
The Socialist Party and the Working Class: Opening Campaign Speech in Indianapolis¹ (September 1, 1904)

Mr. Chairman, Citizens, and Comrades:—

There has never been a free people, a civilized nation, a real republic on this earth. Human society always consisted of masters and slaves, and the slaves have always been and are today, the foundation stones of the social fabric.

Wage-labor is but a name; wage-slavery is a fact.

The 25 million wage-workers in the United States are 25 million twentieth century slaves.

This is the plain meaning of what is known as the labor market. And the labor market follows the capitalist flag.

The most barbarous fact in all Christendom is the labor market. The mere term sufficiently expresses the animalism of commercial civilization.

They who buy and they who sell in the labor market are alike dehumanized by the inhuman traffic in the brains and blood and bones of human beings.

The labor market is the foundation of so-called civilized society. Without these shambles, without this commerce in human life, this sacrifice of manhood and womanhood, this barter of babes, this sale of souls, the capitalist civilizations of all lands and all climes would crumble to ruin and perish from the earth.

Twenty-five million wage-slaves are bought and sold daily at prevailing prices in the American labor market.

This is the paramount issue in the present national campaign.

Let me say at the very threshold of this discussion that the workers have but the one issue in this campaign, the overthrow of the capitalist system and the emancipation of the working class from wage slavery.

The capitalists may have the tariff, finance, imperialism, and other dust-covered and moth-eaten issues entirely to themselves.

The rattle of these relics no longer deceives workingmen whose heads are on their own shoulders.

They know by experience and observation that the gold standard, free silver, fiat money, protective tariff, free trade, imperialism, and anti-imperialism all mean capitalist rule and wage-slavery.

Their eyes are open and they can see; their brains are in operation and they can think.

The very moment a workingman begins to do his own thinking he understands the paramount issue, parts company with the capitalist politician and falls in line with his own class on the political battlefield.

The political solidarity of the working class means the "death of despotism, the birth of freedom, the sunrise of civilization.

Having said this much by way of introduction I will now enter upon the actualities of my theme.

The Class Struggle

We are entering tonight upon a momentous campaign. The struggle for political supremacy is not between political parties merely, as appears upon the surface, but at bottom it is a life and death struggle between two hostile economic classes, the one the capitalist and the other the working class.

The capitalist class is represented by the Republican, Democratic, Populist, and Prohibition parties, all of which stand for private ownership of the means of production and the triumph of any one of which will mean continued wage-slavery to the working class.

As the Populist and Prohibition sections of the capitalist party represent minority elements which propose to reform the capitalist system without disturbing wage-slavery, a vain and impossible task, they will be omitted from this discussion with all the credit due the rank and file for their good intentions.

The Republican and Democratic parties, or, to be more exact, the Republican-Democratic Party, represents the capitalist class in the class struggle. They are the political wings of the capitalist system and such differences as arise between them relate to spoils and not to principles.

With either of these parties in power one thing is always certain and that is that the capitalist class are in the saddle and the working class under the saddle.

Under the administration of both these parties the means of production are private property, production is carried forward for capitalist profit

purely, markets are glutted and industry paralyzed, workingmen become tramps and criminals while injunctions, soldiers, and riot guns are brought into action to preserve "law and order" in the chaotic carnival of capitalistic anarchy.

Deny it as may the cunning capitalists who are clear-sighted enough to perceive it, or ignore it as may the torpid workers who are too blind and unthinking to see it, the struggle in which we are engaged today is a class struggle, and as the toiling millions come to see and understand it and rally to the political standard of their class, they will drive all capitalist parties of whatever name into the same party, and the class struggle will then be so clearly revealed that the hosts of labor will find their true place in the conflict and strike the united and decisive blow that will destroy slavery and achieve their full and final emancipation.

In this struggle the working men and women and children are represented by the Socialist Party and it is my privilege to address you in the name of that revolutionary and uncompromising party of the working class.

Attitude of the Workers

What shall be the attitude of the workers of the United States in the present campaign? What part shall they take in it? What party and what principles shall they support by their ballots? And why?

These are questions the importance of which are not sufficiently recognized by workingmen or they would not be the prey of parasites and the servile tools of scheming politicians who use them only at election time to renew their master's lease of power and perpetuate their own ignorance, poverty, and shame.

In answering these questions I propose to be as frank and candid as plain-meaning words will allow, for I have but one object in this discussion and that object is not office, but the truth, and I shall state it as I see it if I have to stand alone.

But I shall not stand alone, for the party that has my allegiance and may have my life, the Socialist Party, the party of the working class, the party of emancipation, is made up of men and women who know their rights and scorn to compromise with their oppressors; who want no votes that can be bought and no support under any false pretenses whatsoever.

The Socialist Party stands squarely upon its proletarian principles and relies wholly upon the forces of industrial progress and the education of the working class.

The Socialist Party buys no votes and promises no offices. Not a farthing is spent for whisky or cigars. Every penny in the campaign fund is the voluntary offering of workers and their sympathizers and every penny is used for education.

What other parties can say the same?

Ignorance alone stands in the way of socialist success. The capitalist parties understand this and use their resources to prevent the workers from seeing the light.

Intellectual darkness is essential to industrial slavery. Capitalist parties stand for slavery and night. The Socialist Party is the herald of freedom and light.

Capitalist parties cunningly contrive to divide the workers upon dead issues. The Socialist Party is uniting them upon the living issue: Death to wage-slavery!

When industrial slavery is as dead as the issues of the Siamese capitalist parties, the Socialist Party will have fulfilled its mission and enriched history.

And now to our questions: First, every workingman and woman owe it to themselves, their class, and their country to take an active and intelligent interest in political affairs.

The Ballot

The ballot of united labor expresses the people's will and the people's will is the supreme law of a free nation.

The ballot means that labor is no longer dumb, that at last it has a voice, that it may be heard and if united must be heeded.

Centuries of struggle and sacrifice were required to wrest this symbol of freedom from the mailed clutch of tyranny and place it in the hand of labor as the shield and lance of attack and defense.

The abuse and not the use of it is responsible for its evil.

The divided vote of labor is the abuse of the ballot and the penalty is slavery and death.

The united vote of those who toil and have not will vanquish those who have and toil not and solve forever the problem of democracy.

The Historic Struggle of Classes

Since the race was young there have been class struggles. In every state of society, ancient and modern, labor has been exploited, degraded, and in subjection.

Civilization has done little for labor except to modify the forms of its exploitation.

Labor has always been the mudsill of the social fabric — is so now and will be until the class struggle ends in class extinction and free society.

Society has always been and is now built upon exploitation — the exploitation of a class, the working class — whether slaves, serfs, or wage-laborers; and the exploited working class have always been, instinctively or consciously, in revolt against their oppressors.

Through all the centuries the enslaved toilers have moved slowly but surely toward their final freedom.

The call of the Socialist Party is to the exploited class, the workers in all useful trades and professions, all honest occupations, from the most menial service to the highest skill, to rally beneath their own standard and put an end to the last of the barbarous class struggles by conquering the capitalist government, taking possession of the means of production, and making them common property of all, abolishing wage-slavery and establishing the cooperative commonwealth.

The first step in this direction is to sever all relations with capitalist parties. They are precisely alike and I challenge their most discriminating partisans to tell them apart in relation to labor.

The Republican and Democratic parties are alike capitalist parties — differing only in being committed to different sets of capitalist interests — they have the same principles under varying colors, are equally corrupt, and are one in their subservience to capital and their hostility to labor.

The ignorant workingman who supports either of these parties forgets his own fetters and is the unconscious author of his own misery. He can and must be made to see and think and act with his fellows in supporting the party of his class and this work of education is the crowning virtue of the socialist movement.

The Republican Party

Let us briefly consider the Republican Party from the worker's standpoint. It is capitalist to the core. It has not and can not have the slightest interest in labor except to exploit it.

Why should a workingman support the Republican Party?

Why should a millionaire support the Socialist Party?

For precisely the same reason that all the millionaires are opposed to the Socialist Party, all the workers should be opposed to the Republican Party. It is a capitalist party, is loyal to capitalist interests and entitled to the support of capitalist voters on election day.

All it has for workingmen is its "glorious past" and a "glad hand" when it wants their votes.

The Republican Party is now and has been for several years, in complete control of government.

What has it done for labor? What has it not done for capital?

Not one of the crying abuses of capital has been curbed under Republican rule. Not one of the petitions of labor has been granted.

The eight-hour and anti-injunction bills, upon which organized labor is a unit, were again ruthlessly slain by the last Congress in obedience to the capitalist masters. David M. Parry has greater influence at Washington than all the millions of organized workers.

Read the national platform of the Republican Party and see if there is in all its bombast a crumb of comfort for labor. The convention that adopted it was a capitalist convention and the only thought it had of labor was how to extract its vote without waking it up. In the only reference it made to labor it had to speak easy so as to avoid offense to the capitalists who own it and furnish the boodle to keep it in power.

The labor platforms of the Republican and Democratic parties are interchangeable and non-redeemable. They both favor "justice to capital and justice to labor." This hoary old platitude is worse than meaningless. It is false and misleading and so intended. Justice to labor means that labor shall have what it produces. This leaves nothing for capital.

Justice to labor means the end of capital.

The old parties intend nothing of the kind. It is false pretense and false promise. It has served well in the past. Will it continue to catch the votes of unthinking and deluded workers?

What workingmen had part in the Republican national convention or were honored by it?

The grand coliseum swarmed with trust magnates, corporation barons, money lords, stock gamblers, professional politicians, lawyers, lobbyists, and other plutocratic tools and mercenaries, but there was no room for the horny-handed and horny-headed sons of toil. They built it, but were not in it.

Compare that convention with the convention of the Socialist Party, composed almost wholly of workingmen and women and controlled wholly in the interest of their class.

But a party is still better known by its chosen representatives than by its platform declarations. Who are the nominees of the Republican Party for the highest offices in the gift of the nation and what is their relation to the working class?

First of all, Theodore Roosevelt and Charles W. Fairbanks, ²candidates for president and vice-president, respectively, deny the class struggle and this almost infallibly fixes their status as friends of capital and enemies of labor. They insist that they can serve both; but the fact is obvious that only one can be served and that one at the expense of the other. Mr. Roosevelt's whole political career proves it.

The capitalists made no mistake in nominating Mr. Roosevelt. They know him well and he has served them well. They know that his instincts, associations, tastes, and desires are with them, that he is in fact one of them and that he has nothing in common with the working class.

The only evidence of the contrary is his membership in the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen which seems to have come to him coincident with his ambition to succeed himself in the presidential chair. He is a full fledged member of the union, has the grip, signs, and passwords, but it is not reported that he is attending meetings, doing picket duty, supporting strikes and boycotts, and performing such other duties as his union obligation imposes.

When Ex-President Grover Cleveland violated the constitution and outraged justice by seizing the state of Illinois by the throat and handcuffing her civil administration at the behest of the crime-sustained trusts and corporations, Theodore Roosevelt was among his most ardent admirers and enthusiastic supporters. He wrote in hearty commendation of the atrocious act, pronounced it most exalted patriotism, and said he would have done the same thing himself had he been president.

And so he would and so he will!

How impressive to see the Rough Rider embrace the Smooth Statesman! Oyster Bay and Buzzard's Bay!³

Two souls with but a single thought,
Two hearts that beat as one.⁴

There is also the highest authority for the statement charging Mr. Roosevelt with declaring about the same time he was lauding Cleveland that if he was in command he would have such as Altgeld, Debs, and other traitors lined up against a dead wall and shot into corpses. The brutal remark was not for publication but found its way into print and Mr. Roosevelt, after he became a candidate, attempted to make denial, but the distinguished editor who heard him say it pinned him fast, and the slight doubt that remained was dispelled by the words themselves which sound like Roosevelt and bear the impress of his war-like visage.

Following the Pullman strike in 1894 there was an indignant and emphatic popular protest against "government by injunction," which has not yet by any means subsided.

Organized labor was, and is, a unit against this insidious form of judicial usurpation as a means of abrogating constitutional restraints of despotic power.

Mr. Roosevelt with his usual zeal to serve the ruling class and keep their protesting slaves in subjection, vaulted into the arena and launched his vitriolic tirade upon the mob that dared oppose the divine decree of a corporation judge.

"The men who object to what they style 'government by injunction,'" said he, "are, as regards the essential principles of government, in hearty sympathy with their remote skin-clad ancestors, who lived in caves, fought one another with stone-headed axes, and ate the mammoth and woolly rhinoceros. They are ... dangerous whenever there is the least danger of their making the principles of this ages-buried past living factors in our present life. They are not in sympathy with men of good minds and good civic morality."⁵

In direct terms and plain words Mr. Roosevelt denounces all those who oppose "Government by Injunction" as cannibals, barbarians, and anarchists, and this violent and sweeping stigma embraces the whole organized movement of labor, every man, woman, and child that wears the badge of union labor in the United States.

It is not strange in the light of these facts that the national Congress, under President Roosevelt's administration, suppresses anti-injunction and eight-hour bills and all other measures favored by labor and resisted by capital.

No stronger or more convincing proof is required of Mr. Roosevelt's allegiance to capital and opposition to labor, nor of the class struggle and class rule which he so vehemently denies; and the workingman who in the face of these words and acts, can still support Mr. Roosevelt must feel himself flattered in being publicly proclaimed a barbarian, and sheer gratitude, doubtless, impels him to crown his benefactor with the highest honors of the land.

If the working class are barbarians, according to Mr. Roosevelt, this may account for his esteeming himself as having the very qualities necessary to make himself Chief of the Tribe.

But it must be noted that Mr. Roosevelt denounced organized labor as savages long before he was a candidate for president. After he became a candidate he joined the tribe and is today, himself, according to his own dictum, a barbarian and the enemy of civic morality.

The labor union to which President Roosevelt belongs and which he is solemnly obligated to support, is unanimously opposed to "Government by Injunction." President Roosevelt knew it when he joined it and he also knew that those who oppose injunction rule have the instincts of cannibals and are a menace to morality, but his proud nature succumbed to political ambition, and his ethical ideas vanished as he struck the trail that led to the tribe and, after a most dramatic scene and impressive ceremony, was decorated with the honorary badge of international barbarism.

How Theodore Roosevelt, the trade-unionist, can support the presidential candidate who denounced him as an immoral and dangerous barbarian he may decide at his leisure, and so may all other men in the United States who are branded with the same vulgar stigma, and their ballots will determine if they have the manhood to resent insult and rebuke its author, or if they have been fitly characterized and deserve the humiliation and contempt.

The appointment of Judge Taft to a cabinet position is corroborative evidence, if any be required, of President Roosevelt's fervent faith in Government by Injunction. Judge Taft first came into national notoriety when, some years ago, sitting with Judge Ricks, who was later tried for malfeasance, he issued the celebrated injunction during the Toledo, Ann Arbor

& North Michigan railroad strike that paralyzed the Brotherhoods of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen and won for him the gratitude and esteem of every corporation in the land. He was hauled to Toledo, the headquarters of the railroad, in a special car, pulled by a special engine, on special time, and after hastily consulting the railroad magnates and receiving instructions, he let go the judicial lightning that shivered the unions to splinters and ended the strike in total defeat. Judge Taft is a special favorite with the trust barons and his elevation to the cabinet was ratified with joy at the court of St. Plute.

Still again did President Roosevelt drive home his arch-enmity to labor and his implacable hostility to the trade union movement when he made Paul Morton, the notorious union-hater and union-wrecker, his secretary of the navy. That appointment was an open insult to every trade unionist in the country and they who lack the self-respect to resent it at the polls may wear the badge, but they are lacking wholly in the spirit and principles of union labor.

Go ask the brotherhood men who were driven from the CB&Q and the striking union machinists on the Santa Fe to give you the pedigree of Mr. Morton and you will learn that his hate for union men is coupled only by his love for the scabs who take their places.

Such a man and such another as Sherman Bell the military ferret of the Colorado mine owners are the ideal patriots and personal chums of Mr. Roosevelt and by honoring these he dishonors himself and should be repudiated by the ballot of every working man in the nation.

Mr. Fairbanks, the Republican candidate for vice-president is a corporation attorney of the first class and a plutocrat in good and regular standing. He is in every respect a fit and proper representative of his party and every millionaire in the land may safely support him.

The Democratic Party

In referring to the Democratic party in this discussion we may save time by simply saying that since it was born again at the St. Louis convention it is near enough like its Republican ally to pass for a twin brother.

The former party of the "common people" is no longer under the boycott of plutocracy since it has adopted the Wall street label and renounced its middle class heresies.

The radical and progressive element of the former Democracy have been evicted and must seek other quarters. They were an unmitigated nuisance in the conservative counsels of the old party. They were for the "common people" and the trusts have no use for such a party.

Where but to the Socialist Party can these progressive people turn? They are now without a party and the only genuine Democratic Party in the field is the Socialist Party and every true Democrat should thank Wall Street for driving him out of a party that is democratic in name only and into one that is democratic in fact.

The St. Louis convention was a trust jubilee. The Wall street reorganizes made short work of the free silver element. From first to last it was a capitalistic convocation. Labor was totally ignored. As an incident, two thousand choice chairs were reserved for the Business Men's League of St. Louis, an organization hostile to organized labor, but not a chair was tendered to those whose labor had built the convention hall, had clothed, transported, fed, and wine the delegates and whose votes are counted on as if they were so many dumb driven cattle, to pull the ticket through in November.⁶

As another incident, when Lieutenant Richmond Hobson⁷ dramatically declared that President Cleveland had been the only president who had ever been patriotic enough to use the federal troops to crush union labor, the trust agents, lobbyists, tools, and claquers screamed with delight and the convention shook with applause.

The platform is precisely the same as the Republican platform in relation to labor. It says nothing and means the same. A plank was proposed condemning the outrages in Colorado under Republican administration, but upon order from the Parryites it was promptly thrown aside.

The editor of American Industries, organ of the [National] Manufacturers' Association, commented at length in the issue of July 15th, on the triumph of capital and the defeat of labor at both Republican and Democratic national conventions. Among other things he said: "The two labor lobbies, partly similar in make-up, were, to put it bluntly, thrown out bodily in both places." And that is the simple fact and is known of all men who read the papers. The capitalist organs exult because labor, to use their own brutal expression, was kicked bodily out of both the Republican and Democratic national conventions.

What more than this is needed to open the eyes of workingmen to the fact that neither of these parties is their party and that they are as strangely

out of place in them as Rockefeller and Vanderbilt would be in the Socialist Party?

And how many more times are they to be "kicked out bodily" before they stay out and join the party of their class in which labor is not only honored but is supreme, a party that is clean, that has conscience and convictions, a party that will one day sweep the old parties from the field like chaff and issue the Proclamation of Labor's Emancipation?

Judge Alton B. Parker corresponds precisely to the Democratic platform. It was made to order for him. His famous telegram in the expiring hour removed the last wrinkle and left it a perfect fit

Thomas W. Lawson,⁸ the Boston millionaire, charges that Senator Patrick McCarren,⁹ who brought out Judge Parker for the nomination, is on the payroll of the Standard Oil company as political master mechanic at \$20,000 a year, and that Parker is the chosen tool of Standard Oil. Mr. Lawson offers Senator McCarren \$100,000 if he will disprove the charge.

William Jennings Bryan denounced Judge Parker as a tool of Wall Street before he was nominated and declared that no self-respecting Democrat could vote for him, and after his nomination he charged that it had been dictated by the trusts and secured by "crooked and indefensible methods." Mr. Bryan also said that labor had been betrayed in the convention and need look for nothing from the Democratic Party. He made many other damaging charges against his party and its candidates, but when the supreme test came he was not equal to it, and instead of denouncing the betrayers of the "common people" and repudiating their made-to-order Wall Street program, he compromised with the pirates that scuttled his ship and promised with his lips the support his heart refused and his conscience condemned.

The Democratic nominee for president was one of the supreme judges of the State of New York who declared the eight-hour law unconstitutional and this is an index of his political character.

In his address accepting the nomination he makes but a single allusion to labor and in this he takes occasion to say that labor is charged with having recently used dynamite in destroying property and that the perpetrators should be subjected to "the most rigorous punishment known to the law." This cruel intimation amounts to conviction in advance of trial and indicates clearly the trend of his capitalistically trained judicial mind. He made no such reference to capital, nor to those ermined rascals who use judicial dynamite in blowing up the constitution while labor is looted and

starved by capitalistic freebooters who trample all law in the mire and leer and mock at their despoiled and helpless victims.

It is hardly necessary to make more than passing reference to Henry G. Davis,¹⁰ Democratic candidate for vice-president. He is a coal baron, railroad owner, and, of course, an enemy to union labor. He has amassed a great fortune exploiting his wage-slaves and has always strenuously resisted every attempt to organize them for the betterment of their condition. Mr. Davis is a staunch believer in the virtue of the injunction as applied to union labor. As a young man he was in charge of a slave plantation and his conviction is that wage-slaves should be kept free from the contaminating influence of the labor agitator and render cheerful obedience to their master.

Mr. Davis is as well qualified to serve his party as is Senator Fairbanks to serve the Republican Party and wage workers should have no trouble in making their choice between this precious pair of plutocrats, and certainly no intelligent workingman will hesitate an instant to discard them both and cast his vote for Ben Hanford, their working class competitor, who is as loyally devoted to labor as Fairbanks and Davis are to capital.

The Socialist Party

In what has been said of other parties I have tried to show why they should not be supported by the common people, least of all by workingmen, and I think I have shown clearly enough that such workers as do support them are guilty, consciously or unconsciously, of treason to their class. They are voting into power the enemies of labor and are morally responsible for the crimes thus perpetrated upon their fellow workers and sooner or later they will have to suffer the consequences of their miserable acts.

The Socialist Party is not, and does not pretend to be, a capitalist party. It does not ask, nor does it expect the votes of the capitalist class. Such capitalists as do support it do so seeing the approaching doom of the capitalist system and with a full understanding that the Socialist Party is not a capitalist party, nor a middle class party, but a revolutionary working class party, whose historic mission is to conquer capitalism on the political battlefield, take control of government and through the public powers take possession of the means of wealth production, abolish wage-slavery and emancipate all workers and all humanity.

The people are as capable of achieving their industrial freedom as they were to secure their political liberty and both are necessary to a free nation.

The capitalist system is no longer adapted to the needs of modern society. It is outgrown and fetters the forces of progress. Industrial and commercial competition are largely of the past. The handwriting blazes on the wall. Centralization and combination are the modern forces in industrial and commercial life. Competition is breaking down, and cooperation is supplanting it.

The hand tools of early times are used no more. Mammoth machines have taken their places. A few thousand capitalists own them and many millions of workingmen use them.

All the wealth the vast army of labor produces above its subsistence is taken by the machine owning capitalists, who also own the land and the mills, the factories, railroads and mines, the forests and fields and all other means of production and transportation.

Hence wealth and poverty, millionaires and beggars, castles and caves, luxury and squalor, painted parasites on the boulevard and painted poverty among the red lights.

Hence strikes, boycotts, riots, murder, suicide, insanity, prostitution on a fearful and increasing scale.

The capitalist parties can do nothing. They are a part, an iniquitous part of the foul and decaying system. There is no remedy for the ravages of death.

Capitalism is dying and its extremities are already decomposing. The blotches upon the surface show that the blood no longer circulates. The time is near when the cadaver will have to be removed and the atmosphere purified.

In contrast with the Republican and Democratic conventions, where politicians were the puppets of plutocracy, the convention of the Socialist Party consisted of workingmen and women fresh from their labors, strong, clean, wholesome, self-reliant, ready to do and dare for the cause of labor, the cause of humanity.

Proud indeed am I to have been chosen by such a body of men and women to bear aloft the proletarian standard in this campaign, and heartily do I endorse the clear and cogent platform of the party which appeals with increasing force and eloquence to the whole working class of the country.

To my associate upon the national ticket I give my hand with all my heart. Ben Hanford typifies the working class and fitly represents the historic mission and revolutionary character of the Socialist Party.

Closing Words

These are stirring days for living men. The day of crisis is drawing near and socialists are exerting all their power to prepare the people for it.

The old order of society can survive but little longer. Socialism is next in order. The swelling minority sounds warning of the impending change. Soon that minority will be the majority and then will come the cooperative commonwealth.

Every workingman should rally to the standard of his class and hasten the full-orbed day of freedom.

Every progressive democrat must find his way in our direction and if he will but free himself from prejudice and study the principles of socialism he will soon be a sturdy supporter of our party.

Every sympathizer with labor, every friend of justice, every lover of humanity should support the Socialist Party as the only party that is organized to abolish industrial slavery, the prolific source of the giant evils that afflict the people.

Who with a heart in his breast can look upon Colorado without keenly feeling the cruelties and crimes of capitalism? Repression will not help her. Brutality will only brutalize her. Private ownership and wage-slavery are the curse of Colorado. Only socialism will save Colorado and the nation.

The overthrow of capitalism is the object of the Socialist Party. It will not fuse with any other party and it would rather die than compromise.

The Socialist Party comprehends the magnitude of its task and has the patience of preliminary defeat and the faith of ultimate victory.

The working class must be emancipated by the working class.

Woman must be given her true place in society by the working class.

Child labor must be abolished by the working class.

Society must be reconstructed by the working class.

The working class must be employed by the working class.

The fruits of labor must be enjoyed by the working class.

War, bloody war, must be ended by the working class.

These are the principles and objects of the Socialist Party and we fearlessly proclaim them to our fellow men.

We know our cause is just and that it must prevail.

With faith and hope and courage we hold our heads erect and with dauntless spirit marshal the working class for the march from capitalism to socialism, from slavery to freedom, from barbarism to civilization.

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¹ This speech officially launched the second campaign of Eugene V. Debs for president of the United States. A ten week public tour followed, with Debs speaking nightly to packed houses from California to Massachusetts, Alabama to Michigan. Three distinct pamphlet editions of this speech were issued in conjunction with the 1904 campaign, and the title remained in print through Chicago publisher Charles H. Kerr & Co. for more than a decade. It was thus one of the basic pieces of American socialist propaganda of the era.

² Charles W. Fairbanks (1852-1918), an attorney from Indianapolis, was a one-term member of the US Senate from Indiana, succeeding Democrat Daniel W. Voorhees in the position from 1897 until his inauguration as vice-president in 1905.

³ Oyster Bay, New York, and Buzzard's Bay, Massachusetts, were the locations of the posh summer homes of Presidents Roosevelt and Cleveland, respectively.

⁴ A ubiquitous romantic couplet frequently misattributed in the internet age to John Keats (1795-1821). The lines are actually derived from a flowing translation of the poem "Mein Herz, ich will dich fragen," by Friedrich Halm (pseudonym of Eligius Franz Joseph von Münch-Bellinghausen, 1806-1871).

⁵ Theodore Roosevelt, "The Three Vice-Presidential Candidates and What They Represent," *Review of Reviews*, vol. 14, no. 3 (Sept. 1896), p. 295.

⁶ Debs is correct in his assertion that 2,000 of 11,000 total seats at the 1904 Democratic National Convention held in July had been reserved for the Business Men's League of St. Louis — a number only slightly less than the 2,020 seats reserved for delegates and alternates themselves and the 2,288 gallery tickets allocated for distribution by delegates.

⁷ Lt. Richmond Hobson was a hero of the Spanish-American War, having led a dangerous mission of eight volunteers to attempt to sink the steamship *USS Merrimac* as a blockship in the entrance of Santiago harbor in order to entrap the Spanish fleet. The ship was sunk by the Spanish without accomplishing its object and Hobson and his seven compatriots were made prisoners-of-war. The *Merrimac* was the only ship sunk by the Spanish during the brief 1898 conflagration.

⁸ Thomas W. Lawson (1857-1925) was a Boston multimillionaire who made his fortune as a partner of the Amalgamated Copper Mining Co., extracting profit from mines of Montana. Lawson later disavowed his earlier commercial activities and became a reform advocate, authoring the book *Frenzied Finance, Volume 1: The Crime of Amalgamated* (1905) and running as an independent candidate for the United States Senate in 1918.

⁹ Patrick Henry McCarran (1849-1909) served a number of terms as a Democratic member of the New York State Senate.

¹⁰ Henry G. Davis (1823-1916), a millionaire and former member of the US Senate from West Virginia, was 80 years old at the time of his nomination for vice-president, making him the oldest major party nominee for top office.