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INSIDE STORIES FROM CHICAGO

Four Delegates Tell What They Saw

HERMAN'S IMPRESSIONS

The convention has come and gone. Delegates from all states and territories of the United States were present. They were from all walks of life, from wage-worker down to preacher. Some were poor and a few were rich.

Many delegates arrived at Chicago somewhat worn as a result of hundreds and in some cases thousands of miles of riding—day and night they stayed with the cushions, not being flush enough to afford a Pullman sleeper.

Others arrived not quite so worn, because they could afford to patronize the sleepers.

All of them, however, arrived with the firm conviction that there was work to be done and that they were elected to do that work.

All delegates (except those from Chicago) with whom I conversed agreed with me that they could live at least two days by biting chunks out of the atmosphere before they would become well enough acclimated to eat some real food.

I am now firmly convinced that Chicago is one of the most undesirable cities in which to hold our national conventions.

The first two and a half days of the convention's time was taken up by delegates who seemed to think it was necessary to qualify as orators before they would be eligible to take part in the proceedings.

These orations were very frequently interrupted by points of order and questions of information.

It was very apparent that not many delegates had spent much time in the study of parliamentary usage.

Every Socialist should read and study "Robert's Rules of Order."

When we finally got settled down to real work, an earnestness and sincerity was shown which bodes no good to the capitalist class.

One of the encouraging signs of this convention was the self reliance shown by the great majority of the delegates—they were agreed that they didn't need any Messiahs.

The small minority who really believed (and honestly, too) that they were especially ordained to guard the Socialist Party and save the proletariat, carried a worried expression with them throughout the entire convention.

One of these, Victor L. Berger, while speaking in favor of a committee on trades unions, tried to impress his importance on the convention by threatening to bolt if he didn't have his way. He didn't convince the delegates that his presence was absolutely necessary to the existence of the Socialist Party and was even told by some that the sooner he carried out his threat the better it would be for the party. Anyhow, he didn't have his way and he didn't bolt either.

Another incident similar to this occurred in the debate on the first demand of the program as presented by the committee.

It read as follows: "We demand the national ownership of railroads, telegraphs, telephones, steamship lines and all other means of transportation and communication." This was amended to strike out "national," substitute "collective" and add the words "and land."

Many speeches were made for and against the amendment.

It was brought out in the course of the debate that those who were opposed to the amendment believed in the single-tax theory that the title to land should be vested in occupancy and use.

Mrs. Ida Crouch-Hazlet in speaking against the amendment seemed to infer that she was one of the special guardians of the Socialist Party, and that no one had a right to give expression to an opinion which conflicted with her own.

She did not put up any argument but confined herself to abusing her opponents, some of her choice phrases being: "Hot air and ignorance," "Young and ignorant," etc. The amendment was carried and the Socialist Party very properly went on record for the collective ownership of all land as well as other means of social production.

A strong fight occurred over the adoption of a plank on religion. It at first seemed to be the general opinion that the party should remain silent on this question. A. M. Lewis made a strong and able plea against an expression of opinion by the Socialist Party on the matter of religion, "but," he demanded, "if it is necessary to state our position let us tell the truth," namely, that the church is one of the superstructures of the present economic order and must protect the interests of the capitalist class, from whom it derives its revenue.

The convention adjourned before taking final action and when we were convened someone moved the present clause in the platform as a substitute for the original and after another speech by Lewis which was a beautiful straddle, the amendment was carried.

I asked Lewis afterwards what induced him to straddle and he said

That every ruling sentiment of its deliberations was against capitalism, and emphatically for the working class, was rounded out conclusively in the declaration of principles and platform, and the selection of truly revolutionary working class candidates.

Its accomplishment of the task in hand, proved beyond doubt or cavil, the successful democratic management of a proletarian body of representatives.

That there was a slated affair on the part of some of the earnest, active workers to carry the convention in accordance with their own views, was clearly evident. Yet not without honor to themselves and the party; for out of each heated debate and prolonged discussion we emerged a unit, and without a faction.

We favor the pending referendum measure, that provides for the assembling in convention, of the national party every two years instead of every four years.

The wonderful growth of the movement, and the eventually changing order of present day society makes it expedient that we equip ourselves for the change as thoroughly as wisest counsel will permit. We need all the skill and preparation possible for the oncoming, unavoidable change that awaits us.

The insignificant few cents per member of tax that must be levied on the individuals in the party, to defray the expense incurred, would be as a penny wise and pound foolish saving investment, as compared with the wisdom and knowledge gained.

We need to improve every opportunity in wisely considering the funeral obsequies of a decayed, and discarded system, whose portals open in to the grandest, sublimest social relation the world has yet precluded, and entered into.

In the establishment of a co-operative commonwealth on the wrecked

ruins of capitalism, we must if possible, preserve every part and parcel of the nation's wealth for use in the reconstruction. Wise counsel will aid in the preservation of the work of our own hands. We must make for construction as against the destruction of the direct actionists that have been created by and through this present individual system of personalities.

Our power, and majority, will be unshaken, in by this same, unshaking, untutored class who now unintelligently vote with their masters, and thereby continue the rulling power to enslave them.

Every informed Socialist of today will then become a counselor to avert catastrophes; not for the preservation of capitalist interests, but to avoid the already acquired propensities of the direct actionist, from asserting their individuality as against the collectivity.

We believe we should at this time begin something of a suitable constructive policy that will tend to educate ourselves toward the political as well as industrial plans of the future society.

The proletarian interests, and education, demand this general instruction. Contrary to a reaction through the passing change we should progress, with a greater and with more scientific rapidity than hitherto. We are not a party, in the present understood definition, but we are rather an economic condition, evolving into the most advanced type of socialization.

Capitalism is doomed; likewise the bourgeoisie, or middle class; the very science of our movement makes for proletarianism.

Party contention makes only for further enlightenment, and cannot effect a disruption. The very essence of its principles being proletarian likeness it to a barrel whose both ends are alike and the overturning of it leaves it just the same. Economic evolution

lies behind all, and the movement cannot precede it.

When we sat in that convention with its weight of duty falling heavily upon us, and were cheered by the numerous telegrams from across the waters on either side; each one ringing with the proletarian cause and true comradeship, we felt the thrill of common brotherhood fill our lungs as only those who are bound can feel, when they hear the rusty gratings of the prison doors moving their hinges, in a united proclamation, for the overthrow of capitalist oppression, that burdens our lives, from the cradle to the grave.

Freedom not only for the wage slave but for the overburdened aristocracy of the world, whose cares are heavy with the weight of the possession and individual management, of the plunder of past ages. We will beget, and bequeath, to society, such an inheritance, as present day humanity has little dreamed of.

In all ages of past human relations there have been the world's great men and benefactors from biblical Abraham down through the prophets, Christ, even unto our own Abraham Lincoln and Karl Marx. While the Mohammed, the Buddha, the Confucius, of other nations have had like reverence and regard. Will not the society of the future look back in like manner upon the periods of stigma, persecution and sacrifice of today, as we stand in defense of advancement and preservation of the evolutionary forces of life and happiness? As against the powers that beget and administer the blundering social conditions of oppression? With its festering wealth of accumulations and armed protection on one side, and its robbed and oppressed on the other, whose suffering is caused through unfair distribution of the creation of their own hands? And whose possession is restrained only through the fear of the

weapons and bullets of their own handcraft? It is an open secret among the world's thinkers and writers of today that to the Socialists belongs the future. Truly with Karl Marx we may say humanity has nothing to lose but its chains and the fullness of a world to gain.

C. W. B.

WAG'S IMPRESSIONS

The Washington comrades would have smiled much had they had the chance to watch the work of the Credentials committee in considering the Washington contest. The hidden attempt of some of the committee to play into the hands of Hutcheson. Then the cowardly argument, that both sides were right and both were wrong. Untermyer proved that his place in the Socialist movement was not with the organization work for he showed utter ignorance in system and regularity. He surely has not received the drilling in Local work that the average member should. Gaylord was prejudiced against us from the start. Reilly of New Jersey and Tuck of California presented the only orderly disposition of the contest. Schwartz of Pennsylvania missed several meetings of the committee, not knowing or being informed of their taking place. Boomer was given scant consideration by the evaders because he was from our state.

The Credentials Committee jumped the job of deciding who was who in Washington by asking the convention to give the job to the National Executive Committee, which it did. This committee met and heard both sides. We have Hillquit of this committee to thank for his logical and unprejudiced

analysis of our trouble in Washington. He was our only original defender on committee. He convinced Berger that we were "it," in spite of Berger's previous conception, for Berger understands organization and knows it when he sees it. And he saw that we knew a few things about organization. Thompson fell on our side with Berger. Simons was pro and con till he saw things coming our way. Stokes was chairman and said nothing, realizing undoubtedly that he knew nothing much about it. Work was a rather quiet secretary. Floaten was absent. In the end Hitchison's party was laughed at by Berger and Simons for being simple and "easy" and we were praised for our knowledge of how and when to do what we, the anti-fusionists, want to do.

When the National Executive Committee reported to the convention, Goebel, who has a particular grudge against Washington, was the most ardent opponent of the report. His main point was that our state constitution was autocratic and did not allow the rank and file to rule by means of the referendum and initiative. Grant Miller of Nevada, who afterwards admitted that he had found out by watching us that there was nothing much wrong with us, followed Goebel in a general denunciation of our constitution and what he supposed were our methods. An end was speedily made to this argument. The Washington delegates started to call for a reading of the objectionable parts of our constitution. Miller tried to shove the job of finding the objectionable on to Goebel. Goebel could not see it that way. A reading was called for from all parts of the floor. Miller was handed a copy of our constitution. He found nothing. He did find out he had been mis-

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ANARCHISM

By GUSTAV BANG
Translated from the Danish in "Social-Demokraten"
by Arthur Jensen

1. Socialism and Anarchism

The general conception of Anarchism is, that it is more far-reaching in its demands than Socialism. In other words, that it is an extremely radical and revolutionary movement.

That is correct only in as far as its outward appearance, its revolutionary sounding phrases and the violent means employed by it, are concerned. It is not an expression of a proletariat, which, boldly and fully conscious of the mission it is called on to perform in the history of the world, strives forward toward a new and higher social order, which shall release the restrained forces in Capitalist society; but that of a petty bourgeoisie, which feels itself stunted and subdued by the superior power of organized Capital in society, notes its own decay advancing further year after year, and, in its hopeless despair, seizes at every possibility, which apparently may revive the old conditions of the age of handicraft, when the petty traders and shopkeepers were unhampered by Capital—seizes at every idea reflecting such a possibility, and clings to it with the same passionate impulse of self-preservation, as that of a drowning person who grasps at every piece of timber floating toward him.

First Difference.

The first and most important difference between Socialism and Anarchism lies in the absolute opposite premises, from which they respectively strive toward the overthrow of existing social conditions.

While Socialism is saturated with the doctrine of evolution, bases its whole conception and all its practical activity on the fact, that the social structure is constantly changing form in accordance with certain determined historical laws, and therefore inquires into the nature and mode of operation of these laws, observes how they appear in existing society and sees how, with the certainty of a force of nature, they move in the direction of a new society, in which the means of production will be collectively owned as well as collectively used, a society the advent of which should be facilitated and hastened—not because it will mark the maximum of human welfare and human culture, for such an absolute impassible height will never be reached, since development is constantly moving forward, past newly gained results; but because it will mark the next great advance in the history of civilization and will convey a higher degree of welfare and culture, than it is possible to attain under present conditions—while Socialism thus is in absolute harmony with all scientific thought, Anarchism is purely Utopian in character.

It does not endeavor to investigate the social conditions, which, naturally, will be brought about as an effect of economic development, but arbitrarily seeks to construct a future society as the ideal, the one which is most in harmony with human nature.

Historical evolution is the basis of all Socialist investigation, while the abstract human nature is the basis of all anarchist thought.

Human Nature Variable.

Anarchism does not comprehend that human nature is a product of historical development. Aside from a small number of the most elementary natural instincts, that whole gigantic composite idea, which we encounter as "human nature," is extremely changeable, being wholly determined by the social environment, in which man lives. Note how differently we think, feel and act in the modern industrial city from what we did in the mediæval villages, in the ancient Greek trading centers, or in the prehistoric dwelling place; how different the various

interests, passions and desires are which animate man; how differently we judge about good and evil, honor and dishonor.

A deed, which under certain social conditions is considered as most honorable and conveys the highest regard to the person who performs it, because it is in harmony with the interests of society, may under different social conditions be condemned as detestable, because of its anti-social character. Among certain primitive tribes a young man is not considered worthy of associating with adults, until he has committed a certain number of thefts; mediæval chroniclers laud the warriors who on their crusades to foreign countries murdered peaceable peasants, speared babies, disgraced women and tortured their victims in every imaginable manner; and I wonder how some of our shining lights in society, for instance the stock gambler, the industrial baron, or the military officer, will be regarded in the eyes of the future.

But it is not alone the changing social forms, which each makes its impression on the mind and breeds its peculiar form of human nature, but the same difference is again found between the various classes within each society; the Capitalist and the Laborer maintain entirely opposite views on a great many various phenomena; their ideas of right and wrong, and of good and evil are divergent on a number of points; what to one seems the most natural thing in the world, fills the other with abhorrence; what leaves one perfectly cool and unmoved, arouses deep felt joy and admiration within the other—their every thought and feeling, their whole nature, is influenced by and formed in accordance with the social conditions under which they live and work.

Without understanding this constant transformation and change, the anarchist regards human nature as something eternal, something unchangeable, something which is and always remains in the same form, with the same qualities, like a mathematical quantity. The thing which he sets out to do, is to discover that form of human association which best corresponds with human nature and then to announce this discovery as a gospel; people will flock around him, will be seized by the new idea, because it corresponds with their innate nature, will make the new thoughts a reality and adapt themselves to the new social order—and then the maximum of social welfare and culture will have been reached, never to be exceeded.

Capitalist Human Nature.

But when the Anarchist thus labors with abstract human nature as a basis for his theory and when he endeavors to discover a new social system which forever and for all eternity and not alone under certain given historical conditions, will best comply with the inborn, natural desires of all mankind, he becomes a victim of self-delusion. That human nature which he uplifts to the position of something general and imperishable, is neither general nor imperishable; it is nothing but what is bred by the peculiar surroundings and social conditions of the class which he himself represents, the petty bourgeoisie—that petty bourgeoisie, which is being impoverished and subdued in competition with organized Capital, and now with sad reflection looks back at the independence and liberty it enjoyed in the good old days. When the Anarchist imagines that he is advocating the cause of all mankind, he is in fact only making himself spokesman for the class instinct of the petty bourgeoisie; when he imagines that he is presaging a future stage of society, he is in fact only describing in a glorified and beautiful form the old conditions prevailing during the age of the guilds; when he regards himself as extremely revolutionary, he is in fact at bottom deeply reactionary.

Vaillating Bourgeoisie.

The petty bourgeoisie, within which the Anarchist ideas have been generated stands between the great bourgeoisie and the proletariat and it has on its character the im-

pression of this intermediate position. Karl Marx in his book on revolution and counter-revolution in Germany, has given a splendid analysis of the class character of the petty bourgeoisie, an analysis which, in spite of the more than fifty years passed by, still holds good in every respect.

The petty bourgeois feels homeless in existing society, he swings between the hope of rising into the well situated classes and the fear of sinking down into the proletariat or deeper yet into the almshouse. He becomes vaillating in his politics, can be loyal to humiliation before a strongly feudal or monarchial form of government and form one of the strongest pillars of reaction, but on the other hand can be carried off by violent democratic movements, when the question is to combat a purely capitalist regime. He is a victim of constantly changing and apparently conflicting feelings, without firmness or consistency in his efforts, one moment inclined to combat the proletariat in conjunction with the ruling class and the next moment taking the opposite position—just because his own social position, being undefined, draws him in opposite directions. He will not find his permanent place in the modern class struggle, until his untenable position gradually becomes clear to him, and he gives up all political independence and steps into the political organization of the proletariat.

Anarchist is Bourgeois.

The anarchist idea is one of the convulsions which are the natural effect of the peculiar class position of the petty bourgeoisie. It reflects a series of feelings and emotions passing through the mind of the petty bourgeois.

When he dreads the fall into the proletariat it is not so much the length of the workday nor the size of his income, that he reflects on—many a small trader and shopkeeper is chained to his work for a longer period per day and receives a smaller income in the course of a year, than the majority of skilled workmen—as it is the loss of his economic independence. While a wage worker is employed in a shop that belongs to somebody else, dependent on the working rules, compelled to work a certain number of hours under certain set conditions, the petty bourgeois in his own business needs account to no one but himself, regards himself as a free man, as master of his own household. It is this economic independence and personal liberty which appears to him as the most precious gem. When comparing his own lot with that of the proletariat. And when he can not help but plainly notice how all this, through economic development, is more and more becoming a mere sham, a self-delusion, how his own existence is being undermined in his competition with organized industry, he is seized by a desperate hatred toward factory industry, the great department stores and the whole modern Capitalist system, with the state, the Capitalist state, as its foremost representative. But being tied by his class instinct to the old form of society and ensnared in its tradition, he can not, as the proletariat, look beyond the limits of existing social conditions and acknowledge that personal independence can no longer be maintained in the old form, but must be given an entirely new form in accordance with modern conditions. He reaches back and shapes his ideal in the image of the old guilds, where the individual traders lived as free men, each in his own shop, worked and exchanged their goods, enjoying the full product of their labor.

But in order to realize this ideal, the state with all other institutions in Capitalist society must be abolished and absolute "Anarchy," i. e. complete lack of government, ushered in. This goal once reached, unhampered human nature will bring forth social conditions as natural and as worthy of human association as possible.

In the next article, we will view the first and most prominent of all Anarchist philosophers, the Frenchman, Proudhon.

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ON THE INSIDE AT CHICAGO

Continued from Page One

led by Goebel. The convention by a port dismisses the petition of Hutchinson's party for a referendum of the state and recognizes us as the "duly, regularly constituted" party. vote of 162 to 29 accepted the report of the Executive Committee, which re-

The farmer delegates were a surprise to all wage worker delegates. They were revolutionary, recognized the class struggle basis of our party and that it must be a party of and for wage workers. Some delegates called them ultra-revolutionary. If this is true, there is surely less danger in that tendency than in the tendency toward middle class reform and compromise.

A return to the old manner of electing the National Secretary and Executive Committee, namely, by the National Committee, was good business. The only further amendment necessary now is the election of the National Executive from the membership of the National Committee instead of from the party membership outside of this committee. Then and only then will it represent the true executive of the National Committee and consequently the party. Berger was against this change. It spoils Wisconsin's chances of being the entire executive.

The clause was retained in the constitution allowing a referendum of a state by the National Executive, irrespective of principle, at any time a few kickers say there is a controversy. Knowing the clause to be a detriment to good organization, would it now not be advisable for all the states to refuse the national office a list of their locals and members, the same as Wisconsin has done? If this is done, then the National Executive will never be able to take a referendum of a state irrespective of principle involved upon demand of a few kickers. Wisconsin voted to retain this clause, which we in Washington know as harmful and Berger spoke in favor of retaining it.

The character and personnel of the the convention was all that anyone could desire. It was working class. Hero worship could not be found with a microscope. After the first few sessions all those who thought themselves a great add to be appreciated part of the convention, those who thought the Socialist Party could surely never get along without them, found themselves just as good as many whose names and pictures had never been printed and who had never been heard. The power of saying what was to be said and saying it understandingly, and orally, which in a new organization is more admired and powerful than common sense, was possessed by so many that those who came to the convention ready to furnish all the brains and hot air, found that the supply they brought was so small as compared with what they did not bring that you could hardly notice it at all. Milwaukee, which is Wisconsin, and Berger with his "my paper," "my city," "my organization," found themselves not quite all in fact, the ten Wisconsin delegates found they were just about one twentieth of the whole convention. When Berger talked about bolting, he was given full liberty to do so, not even a wee voice lifted in an effort to beg him to stay. The manipulators were manipulated. The preachers were tolerated equally with others. The lawyers were given a good chance to show their usefulness and the intellectuals were given work to do and were corrected when that work was not what was wanted. And gradually the West was discovered by the East to be part and parcel of the Socialist movement.

Every state seemed desirous of having one of its delegates act as chairman for a day. California boomed wheat, and after several defeats he was elected. Some hesitated in choosing him, remembering how little Richardson knew about that job, and how poor a chairman he made four years ago. This should not have figured against Wheat, but it did. Wheat made a very good chairman. Bandlow of Ohio undoubtedly was most efficient, in that he was strongest of all, would not be bluffed and knew his parliamentary law. Hillquit, who acted as temporary chairman, and during the first permanent session showed his fitness for that position in that he was very efficient in helping the convention decide what it really wanted without the convention knowing it. He could not show other qualifications, for the convention did not boll over until the second day. Carey and Slayton were equally efficient, neither showing special fitness. Clark of Texas was very weak in the chair and Thompson, who acted the last day, allowed the convention to organize itself into a perpetual, disorderly turmoil.

The last day's session was discouraging. Everything was rushed thru and one part of the house did not know and heard not what the other part was doing. The committees' reports on Government by Commission, Foreign Speaking, Press, Ways and Means (which committee had the Nebraska case in charge) and Women were all given scant consideration. The Committee on Government by Commission reported what it knew and had found out, but thought the matter should be given more study. The Press Committee report was mainly a call for support for Chicago Daily Socialist. The Nebraska case was side tracked, even though it is true that the former National Executive Committee violated our national constitution in revoking Nebraska's charter. The Finnish secretary's report was endorsed without a reading by the secretary of the convention. Then some one suddenly discovered that by this endorsement the convention had voted itself a prohibition party. The mistake was corrected.

The convention as a whole might have shown more deliberation. Many delegates were too hasty in arriving at conclusions. There was an apparent disposition to hurry, which simply had the effect of delaying progress. Next time the delegates should come prepared to stay a month if necessary, and delegates that do come should take a course of lessons in patience and endurance before coming, for they are essential qualifications that go to make good delegates.

New York, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin showed their strength in that they held state caucuses. Important matters that were discussed in these caucuses had the effect of bringing

the delegates of these states all prepared in argument and to vote upon the convention floor.

The caucus held by Wisconsin and Montana and a few delegates from other small states, in all about twenty-five delegates, to decide who should be the presidential candidate was effective only in showing its hand. Carey and Stedman or Hays and Stedman were the choice of this caucus. Hays refused to run unless positive assurance could be produced that Debs would not accept. The delegates from Massachusetts withdrew Carey's name after he had been placed in nomination, undoubtedly by Carey's consent or instructions. Carey would not run against Debs. Simons, was nominated by Stedman, who was the choice for Vice President of the caucus. Before the nominations some talk of a dark horse was heard. Berger brought the name to the front in the person of Carl D. Thompson. Now we may ask, was the speech of Stedman for Simons and Debs, in which he deplored the physical weakness of the latter, hinted at mistakes he had made, intimated that the campaign, if he were nominated, would be one of literature from Girard, Kansas, was this speech simply an effort to draw votes from Debs to Simons? Was Simons being used by the caucus or Wisconsin to make a stronger horse of Thompson? Did Carey and Hays decline out of respect for Debs or because they refused to be made fall guys? The result showed 159 votes for Debs, 14 for Thompson, of which Wisconsin supplied 8, Nebraska 1, New Jersey 2 and Illinois and New York each one in the persons of Carr and Hunter. Simons got 9 votes and Carey 15. Montana, seemingly not catching on to the black horse business, voted solidly for Carey.

In the nominations for Vice President the caucus showed better work. Only one choice. No black horse. Bandlow nominated Hanford, not making a nomination speech. Thompson, returning a favor, nominated Stedman, the choice of the caucus. Slayton, who had a boom all of his own, was nominated by Ryan of Oregon, much to the satisfaction of the caucus. May Simons and Woody were also nominees, as well as Carey and Lipscomb, who declined.

The result showed 106 votes for Hanford, 43 for Stedman, 20 for May Simons, 15 for Slayton and one each for Woody and Lipscomb. Had Slayton declined in favor of the strongest candidate of the working class, had Mrs. Simons been present to decline, the vote would then have been 141 to 43 for working class candidates for in this vote the cleanest division was had.

California gave Stedman 4 votes, Idaho 2 out of 3 with Utermar absent. Illinois gave him 5 in the persons of Berlyn, Brower, Korngold, Carr and Simons. Simons was nominated by Stedman, remember. Iowa gave Stedman 3, Nebraska its only one and Missouri 2. Montana voted solidly for him Minnesota 5 out of 7. Tennessee its only one. Wisconsin 8 out of 10. Tuttle and Weber voting for Hanford.

If the working class character of the Socialist Party should be shown at all, it surely should be made manifest in its choice for presidential candidates, in that it places before the voters men of the working class. Just how Thompson and Stedman brought it over their dear old hearts that they ought to be the choice; just where they got the nerve to run and just where others got the nerve to support them, would all be mystery did we not know that the contest between revolutionary and reform Socialism is still on. Thompson, the preacher, and Stedman, the lawyer, and all who supported them should be asked to inform the Socialist Party why Thompson and Stedman would be better candidates than Debs and Hanford. Anyway, as for the present, the revolutionary working class is on top.

We have all heard of Porter of Nebraska. He is about as ignorant as it is possible to be about party work. Well, the National Executive Committee was elected, and even care whether or not he is a party member. He was expelled by his own local just recently and a notice to that effect is on file in the national office. In the face of all this, the executive hires Porter as organizer for Nebraska under pay by the national office. Berger wanted it so. Simons recorded him self as not voting.

ALFRED WAGENKNECHT, Delegate from Washington.

OSBORNE'S IMPRESSIONS

To the Editor of "The Socialist" Dear Comrade: Socialist Convention held last month in Chicago was in some respects the most notable national political convention ever held in America. The size of the convention would be a very poor index of its character, for besides being a nominating convention it was also an organization convention.

The 218 delegates composing the convention were from every state and territory in the Union and were elected by the direct vote of the 40,000 dues paying members of the Socialist Party. The railway fare of every delegate to and from the convention was paid by the national organization, the money for this purpose being raised by a thirty-five cents per capita tax on the entire membership. This feature of the convention not only makes it possible for delegates to be elected entirely independent of their financial ability but at the same time makes the Socialist Party the only democratic and self-reliant political party in America, and whatever criticism of the convention or the persons who composed it, I may have to offer, the very fact that in the Socialist Party we freely criticize the action of the majority and yet submit to that majority any individual member, no matter how high his position, makes the Socialist Party today the one political organization through which the proletariat may express itself and execute its will.

The Credentials Committee reported that there were protests against seating the entire Washington delegation and Reverend Porter, the one delegate from Nebraska, and William McDevitt of the California delegation. The protest against McDevitt was on the ground that he was an official

of Local San Francisco and supported that local in its violation of Article II, Section 2, of the National Constitution. In the California case the Credentials Committee took the position that they could not go behind the returns made by the State Secretary, but reversed this position in the Washington case, which case was referred to the National Executive Committee and then to the convention, resulting in a complete vindication of the regular Washington organization by the convention.

In regard to the Nebraska case, the National Secretary and National Executive Committee used every effort to keep the Nebraska case from being investigated either by the Credentials Committee or the convention and when the National Secretary was asked from the floor of the convention to give information as to why and on what constitutional grounds the state of Nebraska was declared unorganized by the National Executive Committee, he refused this information and said on the floor of the convention that the National Committee speak for themselves, and while a majority of the National Executive Committee were delegates in the convention and had the consent of the National Secretary to tell what they knew, not one of them cared to talk on this subject, and the convention was kept in the dark as to the Nebraska case.

Delegate Porter was a member of Local Omaha and Local Omaha was buying its stamps direct from the national office, and three days before the convention met Porter was expelled from party membership. The national office was notified of this action and deliberately kept this information from the Credentials Committee till after Porter was seated and the first thing the National Executive Committee did after the convention was to make Porter a National Organizer to work in Nebraska. At the same time the National Executive Committee knew that Porter was not a member of the party at the time they employed him to organize Nebraska. They knew further that he was the leader of one of the factions in Nebraska and as such thoroughly disqualified to unite the different factions and reorganize the state regardless of personal feeling or advantage. I know more about the Nebraska case, but this is enough in its relation to the convention.

The Platform Committee did not contain a single delegate from the Pacific Coast, as the convention in the very beginning was made to feel the temper of the delegation from the Pacific states, and avoided a minority report on platform by a careful selection of the Platform Committee. The platform in one respect, at least, is better than the old one, in that it omits the philosophical contradiction contained in the platform four years ago, but in all other respects I believe it is not so good. There is too much of it; it attempts to deal with every kind of question, and in the characteristic style of our wise men of the East who come as near as they can to saying something without saying it. There was at least a third of the convention opposed to "Immediate Demands," but these clear-cut political revolutionists were altogether unorganized, while the opportunists had a thorough understanding among themselves. The encouraging feature along this line is that the revolutionary element was much stronger in the convention than it was four years ago and was thoroughly impressed with the necessity of co-operating and organizing for the next convention, and if they do, the results will be far more satisfactory from a revolutionary standpoint.

The new constitution to be submitted is in many ways an improvement over the old. According to the new constitution the National Secretary and the National Executive Committee will be elected by the National Committee, and will be responsible to the National Committee in this way we can get quick and direct action in National Party affairs.

A uniform system of dues at fifty cents a month was proposed and vigorously contended for, and while it failed to pass, the next convention is sure to make some improvement in this direction.

The new constitution also provides for a Delegate National Congress to be held every four years. This congress will devote itself to organization improvement, and will be held in even numbered years except years of presidential nominating conventions. By far the greatest interest of the convention was manifested in organization affairs and this growing tendency is the most hopeful sign in the Socialist movement.

One of the amusing things in the convention was in the debate over the appointment of the committee on Farmer's program. The debate was quite general and every farmer who spoke on the question spoke against the appointment of the committee, and the lawyers and preachers spoke in favor of a special program for the farmers. The convention voted at first not to appoint the committee but afterward, through the influence of the Milwaukee delegation, a reconsideration was had, the committee appointed and Rev. Carl D. Thompson, of Milwaukee, was made chairman of the committee, who was afterward always referred to as "Farmer Thompson." A real farmer, Barzee, of Oregon, who was elected on the committee, brought in a minority report which was practically averse to a Farmer's program, and the minority report was adopted by the convention. It was very gratifying to observe that straight Socialism was good enough for the farmer delegates.

The convention had many interesting and strong personalities. However, the strongest men and women in the Socialist movement are not by any means the most popular or best advertised. There were eighteen women delegates in the convention. Laura B. Payne, of Texas, was one of them, and she never had an advertising agent nor been "next" to any great speaker. At the same time she is by far the best orator, the ablest expounder of scientific Socialism, and has the clearest perception of proletarian organization, of any woman I know of in the Socialist movement.

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MRS. FLOYD HYDE.....Socialism and the Home

**WHAT'S THE MAT-
TER WITH SEATTLE**

By Tom Sladden

I had always thought that Local Seattle was one of the revolutionary
locals on the Pacific Coast, they had fought for the rights of Socialists
to speak on the streets, they had always been aggressive and theoretically
they had always been a revolutionary body. Something must be wrong.
Some one has blundered and with that someone Local Seattle stands dis-
graced in the eyes of every Socialist who refuses to make a compromise with
Capitalism.

Who is the lobster that can see any difference in substance between
a Chain Gang with chains on their legs and a Chain Gang without chains,
but guarded by rifles?

Do you suppose that when that gang of Socialists struck and refused
to work on the Chain Gang in Seattle that it was because of the "dis-
grace" (sic) of wearing shackles? No! It was because we refused to
work as slaves for a rotten community and to pay with our labor for a
crime we had not committed. If it was up to me to pass a petition to work
those city prisoners either with or without chains, I would favor the one
with chains, well knowing that the tax payers could not get as much work
out of the man with chains on his legs as from the man whose limbs were
free.

You talk about humiliating working men.
Humiliate your grandmother! It is the infernal robbery of labor! I
wish every member of Local Seattle that voted in favor of circulating that
petition would get one of Judge Gordon's 63 day sentences and be put to
cleaning Second Avenue from Pike to Washington, each one with a chain
on his leg with a hundred pound ball on the end of it and humiliate some
sense into them. I would willingly be one of the gang so I could laugh
at them in their humiliation and at the pious frauds who were in the
passing mob.

The Chain Gang in Seattle has made more Socialists in the last six
months than all the Constructive Socialists will make in the next six years.
Working prisoners relieves capitalism, that is why I am against it.
It reduces taxes. If the tax payers had to dig down in their jeans for
the money to keep those prisoners they would quit putting men in jail
for the crime of being out of a job. They would then spend their money
to pay free laborers and get results from what they spent, instead of put-
ting them in jail and paying their board and getting nothing to show for it.

You say you consider "the Chain Gang treatment conducive to a car-
eer of crime." What do you call crime? A hungry man stealing chickens?
The principal crime that a Socialist is interested in is the crime of one
man living off of another man's labor and the Socialist can well afford
to allow the capitalists to attend to the other petty larceny crimes them-
selves.

To the devil with your bourgeois morals and ethics and ideas of crime!
To me it is a crime for any Socialist to help the capitalist in his efforts
to regulate society and to help bolster up their crumbling system by mak-
ing their penal institutions more humane and not so shocking to the
tender sensibilities of the kid-glove-pink-tea Socialists, mush chewing,
sloppy idealists and chicken hearted, sentimental milksoops.

You good people make me sick. I would steal an election as quick
as Hinky Dink. I would turn the militia against the capitalists as quick
as Roosevelt did against the striking Dagoes on the Croton Dam and I
would steal anything I could get away with, if they did not have a Chain
Gang and a penitentiary behind me to make me be what they call good.
I will be as good as I have to and no more.

You call yourselves Socialists and go flirting with a bourgeois reform
measure like a chainless chain gang, and the labor unions of Butte City,
Montana, belonging to the W. F. of M. and the A. F. of L., put a stop to the
public working of prisoners for capitalist gain, years ago. Those unions
went to the capitalists and said, "If you can not find work for those men
and keep them from becoming criminals and vagrants, you can dig down
in your pockets and feed them, you shall not work them in competition
with free labor."

You "appeal to the people of Seattle to suppress this offense against
human sentiment," do you? It is about time for someone to appeal to the
wage working class to dig into that bunch of codfish aristocratic senti-
mentalism in Seattle masquerading under the name of Socialism, with a
stuffed club and run it into the Women's Christian Temperance Union, or
the Methodist Church or Puget Sound, or some place where they need it
in their business.

This is "Constructive Socialism" and what comes of it. Any time that
a Socialist gets to poking his nose in capitalist business it is time to call
in the corner.

"Appeal to the people,"—appeal to hell!
Appeal to the wage working class and get hold of the city of Seattle
and hoist the red flag on the new city hall and run it to suit yourselves
and if you try to run a chainless chain gang after you get in, I will do
my best to organize a bunch of rough necks in Portland and go up there
and clean out the dump.

"Appeal to the people,"—What business has a Socialist to appeal to
the people? Make Socialists—never mind the people—get Socialists with
red blood in their veins—fight your own battles.

A chainless chain gang is worse than one with shackles, as a hidden
disease is worse than an open one. If they can hide the fact that they
are plundering the unfortunates who fall into their clutches they can stop
the agitation, but the ocular proof of such damnable practices hastens
the day for the abolition of both chained and chainless chain gangs.

I am glad to see the capitalist minded people humiliated. Any one
that can look at a man with chains on and think about humiliation is no
good anyway, he needs fixing and the sooner he gets a shock that will jar
him loose the better. I will give an example and I am done.

One night I was in jail in Seattle. I think Titus was in that night
also. There were about 30 prisoners in the cell and we had them all going
and we could have started a better local in that cell that night than the
Seattle Local is now. A couple of kids, I should judge they were about
19 or 20 years of age, came in. I tried to talk Socialism to them. Noth-
ing doing, they were patriots, they talked about "their country" and what
they were going to do when they got out in the morning. They had work-

ed all day for a contractor in West Seattle and only had ten cents left.
They walked six miles so they could get a meal with that ten cents in
the morning, and then they intended to work all the next day, without
having any supper that night, on that ten cent meal, so they would have
two days' pay when they quit. They did not have any money to pay for
a bed, so they went down and went to sleep on a bale of hay on that winter
night, without any blankets, on an open pier.

I told them they would get about ten days. They laughed at me. "I
was crazy. Did I mean to tell them such a thing as that and expect them
to believe it? Why, they could sue the city and get damages, they would
publish it in all the papers, I do not know what they would not do. The
Socialists were no good. They were just two good, honest, farmer boys
—that was all—two of just such men as have given their lives on every
battle field to place the American flag where it is today on the topmost
pinnacle of industrialism. They were so honest and innocent that, as a
graffer would say, "It's a shame to take the money."

I was in court the next morning awaiting trial when they lined up
in a bunch, some 20 odd "sleepers." The officer gave his testimony: "I
and Officer Blank found this bunch asleep on pier 7 (I think it was) so I
sent them in."

The bunch got a fine of \$25.00 collectively. The boys were in the
bunch.

I got fired out about fifteen minutes afterwards, but got pinched
again the same night. I looked through the bars of my cell the next
morning and there were my two brave young American heroes, each one
with his leg on a chair having the leg irons snapped on. I slipped a piece
of money through the bars for the gang to get tobacco with, while the
guard purposely turned his head.

A couple of days later I was pinched again, the boys were trustees
now, that is, the last couple of days a chain gang prisoner had to serve,
he was left in to boll his lousy clothes so he could go out clean, unless
the guards had it in for him and then he was discharged lousy.

I talked to the boys that afternoon for an hour or two, told them
where our Local was in Portland and how to find it and that if they were
in the hole, some of the gang would give them a lift.

They are both of them now carrying red cards and they do not care
what any bourgeois minded lobster thinks about them either, and they
would feel more humiliated to think that some who call themselves So-
cialists would petition a capitalist minded people for a chainless chain
gang than they would to get out on a crowded city street with chains on
their legs and curse the pious hypocrites that put them there.

Many of our Portland members have been in jail, some of them have
been on the Seattle Chain Gang and I think in the near future one of the
best qualifications for membership in the Socialist Party would be that
the member had been in jail at least once or twice. This is the best
medicine I know of for those who get humiliated so easily.

THOMAS A. SLADDEN.

**QUESTION AND
ANSWER**

VOTE IT DOWN (?)

To the Editor:

In your issue of May 30th under the
caption, "This Too," you say, "But the
main objection is that it allows de-
cision of party validity wholly with-
out reference to the principles in-
volved and solely on a majority of
votes—which might be democratic or
Republican votes."

What do you mean by this? Has
the Socialist party any other way to
settle any question than by a major-
ity? When a question of principles
is involved, who is going to decide
the question, if the majority of the
party membership is not? If the major-
ity of the party is not capable of decid-
ing a question vital to the party, a
question of principle, what part of the
minority is so capable, and what hope
there that the party will be capable
of doing anything?

The editor will oblige the under-
signed Proletarian by answering these
questions. Excuse me, but I must say
that I consider the paragraph quoted
as the most arrant nonsense.

Is this a new departure? Is it going
to be the editorial policy of "The So-
cialist" to hereafter oppose majority
rule?

In one column you rejoice in a
"wageworkers" platform, in the next
you insinuate that these same wag-
eworkers must not be trusted. Please
explain.

Fraternally,
E. S. REINERT,
Orville, Wash., June 9, 1908.

EDITOR'S REPLY.

This question concerns the proper
action of the Socialist party of the
United States when there is a contro-
versy in the Socialist party of any
one state.

When there are two factions in any
state organization both claiming to be
the valid Socialist party in that state,
what action should the National orga-
nization take to decide which of the
two claimants shall be recognized as
the real representative of the National
party?

The proposed section in the National
constitution, which we want to see
voted down, provides that the National
Executive committee shall take a refer-
endum in said state of all the mem-
bership "when the controversy began,"
and the faction which gets the most
votes shall be declared the real Social-
ist party in that state.

What we contend for is this: that
it is the duty of the National party to
ascertain which faction represents the
Principles of the Party and to recog-
nize that faction, even if it has only
half the number of the other faction.

Suppose the Democrats in this state,
hopeless of Democratic victory, re-
solve to join the Socialist party and
win under the Socialist name. They do
not change their principles. They still
stand for Bryan's "Public Owner-
ship of Monopolies." They sign our
Socialist pledge without scruple, not
caring or not knowing exactly what it
means. Many of our Locals as consti-
tuted before "the late unpleasantness,"
were made up of such members,
until they constituted a large majority
of the party in this state.

The real Socialists in such a case
are in a minority. The majority of
members of the Socialist party in the
state are then not Socialists but Democ-
rats. If this section of the constitu-
tion remains in force, there is no pos-
sibility for the real Socialists to get
recognition from the National party,
for the reason that any referendum
conducted by the National office would
show the Socialists in a minority and
the Democrats in a majority. We
think such a provision which ignores
the principles involved, is "arrant non-
sense."

Take the actual controversy in this
state as another illustration. The Mills-
Hutchison faction called for a refer-
endum. They said the "controversy
began" some three years ago. They
chased after signatures of all sorts of
people, hundreds of them never even
members of the party.

If the National convention had not
turned their petition down, we would
have had the Berger-Thompson-Work-
Simons Executive committee, in full
sympathy with the opportunist fac-
tion, conducting a referendum of the
Washington party and allowing every
one to vote who claimed to have been
a member of the party at any time
since 1905. Expelled members, delin-
quent members, former members, now
open Democrats or Republicans or La-
borites, all rushing in their votes to
make a "majority" to down the Revo-
lutionary organization we have spent

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