of the ordinance department, which is the department principally interested in the product of the plant; and also that a permanent local board of mediation and conciliation, consisting of six members, three chosen by the company, three by the workers, be established to effect agreements on future disputed points not covered in the award.

This decision clearly recognizes the right of the workers to organize and bargain collectively and to participate in decisions affecting their welfare. They are given a voice in the management so far as these particular points are concerned.

In Bridgeport, Connecticut, munition center the decision of the War Labor Board went even farther. It provided for the election by the 60,000 workers engaged in the industries there of a committee to represent them in negotiations with the organized employers of the city.

Hundreds of similar decisions were made by the War Labor Board.

In England the movement of the workers for the right to participate in the management of industry has developed even further. Through "shop stewards" representing all the workers of a certain industry and "shop committees" the workers are participating to a constantly increasing extent in decisions affecting their welfare.

This development in industry is of equal significance with the progress toward collectivism which the

war brought about. It points to the form which the management of industry must take in the future. For the rights which the workers have had conceded to them during the war are rights which the workers have struggled for through many years. The workers have demanded a voice in the management of industry. They challenged the right of an oligarchy controlling industry to determine, without consulting them, the conditions under which they would be permitted to earn a living. Their demands have been acknowledged to be just and right in the concessions made to them during the war.

But it must be remembered that the gains made for democracies in industry during the war were concessions to the workers granted only to secure the support of the workers in a crucial time for capitalism. Already the capitalist class is endeavoring to retrieve its losses in this respect.

The workers can only hope to retain their gains and to make further inroads upon the capitalists' power to automatically manage industry by organizing their power. They can make most effective use of their strength by organizing in class conscious, industrial union. The future management of industry will be in the hands of the workers in each particular plant and the unions of the workers must conform to what the development in industry has shown to be the future organization. By organizing industrially now they will be preparing the framework of the organization which in the future will take control and establish complete industrial democracy.

VIII. The Road to Freedom.

The reader who has followed the argument thus far will grasp from the foregoing that the form of industrial organization which will exist in the reconstruction society of the future is not only indicated in the evolution of the machinery of production but that under the pressure of the necessities of wartime some of the principles have been tentatively applied that will govern the management of industry in the future.

Insofar as the government has assumed ownership and control of industry and applied the right to fix prices and the workers have gained representation in the management, we have developed the structure of the new social order.

Given this development it does not require a great leap of imagination to discern the outline of the industrial order which will supercede the profit system and end the evils which are part of that system. The principles we must place in our program of reconstruction become clear.

Industry must no longer be conducted as a private business for profit, but must become a coordinated, collective process conducted for the purpose of supplying human needs and comforts. Such a transformation can only be accomplished by taking the ownership of the national resources and means of production and distribution out of the hands of the present owners and vesting the ownership in the people collectively.

The government has taken over the railroads, the telegraph and telephones, and the express companies for the period of the war. A working class government would retain these industries permanently. To add to them the mines, the steel industry, the food distribution industry, and as quickly as feasible all the main industries of the country would be merely an extension of a principle already adopted for wartime. Such industries as are national in their scope would be under control of the national organization, those that are statewide under control of the state organization, and the municipal services under control of the municipal organization.

Together with the establishment of collective ownership of industry there must be developed the democratic management of industry by the workers employed in them. Here again the beginning has been made in the agencies which represented the workers in the collective bargaining during the war. The line of development must be increased participation of these agencies in the management of industry until such time as the organized workers in each industry assume complete control of the work of production within the industry, leaving to the supervising local, state, or national organization such questions as effect the interest of society as a whole, such as price-fixing, the extent and character of production, and the coordination of industry as a whole.

Coincident with the end of private ownership and management there will be abolished the right of any person to exploit the labor of another.

In the ventures in collectivism during the war

the government was careful to secure the interests of the owners of industry, guaranteeing them generous interest and dividends on their stocks and bonds. Thus exploitation of the workers continued under government control.

No program of reconstruction which secures the privileged class in its right to draw unearned wealth from the labor of the workers is worthy of the name. Exploitation must end with private ownership and no individual should be permitted to share in the wealth produced by society unless he earns that right through the services he contributes.

Whether our program of reconstruction shall provide for the cancelling of the title of ownership of the present owners of industry at once or whether some period of adjustment shall be provided is an open question. The cancellation of the title of ownership might be extended over a period of years through a taxation program. Ample justification can be found, however, in the past and present actions of the government.

The emancipation of the southern slaves was a financial loss to the owners comparable to the loss the present owners of industry will suffer through collective ownership, but no compensation was granted them. Just recently the required number of states have given their approval to the prohibition amendment to the national constitution which confiscates the property interests of liquor distillers, beer brewers, and wine producers, without compensating them for the immense losses they will suffer.

These acts are justified by the needs of society as a whole and the confiscation of the industries of the nation is justifiable on the same grounds.

The abolition of exploitation and the equitable distribution of the rewards of industry will give to every worker sufficient reward for his or her services to secure the means for a happy, healthy life, education, and recreation.

The road to freedom lies through a program of reconstruction that will establish collectivism and industrial democracy and through these measures end the exploitation of the workers by a privileged capitalist class.

IX. The End of the War.

One of the strongest arguments used to secure support of the war by the masses in this country was that it was "a war to end war."

In deciding upon our program of reconstruction it is of paramount importance that we know whether the principles we adopt will lead to realization of the ideal of a society in which there will be no more war.

At the present time an effort is being made to reach this goal through the organization of a League of Nations. This is the means through which the supporters of the present industrial order hope to make war impossible in the future.

The structure of the League of Nations is just emerging from the council of statesmen representing the Allied nations and the United States, but the lines on which the supernational organization is to be built are clear enough to warrant a conclusion in regard to whether it will prove a barrier against future wars.

There are two ways in which the League of Nations is to prevent future wars. It is to be the trustee of the capitalist nations of the world in charge of the backward countries, which are to be administered through "mandatories" under its direction, and there is also to be set up as part of the supernational organization machinery for conciliation and arbitration of disputes which arise between nations.

There is nothing in either of these proposals which will eliminate the cause of wars.

Let us examine the situation we face by considering the relations that will exist between two groups of countries after the peace treaty is signed and the League of Nations organized.

On the one side will be the United States and Japan; on the other Russia and Germany.

It is fairly certain that in the United States and Japan capitalism will still flourish, and we will presume that in Russia and Germany Socialist industrial republics will be established.

We would then find that in the United States and Japan the machinery of production would be in the hands of a relatively small class which would operate the industries for its profit. The workers would be able to secure the opportunity to work only by consent of the owners of industry. When they did work

they would receive in wages only a small part of the product of their labor. They would work 8 or 10 hours per day, but would receive in wages only the product of 2 or 3 hours work. The remaining hours after they had produced their wages they would be producing "surplus value" for the owning class.

Since the workers receive only part of the value of their product in wages it would naturally follow that they would be unable to buy and consume all of the goods they produced. The capitalist class, relatively small in number, could not consume the goods the workers could not buy and would be compelled to seek foreign markets in which to sell these goods. The capitalists would also amass new capital as a result of the profits they took and this would lead them to seek colonies and "spheres of influence" for development and exploitation.

Thus we would find the capitalists of the United States seeking to control the markets of China and the capitalists of Japan endeavoring to gain control of the same markets; we would find the capitalists of the United States and Japan seeking to exploit the Philippine Islands and the countries of South America. The capitalists of both countries would be driven by the inexorable conditions of capitalist production into bitter competition with each other and the history of the past tells us that such competition begun on the commercial field would lead inevitably to the battlefield.

Will the League of Nations be able to prevent the logical development of commercial rivalry which capitalism produces?

It is an effort in that direction. The capitalists of the world realize the danger for them which accompanies war. Aside from the great destruction of wealth and the piling up of huge mountains of debts, there is always the threat that war will precipitate a revolution, such as took place in Russia, and which, although not yet complete, followed the defeat of Germany. So the League of Nations is being organized to act as the international agent of capitalism and to minimize the possibility of the recurrence of such a conflict as this through which the world has just passed.

The League of Nations, as trustee of the backward and undeveloped countries, assigns to each certain territory for exploitation. When disputes arise the League of Nations will seek to prevent war through conciliation and arbitration.

Can it succeed?

One of the favorite arguments of the supporters of the League of Nations, in support of their scheme, is to point at the fact that the 13 colonies, after the break with England, were each separate, independent states, which federated as the United States, with resulting harmony and peace.

This argument overlooks the fact that an economic question about which two groups of states differed was left unsettled, and that in spite of all the machinery for settlement of disputes provided in the Constitution of the United States, there resulted the bloodiest civil war of modern times over the question whether chattel slavery or wage slavery should prevail.

Just so capitalist internationalism presenting itself in the form of a League of Nations will have to deal with commercial imperialism — the logical product of the exploitation of the workers in modern industry — which in spite of all the machinery of arbitration and conciliation will drive the capitalist countries to an appeal to arms in the struggle for survival.

Now let us consider Socialist Russia and Socialist Germany, supposing that in the latter country the social revolution is completed and the workers take control of industry.

In each of these countries the industries will no longer be the private property of capitalists. The industries will be owned by the people. The workers in each industry will organize for the management of the industry in which they work. They will select their representatives in city councils, or state or national councils, in which the workers form the various industries will meet to decide matters of common interest. There will be no exploitation of the workers and therefore no need to seek foreign markets in which to sell surplus products. There will be no economic motive to push the workers of Russia into a war with the workers of Japan to decide whether the capitalists of Russia or Japan should exploit the markets and resources of Manchuria, such as took place some 15 years ago. There will be no economic motive to force the workers of Germany into a struggle to secure control of the spheres of influence in Asia Minor in which to sell surplus products and make more profits for the capitalists.

The workers of each country will enjoy the wealth they produce. If, after supplying every family

with good food, good clothing, a comfortable home, and the opportunity for education and recreation, they find they have surplus products on their hands, they will simply cut down the hours of labor. If the workers of Russia find they are producing too much wheat and need machinery and the workers of Germany produce too much machinery and need wheat, they will arrange for an equal exchange of these products on the basis of their value. The economic motives which drive nations to war will have ceased to exist with the end of exploitation.

Why should the workers of any country wish to ship the goods they produce to foreign countries? Don't they need them? Can't the workers of the United States use the goods they produce in raising the standard of living in this country? Don't we need these goods to abolish poverty? Don't we need more comfortable homes? Can't we take more of the workers from the work of producing commodities and train them to improve our educational system?

The danger of war will exist as long as capitalism exists. The end of war will come with the end of insecurity, exploitation, and industrial conflicts when capitalism is abolished. Not a League of Nations but Industrial Democracy is the way to permanent peace.

X. Servile State or Socialism?

The program of reconstruction presented in the preceding articles is the program of Socialism.

The practicality of this program is no longer in doubt. During the nineteen months this country participated in the world war the underlying principle of the program — collectivism — was adopted as a measure of self-preservation by the government. In Russia the establishment of collectivism based upon democracy in industry is underway.

It was possible before the war to scoff at and pooh-pooh the Socialist proposals, but in a great emergency, face to face with the fact that private control of industry meant internal conflict, wastefulness, and inefficiency in production, when the most efficient and effective organization of industry was needed by the capitalist class, the government was obliged to cast prejudices to the winds and apply the principle of collective control of industry.

Even the limited application of this principle

which was made has shown the tremendous possibilities of the Socialist program.

We can through collectivism — through the organization and coordination of our powers of production, eliminate hundreds of millions of waste and make a large increase in our productive ability. The abolition of exploitation through the abolition of rent, interest, and profits, will insure to the masses the enjoyment of the wealth produced through our greatly increased productive power and will end the misery and poverty which is such a dark blot upon our civilization. A thoroughgoing program of collectivism will enable us to bring into existence more than enough wealth to give a high standard of living, which means good food, good clothing, good homes, education and recreation, peace and happiness, to every family in the United States.

Through the establishment of industrial democracy we can eliminate the industrial conflicts which are the constant accompaniment of production under the profit system. We cannot only eliminate strikes, lockouts, and unemployment, but we can assure to the workers that joy which comes through creative effort when men are not drudges and slaves, but freemen cooperating with their fellows in producing useful things.

Shall we go on with the development of collectivism and industrial democracy? Shall we go forward to a better world?

The capitalist class says, "no."

The Republican Party, through the declarations of its leaders, its state platforms, and the manifesto it issued during the congressional campaign, has set its face against even the limited bureaucratic collectivism which developed during the war. It stands for the unrestrained exploitation of the workers by the great industrial organization of the country.

The Democratic Party has taken a similar position. In his address to Congress at the opening of the session in December 1918, President Wilson declared that the work of reconstruction could be safely left in the hands of the businessmen of the United States.

The logic of events will likely compel the capitalist class and its political expression, the Republican and Democratic Parties, to change its program somewhat. We may expect that in the near future the advanced section of the capitalist class will advocate that

certain industries be operated by the government. Certain capitalists have learned that it is more economical to have the government own and operate such industries as the transportation system, the telegraph and telephone system, and other basic industries and they will advocate that these industries become the common property of the capitalist class through ownership by a government which it controls, rather than that they be owned by certain groups of the capitalist class. Such an arrangement, they have come to understand, is entirely compatible with the continuance of their right to make profits out of these industries.

Should either of the two capitalist parties change its program to conform with this new view, which is gaining ground, there is no hope that it would attack the profit system. It is entirely possible to apply the principles of collectivism and at the same time maintain the system of exploitation which now exists and even to subject the workers to a more abject form of industrial slavery than they have been obliged to submit to under private ownership. Such an industrial feudalism might well arise if “the masters of the government of the United States are the combined capitalists and bankers of the United States” during the period of reconstruction.

There is no hope for the working class if they continue to support the political parties representing the interest of the capitalist class of the United States.

The war has not only demonstrated the practicality of the Socialist program, but in the experience of the workers of Russia and of Germany we have clearly presented the road which we must follow if we are to reach the goal of industrial democracy and working class freedom.

The idea that Socialism would be established through a series of legislative acts extending possibly over a decade or two has been shown to be an illusion. Socialism will not be legislated into existence but will be established by a mass movement of the workers in the industries. The legislative acts will merely give the accomplished fact the stamp of approval as the will of

the majority.

The struggle of the working class will henceforth be a political struggle for control of the state because it must gain control of the government before it can hope to establish democracy in industry. For the working class to endeavor to take control of industry while all the repressive power of the class state remained in the hands of the capitalist class would be to invite destruction.

The work the workers have to do in this country, the way to freedom, is through building a class conscious political movement which will carry on the work of educating the workers to an understanding of the system of exploitation which now exists and the class character of the government and to organize the workers for the struggle to wrest control of the government out of the hands of the capitalist class. The Socialist Party is the medium through which this work can be done. The workers of the country should give it their undivided support.

At the same time it is an essential part of the work of the workers to build up organizations in the industries themselves, having as their goal to supersede the capitalists in control of industry. In these organizations in the industries are the beginning of the new industrial order that will expand and grow until they become a huge cooperative organization of the workers for control and management of the work of production and of all matters pertaining to their common interest.

Working class reconstruction of our industrial system can only be achieved by the working class itself. In Russia there is already emerging from the blood engulfed debris of capitalism the new industrial order that will be foundation of a better world, a world of security, peace, and happiness. This new society has been achieved through the sacrifice and devotion of millions of Russian workers. The workers of the United States can win the same goal if they prepare themselves and use their power.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

Published by 1000 Flowers Publishing Corvallis, OR, 2010. • Non-commercial reproduction permitted.