

INDUSTRIAL

COMMUNISM

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By
Harold Lord Varney

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INDUSTRIAL COMMUNISM —THE I. W. W.

By HAROLD LORD VARNEY



FOREWORD

UPTON SINCLAIR, in one of his novels, tells of the strange and fateful journeyings of African ant-colonies. From time to time, they migrate, and in great caravans of millions they crawl forward to their new homes. Sometimes they come to ditches on their way. But they never stop. The front ranks plunge down, and in thousands their followers crush upon them until at last the ditch is filled—a living bridge of bodies. And over the victims the caravan continues to crawl—never wavering—never halting—driven on by the very urge of destiny.

And such has been the march of labor through the ages. All human history has been a story of marching men—stumbling blindly onward. The goal has not always been clear. Again and again, the moving line has halted. Again and again they have fallen, and history is peopled with a multitude of martyrs. But always the shattered ranks have reformed, and over the bodies of the nameless ones the army of labor has staggered forward—star-led—to its destiny. Like moving ants of fate, mankind has pursued its inexorable march toward freedom.

But in the old days freedom was but a dream. It was a wish, not a program. Man thrilled at its call, but he was blind to its meaning. For freedom had not yet been defined in economic terms,—it was still a Utopia.

There is a pathos about the past. We look back through the ages, as through a great corridor of agony. Dimly, tragically, man has groped for the way of emancipation. He has fought a thousand revolutions. He has dreamed a myriad of dreams. He has followed a host of prophets in the eternal crusade for liberty. And all the time evolution has

been slowly lifting the structure which has made freedom, at last, possible.

This structure is machinery. And the threshold of freedom—paradoxical as it may seem—is capitalism. When the world reorganized itself upon a capitalist basis, it changed freedom from a Utopia to a practical program. Capitalism is a world ruled by the owners of machinery. Today these world rulers are the handful of plutocrats who have monopolized the ownership of the new machinery. To gain freedom, we need merely expropriate them. Let labor own the machinery! Then labor will at last rule the world, and freedom will come. Such was the new conception of liberty which shaped itself in the early years of the 19th century, and which took the name of communism.

The period of groping passed. Labor began to realize that freedom is not to be gained through religious struggles. Labor began to learn that freedom does not come through the futilities of political democracy. Labor became conscious of the fallacy of individualism, and the hopelessness of single-handed struggle. All the old Utopias suddenly withered. Freedom awoke in the form of class-consciousness. Its program became the class struggle. The diagram of the revolution was at last chiseled out. It disclosed two classes in society—the working class and the employing class. The program of freedom was to overthrow the employing class. Society would then be reintegrated about a working-class commune. This, in brief, is the message of the Communist Manifesto—given by Marx to the working class in 1848. And with the penning of this Communist Manifesto, the dream of freedom at last became a scientific program.

Today, there are two great world movements of the working class, built upon the Marxian program of the Communist Manifesto. One in Europe, and one in America, they divide the revolutionary proletariat of the world between. In Europe it is the Bolsheviks, or Communists, who carry on the tradition of Marx. In the United States it is the I. W. W.

This pamphlet is written to explain these two movements; to describe their birth and growth; to picture the link of solidarity which binds them together, as well as to recount the points of divergence which cuts between them. To show, in other words why the communist proletariat are Bolsheviks in Europe, and why, in America, they are in the Industrial Workers of the World. We will take up Bolshevism first.

THE SECOND INTERNATIONAL

FROM 1889 to 1914 all the Socialist parties of the world were affiliated with what was known as the Second International. This body was a clearing house for proletarian thought. It was believed to be a real organ of Internationalism. "Workers of the World—Unite!" This was its motto. It cut across the lines of nationality, of race, color and continent. It declared that the working classes of all nations were brothers, and that they owed to each other a higher loyalty than the loyalty which they gave to the State. Time and again, when the clouds of war impended, the Second International threatened the ruling classes that the proletariat of every nation would no longer fight their brothers. And for a quarter of a century this threat kept the world at peace.

The aim of the Second International, and of the Socialist bodies affiliated with it, was to overthrow capitalism in every country. And while there were many divisions, it seemed that all were agreed upon Marxian Communism as the new system which should replace the present capitalism. This new system would be established peaceably, by political action. Capitalism would be destroyed by VOTING.

The reasoning of the Second International seemed plausible. The working class are a majority, they said. Let us carry on a world-wide drive of education. And then, we will mobilize the working class votes and vote to overthrow the present system. Our numbers will win the polls.

It is a naive program. It recommended itself to

the Socialist leaders of that period because of its incredible simplicity. It offered to accomplish a world revolution without the striking of a blow. It promised to create a new world without the breaking of a law. And what was perhaps more important, in the minds of the leaders, it entailed no danger. One could be a Socialist and still be respectable. One could be a socialist and be safe from jail. One could even find a career in political Socialism, for there were offices to be filled and Parliaments to be elected to.

But this "safety-first" political program soon reacted upon its believers. Socialism became a profession—and not a revolution. Socialists began to enter politics—not in order to overthrow capitalism, but in order to "play the game." The Socialist parties began to acquire large holdings of property—newspapers, people's houses, clubs, co-operatives, etc.—and the property instinct whetted their respect for the law. And, although the Social Revolution of Marx was to be a proletarian revolution, the Socialist parties began to be swamped with intellectuals and petty bourgeoisie.

The latter soon dominated. The spokesmen of the working class ceased to be workingmen. The elected representatives in the Parliaments were increasingly bourgeoisie. The whole spirit and atmosphere of the Second International became opportunistic and feeble. Even the old-time rebels—the Bebel, the Guesdes, the Keir Hardies—drifted with the current and forgot the revolution. In those final years before the deluge of the world war, the Second International had already become a pale and stricken thing. It still mumbled of Marx but it needed but one shock to turn it into chauvinism.

BOLSHEVISM

BUT there were minorities in the Second International who still remained true to proletarianism. These minorities—although they clung to political action and to the political form of orga-

nization—insisted upon the working class character of Socialism. They combatted the opportunism of the middle class leaders. They scouted social reforms and social meliorism. They demanded that the Second International and its affiliated parties be frankly revolutionary. This minority were known as "Reds," or as the "Left Wing."

The strongest Left Wing group was the Left Wing of the Russian Social Democrats. This Left Wing was known as the Bolsheviks. It was formed in 1903 at the General Congress of the Russian Social Democrats. This Congress resulted in a permanent split, and the majority, under the strong leadership of the Marxian, Nicolai Lenin, formed the Bolsheviks. The fundamental position of the Bolsheviks during the pre-war days was Marxianism, as opposed to reformism. They called for a proletarian, rather than a bourgeois party. And they took the revolutionary stand that the political state must be wiped out, and that the coming of Socialism would mean the creation of a new industrial framework of government. This was virtually anti-parliamentarism.

Of course, their ideas were hopelessly outvoted in the bourgeois Second International. And, since Russia was not—like the United States—a developed industrial nation; since the Russia of those days was still politically feudalistic and economically agrarian, the Bolsheviks were not, like the I. W. W., entirely industrial in their point of view. They did not vision the class struggle as essentially a shop problem. They leaned further toward industrial communism than any of the other Second Internationalists, but they were still haunted by political futilities. Their economics were shadowed by the vast reaches of agricultural life in Russia, and they clung to politics as a means of binding together the peasantry and the industrial workers. It is this peculiarly Russian paradox which explains the ground of difference between the development of Bolshevism in Eastern Europe and I. W. W.ism in America. We will return to it later.

The coming of the war killed the International. A few hot breathless days of negotiation revealed

bitterly the colorlessness of the Second International. Jaures died, Scheidemann became a patriot, Guesde entered the ministry, Ramsay McDonald was silent. And Lenin and his followers were far from their country. Of course, the Second International could have checked the cataclysm, had it been the proletarian body which it claimed. But the worst predictions of the old Left Wingers were confirmed. The Second International shivered and died.

With the beginning of the war three types of Socialists developed. To use Lenin's classification, they were:

- (1) The Social Patriots.
- (2) The Social Pacifists.
- (3) The Communists, or Zimmerwaldians.

In the fall of 1915 an international conference was convened at Zimmerwald, in Switzerland. Those minorities which had constituted the Left Wing in the Second International were invited. This included the Social Pacifists (followers of Kautsky), and the Communists (dominated by Lenin). The object of Zimmerwald was to form a Third International. But the conference split again. The Social Pacifists, like the frankly Social Patriots, were infused with middle class leaders and middle class irresolution. They refused to follow Lenin and Liebknecht in a secession from the old, moribund Second International. They had learned no lesson from the war and they wished to go back to the old status quo.

But the Bolsheviks, after the Zimmerwald fiasco, ruthlessly proceeded to form a new movement. They abandoned the name of Socialist, as one sullied by history. They returned to Marx and revived his old name of Communist.

The program which they united upon has since passed into the law of Russia. And this program was a slavish adaptation of Marx's Communist Manifesto. They would overthrow the political state and establish an industrial democracy. They would mercilessly expropriate the bourgeoisie and organize unions of the workers in every industry to take over and

operate the workshops. They would communize the land, demobilize the army, abolish all parasitic occupations. They would abolish money, nationalize banking, and distribute the food supply upon the basis of useful service to the commune. And these changes would be accomplished during the transitional period, by establishing an iron "dictatorship of the proletariat."

By an irony of history it has happened that this—the extreme Marxian program—has been the first to "go over the top." Midway in the war the cumbersome Russian bureaucracy crumbled. Feeble, bourgeois-Socialist hands took the helm of state. Through eight months of fumbling they revealed the incredible bankruptcy of the bourgeois-Socialist mind. They completed the work of spoliation which the Czarists had begun in the Russian industries. They balked every hope of the Russian proletariat. They were false to both labor and the bourgeoisie. And at last, on a bleak November night, they faded away, and the Bolsheviki became the rulers of Russia.

THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

THE point which one must bear in mind throughout, is that the Bolsheviki, and all other European Communists, are **POLITICAL** parties. They are organized geographically. They are not, essentially, working-class movements, although they have approached nearer to proletarianism than any previous purely political movement. They are not organized upon the basis of industry, and they have no economic framework which can be converted into the core of the new economic democracy. It is in this respect that the I. W. W. differs from the Bolsheviki.

Upon assuming power in Russia, the Bolsheviki faced the task of putting Communism into effect. Obviously, they themselves—a mere political party—could not personally operate industry. And the government which they had seized was a **POLITICAL STATE**; they seized it, only to abolish it. The reformist Socialists, in such a situation, would have

nationalized the industries by transferring their ownership to this existing political state. But this would have been mere government ownership—or State Capitalism. And this final condition would have been no better than the first, to the enslaved industrial workers. Communism meant something more than that.

On the other hand, Russia had practically no economic organizations of the industrial workers, as other nations had. Under the Czar labor unions had been illegal, and the organizations which had borne that name were mostly counter-revolutionary. There seemed to be no authoritative voice in Russia which could speak for the proletariat and assume the mastership of industry. It was necessary, then, to create it.

Hence arose the Soviets. The origin of the Soviets is traditional rather than historic. The Soviets were essentially mass movements. There was nothing scientific in their formation. They were great, diaphanous mass groupings which came together now, as they had come together before in the 1905 Revolution. But in times of crisis instinct is sometimes the truest guide. And the instinct which led the Russian people to hit upon the device of Soviets, in this tense moment, was a fateful one. In forming their Soviets they bridged the gap to the industrial democracy.

The slogan of the Bolshevik revolution was, "All power to the Soviets!" The first act of the new regime was to abolish the political state. In Engels' prophetic language, "the political state died off." The Soviets stepped into the vacant place and became the new government of Russia.

The Soviets, in the Communist plan, are only transitory institutions. They are the machinery by which the huge problems of Russia can be administered during the transition period to complete Communism. Bolshevism claims that human progress is the work of the class-conscious, highly organized minorities. That the great stupid mass of the race cannot inaugurate changes; that they only follow behind the

arbitrary militant minority. And in the Russian crisis the Bolsheviki realized that Communism could only be realized by establishing a stern DICTATORSHIP OF THE PROLETARIAT. Full democracy will only come when the task is completed. But while the battle was still on, reasoned the Bolshevik, it would be folly to truckle to the bourgeoisie and their lackeys. And so Russia passed under the dictatorship of the Soviets.

Soviet government, however, is only dictatorship to those who are not proletarians. Within the Soviet itself there is utter democracy. But the franchise to vote in the Soviets is enjoyed only by the working class. To vote, one must be attested as a proletarian, either by the industrial union in the cities, or by the peasant committee in the country.

The Soviet is a series of geographical bodies, swelling out of each other. Each village is administered by its local Soviet. Each local Soviet sends representatives to a district Soviet which corresponds to our state governments. The district Soviets send delegates to the All Russian Council of Soviets, which assembles in Moscow at regular intervals as a great, supreme legislative convention. This All Russian Council elects an Executive Committee of two hundred, who sit permanently as the Russian executive government. And out of this Executive Committee are chosen the Ministry, or People's Commissars, each of whom presides over a special administrative department. This is the government over which Lenin is today the head Commissar. And from peak to base this Soviet pyramid is ruled by proletarians.

The functions of the Soviet are political in their nature. It has policing power to preserve order within the commune. It controls the army and navy and protects Russia from foreign foes. It manages the foreign policy of the commune, and signs treaties, etc. It acts as a court of last appeal in industrial matters, by regulating and standardizing the industries in those cases where the industrial unions come in conflict. And it controls the process of industrial so-

cialization through its commissariat of Public Economy. But, with the eventual completion of the socializing process, the duties of the Soviets will fall, more and more, to the industrial unions. The role of the Soviet is merely temporary. It is a makeshift to carry Russia over the precipice into ultimate Communism.

Side by side with the Soviets are the industrial unions. These unions are not a survival of the old craft bodies. They are new, revolutionary organizations. After the victory of the proletariat the workers in every industry organized. They took over the factories, expropriated, in most cases, the capitalist owners and abolished exploitation. These unions have been integrated together into a Central Trade Federation. The workers are organized scientifically, according to product rather than (in the old craft style) according to tool. Workers pass from union to union, at their will, as in the I. W. W.—unions of metal workers, miners, transport workers, textile workers, construction workers, leather workers, etc.—and constitute a great industrial pattern, in which the mold of Russian communism is slowly being run. And at Moscow sits the Executive Committee of the Federation, with power over all the INTERNAL affairs of the industries. The setting of wages, the apportioning of output, the distribution of rations, the insurance and relief of workers, their technical education and their recreations are decided by this Executive body, which they have chosen from their industrial unions.

Parallel with the Executive of the Trade Federation is the Commissariat of Public Economy, which is chosen by the Soviets. And this Commissariat, as we have before related, is the supreme arbiter in the EXTERNAL relations of the industrial unions. It is thus that the industries are administered.

Such, after eighteen months, is the communism of Russia. It is incomplete, of course. Mistakes and miscalculations have crusted over the plans of the Bolsheviks like barnacles. During all these tragic

months Russia has poured herself out lavishly in a war against foreign capitalist armies. She has been sabotaged, harried and betrayed by internal traitors. She has been fenced in from food and raw materials by a brutal blockade. She has stood with the threat of German terrorism on her west, Allied terrorism on her north, Cossack terrorism on her south and Japanese terrorism on her east. And all her acts have been like a race with time.

But under the surface shortcomings of the Bolshevik attempt there is the core of real communism. Russia has become concentric about the proletariat. For all purposes of government, there are only proletarians in Russia today. Both the Soviets and the Industrial Unions are expressions of the working class. And although the Soviet may seem to overtop the unions at this stage, the Soviet is assured against even peasant domination by granting to the industrial proletariat a larger proportion of representatives. When communism reaches other nations, then Soviets can give way to unions. But while there is a foreign menace at the frontier, the Soviet must remain to meet it.

The history of Bolshevism is the history of a peculiarly Russian group. The industrial situation in Russia is a peculiarly Russian situation. And the Russian revolution, when it came, came as it will come in no other land. With no unions with which to divide responsibility, with a great preponderance or peasant population, with factories closed and idle, with foreign peril forcing centralization and dictatorship—the Bolshevik group saved the situation with a Soviet. But other workers—more fortunate than they—can approach their own social revolutions more leisurely. They can study the errors of Bolshevism and strengthen their own attempts. They can reach the ultimate day with plans full made and organizations subtly prepared. And the most scientific and hopeful revolutionary program in the world today is the program of the Industrial Workers of the World—of the United States, Great Britain and Australia.

THE I. W. W.

THE I. W. W. springs from a much different train of traditions. It is not, like Bolshevism, a sprout of political Socialism. It does not hark back to the futile Second International for its origin. It did not come brain-blown from the theories of intellectuals or book-writers. It was a growth—a spontaneous product of capitalistic despotism.

Nor is the I. W. W. a mere branch of world labor unionism. Many writers, haunted by the European Syndicalist viewpoint, picture the I. W. W. as essentially a part of the labor union movement—an American Syndicalism. But this viewpoint fails to consider the abysmal difference between the European trade unionism, with its extreme Syndicalist wing, and American industrial unionism. The difference is one of goal. This difference shadows all the aspects of the contrast. For trade unionism, even in its most progressive, Syndicalist stage, is the organized expression of historic Anarchism. But the industrial unionism of the I. W. W. is essentially Marxian and Communistic. The former is autonomous and decentralized. The latter is integral and highly centralized. Syndicalism is anachronistic; it mirrors a past mode of economic production; its highest goal is a sort of revived, mediaeval guild-industry. But the I. W. W. believes that capitalism is one of the stages of the Social Revolution; that capitalism, notwithstanding its evils, has erected a scientific scaffold for our industrial life, and that the new society will grow out of capitalism by patterning itself upon the model of the existing economic structure. And since capitalism has accomplished its wonders by centralizing and trustifying all the riches of the world, revolution must build its machine of opposition in the same centralized form. Which, of course, is the traditional Communist program.

In other words, the I. W. W. occupies a position midway between international Socialism and International trade unionism. It differs from the former because it is non-political and proletarian. It differs

from the latter because it is Communistic and revolutionary. Its nearest counterpart in the proletarian world today, is Russian Bolshevism.

The history of the I. W. W. is significant. It is the child of Socialist theory, wedded to economic practice. It was organized at a convention in 1905, when two confluent streams of revolutionary organizations came together. On the one hand were the theoretical communists, the non-political socialists, the experimental industrial unionists who were so numerous in the American Socialist groups prior to 1905. These crowded to the convention and brought a diagrammed theory of Marxian unionism. And at the convention they met the other element—the practical, experienced trench-broken industrial unionists, who had already stumbled upon the truth in their Western Federation of Miners. The two elements united, and the I. W. W. was the result. And they discovered that both the theories of Marx, and the science of American industry, pointed to the same solution—industrial unionism.

The I. W. W. has three functions, or objects. First, it is a union; second, it is a revolution; third, it is the cell of a new society.

As a union, the I. W. W. organizes the workers on the job and leads them in the everyday struggle against the capitalists. And this phase of the I. W. W. is only secondarily revolutionary. The proletariat, psychologically, are unready for revolution. The great masses of the proletariat are consumed with immediate rather than grandiose projects. The issue to which they thrill is the every-day issue of higher wages and shorter hours. The labor struggle, to the masses of labor, is solely a struggle of the bread-basket. These minor step-at-a-time issues are the springs which must be touched if the revolutionist wishes to stir the inert masses to revolt.

Hence the rallying cry of the I. W. W., in the present or organizing stage, is unionism. And a victorious unionism transmutes itself inevitably into revolution.

The working class learn class-consciousness in the primer of class victory. Successful strikes inspire larger and bolder battles. The proletariat feed upon their own successes, and every improvement in life sharpens labor's appetite. The I. W. W. is essentially Marxian in this tactic, for the theory of revolutionary unionism is but the application of economic determinism to our program. A victorious industrial unionism would invent a revolutionary object even if one did not exist. The organized proletariat are driven on inexorably by economic determinism; by the consciousness of their power to take the world. It is through this psychological truth that unionism and revolution merge.

Moreover, there is a distinct revolutionary gain in the fruits of these strikes. For any gain in wages must come from the masters' profits. Any shortening of hours means a reduction in the number of unemployed, and the diminution of unemployment automatically raises wage standards. These successive gains in wages are accompanied by corresponding falls in profits. Surplus value is reduced. The iron law of wages is abrogated. Capitalism itself slowly expropriated by a gradual equilibration of income. And every such assault weakens the sagging wall of capitalism's economic power.

Secondly, the I. W. W. is a revolution. The form of its organization dooms capitalism. Not only is the I. W. W. prepared to wage the every-day struggle against capitalism, within the existing system, it is the machine by which the existing system shall be completely overthrown.

The genius of the I. W. W. lies in the fact that the same mechanism which can be employed so successfully in wage conflicts is the nucleus of the final mechanism which shall abolish the wage system entirely. It is this revolutionary goal which differentiates the I. W. W. from all organizations which exist merely for the present. Unlike the trade unions, the I. W. W. organizes always with a view to the ultimate revolution.

And it is peculiarly apt that industrial organizations be the means of overthrowing the capitalist system. An industrial organization is the only machine which can transform the present into the future, bloodlessly and costlessly. An industrial organization can build up the very framework of the new society while the old is still in power. All that remains then is to suddenly transfer the management of industry into the hands of the existing unions. The Social Revolution reduces itself to the incredible simplicity of a victorious lockout—the lockout of the capitalists.

The pattern of capitalism is industrial. The veins of its vitality are the industries which it owns. The political state is but the pomp and glitter of a power which is rooted in economic ownership. It is unreal and valueless to the proletariat. It is but the first trench of the capitalist redoubt. To overthrow capitalism, the I. W. W. assails capitalism from within. It attacks the fortress of the industries rather than the breast-work of the state. It rears itself within the capitalist lines; it enters the fight from a place of vantage in the very heart of the capitalist industries. By organizing the workers of every industry, industrially, in great class-conscious unions, the I. W. W. builds up, while capitalism is still dominant, a power which overtops it.

An I. W. W. revolution is thus something different from the revolutions of the past. It is not an explosion. It is not a sudden carnage of blood, of barricades or gory battlefields. It is not destructive or mutilating. An I. W. W. revolution is a logical, sane and scientific social act. It does not occur in one passionate moment; it is an accumulated process which stretches over slow years. The revolution, to the I. W. W., is an act of organization. Slowly growing—following the inexorable urges of proletarian determinism—it gathers revolutionary momentum as it expands. At some final moment, this growing industrial organism becomes more powerful than the existing regime. And when that mement comes, the I. W. W. will blot out capitalism, as the burning bril-

liance of a rising sun fades the moonlight from the dawn.

And the third function of the I. W. W. carries us over beyond the revolution. For when the proletariat shall have overthrown capitalism, the I. W. W. will stand, ready-made, the pre-established government of the new order. It will not be necessary to call constituent conventions. It will not be necessary to create soviets. It will not be necessary to lavish the precious energies of the proletariat in desperate experiments of politics. For the I. W. W. which shall have fought the revolution, will also pass over as the framework of the new communism. The existing parliamentary government will crumble into uselessness. The existing industrial unions will become the supreme national power. Each industrial union will expropriate the capitalists from its industry. The functions of industrial management will be taken over by the union. All kindred unions will be integrated into general departments. Each department will have its representative on the general executive board. And this G. E. B. will be the supreme executive of the nation—taking over the political as well as the industrial functions of society. As Daniel De Leon said in 1905, "Where sits the General Executive Board of the I. W. W.—there sits the government of the future!" And this new administrative machinery will simply be a continuation of the industrial union movement which the I. W. W. has already created.

The I. W. W. thus spans all the needs of the labor struggle. It meets the impetuous demand of present-day grievances with a unionism which is crushingly effective. It meets the ideal of the ultimate social revolution with a mechanism by which that revolution can be waged. And it meets the acute problems of the post-revolutionary period with a scientific framework, which the new society can group itself around. In the I. W. W. program there is need for no other movement but the I. W. W. itself.

THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE I. W. W. AND BOLSHEVISM.

IT is in this respect that the I. W. W. has a distinct advantage over Bolshevism and the other European Communist groups. For Bolshevism—springing historically from the Second International, as it did—has always been fatally shadowed by the ideology of politics. Bolshevism carried an outmoded theory. It entered its revolutionary task weighted down with the sophistry of the Second International. And thus its task has been unnecessarily severe. The I. W. W., on the contrary, is sublimely free from theorizings. The I. W. W. aims to take its color solely from life. It prescribes no arbitrary modes of action. It makes no hard and fast drawing of the future. And its ideology—what it has—is spontaneous. To the I. W. W. the Social Revolution follows the trace-ries of our economic life, and the future is merely the reverse side of the present. To understand Communism, the I. W. W. does not go to metaphysics; it goes to capitalism.

In so far as the Bolsheviks are political, they contrast themselves to the I. W. W. in the same sense that all political parties are contrasted to industrial unions. The difference between political action communists and industrial union communists is a fundamental difference in historic method. The political action communist is an insurrectionist; the industrial communist (the I. W. W.) is an evolutionist.

The Zimmerwaldian-Left Wing Socialists, led by the Bolsheviks, have definitely divided with the old Second International in their conception of political action. To the political communists of all countries political action no longer means voting. It has been broadened; the Left-Wingers have taken a leaf from Russia; and political action now has the meaning of mass action, or insurrection. To capture the political state is still their goal. But they seek to capture it by physical force, not by the ballot box.

Let us organize a militant minority of the proletariat, they say. Let us seize upon every mood of the mob, to bend the mob to the control of this minority. Let us conduct unorganized, emotional political strikes. Let us parade and sing and stir the passions of the masses on the street. Let us finally act with quick precision, at some psychological moment of unrest, and seize the physical machinery of the political government, as Lenin has done in Petrograd. Let us set up a dictatorship of blood and iron. This is our meaning of political action.

And it is upon this point that the industrial communist takes issue with the political communist—the I. W. W. with the Bolsheviki. The fact that such a method has been seemingly successful in Russia is no argument for its application elsewhere. And, although the Bolsheviki have attained some measure of Communism through these tactics, the I. W. W. claims that Communism would have been far more successful had Russian conditions permitted a social revolution of the industrial rather than of the political type. The industrial communist believes that Russia has proven the case for industrial unionism, and not for political insurrection. In calling attention to this contrast the I. W. W. does not seek to minimize or criticize in any sense the Bolsheviki. Lenin and his party were placed in a position where they were obliged to act. They had no choice of tactics. They had no opportunity to build scientifically for the future. Russia was a land where industrial unionism had been throttled in its very birth by the Black Hundreds. Russia was also a country whose economic life was not predominantly industrial. It was an agrarian nation with an agrarian-minded proletariat. In the logic of such conditions Lenin used political insurrection and won. The criticism of the I. W. W. is against those who seek to apply these haphazard, accidental Bolshevik tactics to other countries and other economic situations. The I. W. W. does not criticize the use of the Bolshevik program in Russia. It does criticize the importation of the Bolshevik program to America.

To return then to the contrast. Bolshevism in its more international application by the Left Wingers, represents the historic traditions of insurrectionism. It believes that intellectual minorities can build the future out of their ideologies. It believes that it can diagram communism out of its theories. And then, it believes, it can clamp this diagram down over the human race, by a sudden insurrection, followed by a long dictatorship. Bolshevism would make the world communist, by terror and force. It would free the proletariat by compelling them to be free. The economic conditions of the times, and the resultant psychological condition of the workers, might be inapt for a communist regime. But Bolshevism would go doggedly ahead, and it would bring Communism, if necessary, by the guillotine and the knout.

But the industrial communist (the I. W. W.) takes sharp issue with such Bolshevism. The I. W. W. asserts that a revolution is not necessarily an insurrection. The revolution, to the industrial communist, is a process of social growth. In contrast to the political communist the industrial communist is an evolutionist.

All lasting social changes have been evolutionary, not insurrectionary, in their coming. Systems are not created by the thought of the idealists or by the winning of mob battles. They develop scientifically; they grow like the plants, slowly but surely. The new system of communism is not something which we can impose upon the present. Communism, to be lasting and to be economically successful, must grow out of the present. Its roots must be in the very heart of the capitalist soil. And if it lifts its green shaft to the sunlight, prematurely and unformed, it will wither and perish in the scorching noon.

Therefore, the I. W. W. attempts to build the framework of the new society within the shell of the old. He builds the machinery of communism by building up the industrial unions which will be the arteries of communist life. He inculcates the psychology of communism in the masses, by teaching them to function in these industrial unions. He as-

asures the economic success of communism by preparing the proletariat for the the problems of industrial mastery in the schoolhouse of the industrial unions. And so, to the I. W. W., the final act of revolution will not hinge upon the accident or upon the sudden flooding of untutored popular emotion; capitalism will be overthrown automatically, when these industrial unions reach the point where they are ready for industrial management. The social revolution is thus reduced to the laws of science and evolution.

In such an industrial communism there will be no need for dictatorship. There will be no Red Terrors. There will be no futile, economic experiments or silly political adventurings. The new system will move, as capitalism moved, in a sure, scientific step. It will succeed, because, behind it, will be the invincible momentum of natural, economic law.

Such is the first prime distinction between Bolshevism and the I. W. W. The second is related.

Bolshevism is a political program. It seeks to establish communism by capturing the political state. The I. W. W. is non-political. It seeks solely to capture the industries, and it believes that the capture of the political state is unnecessary.

The I. W. W. does not believe in the fiction of the equal power of the political government with the industrial oligarchy. There is no such division, or duality, in the controlling system. The political government is but an organ of the real industrial government. Washington is but an echo of Wall Street. Politics is but the administrative machinery of capitalism, and those who own the industries overshadow the political state like Titans.

The I. W. W. believes, then, that the proletariat should organize themselves around this fundamental or industrial government. The proletariat should concentrate all its energies to capture the industries; the political state will then crumble into their hands. Just as the capitalists today rule the state by owning the industries, the proletariat, once the industries have been taken over, will make the political state

obsolete. The I. W. W. visualizes the existing system as a high building. Its turrets and cornices represent the political state; its foundation stones are the industries. One may topple over and pull down the turrets, in a great political assault, but the system will stand intact on its foundation. But if one destroy these industrial foundation stones, not only will the industries be mastered, but the political turrets will plunge down in the same collapse. Therefore the tactics of the I. W. W. are monistic; it devotes itself solely to industrial action, knowing that, thereby, the political state will also be mastered.

But the Bolsheviks stumble here. They are not monists; they are dualists: They talk of two arms to the movement—political and industrial. They fail to see the needlessness of capturing the state in order to use the powers of state to socialize the industries, and they seem sublimely oblivious to the plain truth that by first socializing the industries, one avoids the necessity of capturing the state altogether. That such a program means two steps where only one is necessary.

And so the Bolsheviks have made the immense error of organizing themselves into a political party around this "state" program. In every country they have exhausted themselves, hacking at the branches of the economic tree. They have fallen into the political trap which the master class has laid for them, and they have left the economic army unorganized. But now, in Russia at least, they are conscious of their lost opportunity. Russia has learned that a political party cannot run the industries of a nation. Russia has learned that communism, to be proletarian, must be preceded by the industrial organization of the proletariat. And it has been a costly lesson to the Bolsheviks.

An industrial union movement in Russia, in place of the Bolshevik political movement, would have meant the saving of priceless months to the revolution. It would have meant the avoiding of chaos. It would have meant that famine and the havoc of in-

dustrial prostration would have been spared. There would have been no need of Soviets. There would have been no need of dictatorship. There would have been no Red Terror. Even the Kolchaks and the Tschaikowskys of the counter revolution would have been powerless to revolt, for counter revolution is necessarily political and can only spring up within the fabric of a political state. Had the Bolsheviks been industrial communists, instead of political, their eighteen months of power could have stabilized the richest, most united and most powerful nation in history. But hoist on their political petard, the Bolsheviks still battle with chaos, and tinker with the futilities of Soviets.

It is this scientific, industrial viewpoint which is the contribution of the I. W. W. to the revolutionary thought of the world. It is the 20th century expression of Marxianism. It reflects the highest development of capitalist centralization. It liberates the revolutionary movement from the misleading ideology of the master class; from political confusionism and dualistic futility. It lifts the revolution from the chaos of insurrectionism; it plants it on the plane of scientific, reasoned certainty.

THE UNITY OF BOLSHEVISM AND THE I. W. W.

THE contrasts of the I. W. W. and Bolshevism have been noted. But beyond them there is a great field of similarities which link the movements together into natural unity. They may differ on tactics, but they are moving toward the same sure goal. Both are communists.

In the United States, It is the I. W. W. which holds up the Communist banner and battles for the cause of the American Bolsheviks. On politics it may differ with its Russian comrades. But it marches with them in the same international army toward proletarianism.

The fundamental aim of the communists—both industrial and political—is a world ruled by workers.

It is the historic mission of the working class to become the masters of society. It is the golden vision of the communists to hasten the accomplishing of this mission. In European Bolshevism and in American I. W. W.ism the line-up for the final struggle is being made. Bourgeois reformists and sentimental impossibilists are being repudiated. The Social Revolution is being placed upon a scientific basis of proletarianism. And communism has at last become the organ through which the revolutionary dream of the ages finds its triumphant voice. Socialism which began as a Utopia; Socialism which became a futile dogma in the Second International; Socialism which seemed to perish in shame with the coming of the world-war, has given place at last to the destined proletarian star—Communism. And this Communism, girdling the globe, has produced a successful Bolsheviki revolution in Russia, and a flaming, fateful I. W. W. in revolutionary America.

The future of the United States belongs to industrial communism. Resistlessly the avalanche of economic law hurls the capitalist system toward a communist culmination. And indomitably—with the very urge of destiny—the I. W. W. surges thru the industries and waters the sprouting gardens of industrial communism. The Russian Bolsheviki have given to the I. W. W. the thrill of success. They have given to the I. W. W. a great historic example of tactics. The I. W. W. glories in the Russian victory. But the I. W. W. also learns the lesson of organization from the mistakes which Russia has made and the tragedies which political communism has there endured. As the proletariat of America rally to the I. W. W., they build an organization which shall not only win to Bolshevism. They build an organization which shall rise in its victory beyond Bolshevism to INDUSTRIAL COMMUNISM; which shall accomplish not the dictatorship of the proletariat, but the democracy of the proletariat; which shall create not a Soviet but an industrial commune of free labor. It is with that vision that they battle on to destiny.