Published by the Discussion Bulletin Committee
Address all correspondence to
DISCUSSION BULLETIN, P.O. Box 1564, Grand Rapids, MI 49501

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Editorial Matters

We are happy to report that our call in DB14 for subs has brought
a substantial number of renewals and new subscriptions. As has always
been the case, though, nearly half of the 250 copies of this issue
will go to non-subscribers, as we circulate our mailing list. If you
are not a subscriber but feel that the Discussion Bulletin serves a
useful function in our political sector and if you have the means, we
hope you will subscribe and help support the DB financially.

The DB is not meant to serve as an arena for airing the internal
disputes of organizations in our political sector. Comrade Rossi’s
letter in DB14 carried an offhand accusation that he was "purged" from
the Workers Solidarity Alliance. However, spokespersons for the Alliance strongly deny that Com. Rossi was ever expelled from their organization. Without going into details, we suggest that readers interested in learning the WSA's view of the matter write to WSA, 339 Lafayette St., Room 202, New York, NY 10012. Persons wishing to get in touch with the WSA in Morgantown can do so by writing to WSA, c/o Wolford, 383 Madigan Ave., Morgantown, WV 26505.

Com. John Zerzan sent us the leaflet "War or Revolution," which we include in this issue because of its insight on the Vietnam War and the factual information it includes. He believes the author is Keith Sorel.

This issue carries a couple of reviews of periodicals. We are more than willing to publish reviews of other anti-state-capitalism periodicals on an "exchange" basis similar to the arrangement under which these are being published. In any event we plan a periodical list for DB6 similar to the one in DB3. It will list as many English language (not just American) publications in our political sector as we can find out about along with addresses, sub rates, and other information. We also hope to continue our sporadic short reviews of books and pamphlets that we feel will interest our readers. Please send us information for the list and anything you would like to see reviewed in the DB.

But the primary function of the DB remains that of a forum for anti-statist, anti-state-capitalist revolutionaries. We welcome your articles and letters. Remember, single space, use narrow (3/4 inch) margins, and a dark ribbon. We simply paste up your material--no editing is done here. We'll be pasting up the next issue after the middle of February.

Frank Girard
for the DB Committee

Review

ideas & action, P.O. Box 40400, San Francisco, CA 94140. $1.50 per copy; individuals: $5 for four issues.

Ideas and Action is the quarterly publication of the Workers Solidarity Alliance, the U.S. affiliate of the IWA (International Workers' Association), the international organization of anarcho-syndicalists, including the Spanish CNT. Begun as an independent syndicalist magazine prior to the founding of the WSA, it was published irregularly by the same San Francisco group that presently produces it. The quality of the articles has been consistently good. Unlike most "organizational" publications such as the People, The Socialist Standard, and the Industrial Worker, which present only their own views, Ideas and Action publishes long two-way polemics which create interest and promote understanding. Ideas and Action number five, for example, included a twelve-page debate between the WSA's New York section, then called the Libertarian Workers' (Cont'd on p. 18)
"SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL UNIONS" AND INTERNATIONALISM

In DB*14, Samuel Leight claims he "disagrees completely" with the need to clearly define the SIU concept as being Socialism. The question is, how can one "completely disagree" with anything which one does not completely understand?

He revealed his own incomplete comprehension through a mis-quote: "the SLP even describe the National Executive Committee of the Party as the "government of the future"". This is not simply a glaring error in quoting words; it suggests the magnitude of an abysmal lack of knowledge of the subject—especially knowledge which is essential toward understanding Industrial union government.

The SIU concept, as proposed by the SLP, is an "administration of things" and this means that the State, classes and all political parties, including the SLP, will have been abolished. Industrial Union Government will administer the socially owned means of production; through Industrial Union Government we will have production for use, which means planned production and distribution of the goods and services which we need collectively and individually.

If Mr. Leight will go back to original SLP sources, he will find that he did mis-quote the SLP on political action in Industrial Unions. I hope he will study further into the SIU concept and how it can be used by workers to effect revolutionary transformation from Capitalism to world-wide Socialism.

With Socialist transformation, there will be a government (society) without a State; there will be unions (SIUS) without them being "trade unions" and there will be workers (useful producers) without their being classes; there will be countries (geographic locations) without their being national boundaries, for these are abolished with the State.

Through SIU's there will be the basis for a worker's world government. There can be no national boundaries in a state-less, class-less society where the means of production are socially owned and democratically run by workers.

Mr. Leight claims that "none of us have a monopoly of the term 'socialism'. I would also expect that those who lay claim to being socialist should be able to: (1) clearly reveal how workers may go about abolishing the Capitalist system; the State, Classes; (2) clearly define their socialist society; the tactics workers can use to achieve it; the role of the political party in the process of achieving it and after it is achieved; (3) clearly project their theoretical socialist goal based upon current material possibilities.

Perhaps the World Socialist Party has a better definition of its tactics and goals of socialism than that described by Mr. Leight in DB*14. I would like to learn about them because what was presented is so similar to the "ultimate goal" of other socialist parties which advocate a class-less, state-less society—**not now, but eventually**.
This includes the Marxist-Leninists, the Trotskyists, and others who claim that the state must be retained until the entire world becomes 'socialist'. **They claim that their “ultimate goal” is the abolition of all classes and the state, but this is only possible when socialism is established on a world-wide basis.**

My question to WSP is—how are you different from these other parties? How do you define yourself? How does WSP propose to organize workers? What is its perception of a socialist government and how does WSP propose to get it? If the WSP has a Program, I would like to see it present it, up front, just like the SIU people do.

I am a worker and I am an SIU'ist because I believe this is closest to my immediate and ultimate interests as a worker and to the working class as a whole. I want to know if the World Socialist Party has a better program in terms of my immediate and ultimate class interests.

As to the "labor vouchers" so much belabored by Mr. Leight—it is he and the SIU movement who is "hung up" on them. He expressed the Marxist ideal: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs." What he failed to note is that "labor vouchers" are merely a means toward that ideal.

When "all of us are shopkeepers (social owners) and all are tending the highly productive SIU shops", who needs to count anymore how much anyone gets when we have achieved world-wide abundant production to satisfy our needs. But, until then, we need to exchange labor and product based upon full social value of ones labor. "Labor vouchers" assure such equity.

In a Marxist sense, "labor vouchers" are the temporary bridge between a world of scarce production and one of abundance in a socialist society. Without them, how would you get the wealthy, industrialized countries to allocate their wealth to the developing countries. If each worked only to his ability and to satisfy his needs, there would be little left for the teeming millions of people in the world who are in dire want.

"Labor Vouchers" allow us to democratically and equitably designate a portion of national product toward technological expansion and support of un-developed areas of the world. "Labor Vouchers" are needed to assure that our class brothers in less developed lands are elevated to the standards of the more developed lands.

As stated, it is Mr. Leight and not SIU'ists who are "hung up" on "labor vouchers". These are merely an interim measure toward shared abundance between workers of the developed and un-developed parts of the world.

If Mr. Leight and DB readers share a "healthy hatred of the prevailing system", they must also share a healthy interest in developing programs to get rid of such a system. I hope this contribution will help.

Sincerely, Edward Wizek
Discussion Bulletin

Dear Comrades,

Louis Lazarus follows Engels in wanting it both ways. If anti-authoritarians are (as they say) merely renaming an institution which is in essence a government, — and only objecting to the word, — then other sophists could equally claim that these Marxists are renaming the state in the same way; and likewise only objecting to a label.

Engels (or Lazarus) arbitrarily chooses a definition of a government which permitted him to portray the actions of the overwhelming majority of a commune, openly and actively directly participating in both decision making and implementation, leaving nothing to a distinct executive as a government. Well if that is how they define government, it is how they define it and there is no room for argument; but if someone then turns up and defines a state that way, there is still no room for argument.

To most people a government is a body of people set aside from the commonality with the specific role of governing others; that too is a definition arbitrarily chosen, and there is no way one can argue from the meaning of terms that one is right and the other is wrong. Just as Louis would have no way of answering someone who chose to define a state as he chose to define a Government. The Anarchist can, however, appeal to the majority vote.

All one can say is that experience has shown that once the term and concept of government — as of state — is accepted as part of the currency of socialist theory, the entity so described bears very little resemblance to the entity described by Engels. Engels himself departed radically from Marx's description of the "Diktat of the Proletariat as resembling the Paris Commune", so that Engels endorsed Kauczky's proposals for a very bureaucratic state.

Certainly Louis is one with Engels and the majority of those who profess Marxism in his definition; (he is also endorsed by more extreme Stirnerite anarchists, who deny the right of Kropotkinists, Malatestans, & syndicalists to the term anarchist on precisely these grounds;) but Louis should examine the company he keeps. There is not yet any other terminological barrier: those who accept government starting by interpreting the way Engels did, end by accepting a body of ex-workers (usually a minority actually were workers) governing.

If LL insists on the one semantic quibble, then he must accept the other and abandon his claim to oppose the state, for there is no logical reason to endorse one sophistry and not the other. DeLeon was trapped by his past; he abandoned support for the state in practice,
but said too much in attacking anarchists when he supported the state for him to accept the label of his new belief. Louis hasn't that justification.

       P.S. Of course Louis is not the only one to resort to non-normal usage of linguistics to fit theory. Sam Leight is quite correct in arguing that when syndicalists and DeLeonists argue that a revolutionary industrial unionist movement is not only a weapon of struggle within capitalism, but also provides an organizational framework for the reconstruction of post-capitalist society, we use - in the context of that post-capitalist society - the term industrial union in a sense very different from that in which it is now used. Fair enough, guilty we cry and run screaming from the room. We point to the organization which can exist within capitalism that most closely resembles the industrial union movement, at its best, has been totally unlike unions to which Sam Leight points, we accept that while they exist within capitalism they are corrupted by that fact, and that they will be very different within a socialist society. Nevertheless their structure will be of use in social transition.

Louis may claim that his usage of the term government is no worse than the use we share of union; - in so far as both are departures from received popular speech. However, no one can say of government that it is a basically healthy working class response to capitalism, however degenerate it has been forced by capitalism to become. No one can point to an alleged revolutionary governmental body and say that there is evidence that this is (a) a weapon against capitalism, and (b) a potential structure for building a post-capitalist socialist society. Short of a complicated foray into the dialectic - "unity of opposites", there is not the same excuse for the term government.

That said, Sam in his turn, must confess to some specialized interpretation of words; for the 6th paragraph of his party's "declaration of principles" states:

"That the machinery of government, including the armed forces of the nation, exists only to conserve the monopoly by the capitalist class of the wealth taken from the workers, the working class must organize consciously and politically for the conquest of powers of government, in order that this machinery, including these forces, may be converted from an instrument of oppression into the agent of emancipation and overthrow of plutocratic privilege." (my emphasis.)

While it is obvious that that is not what Sam Leight means, the meaning of this in the normal meaning of language, is that WSP & its companion parties intend to set up a transitional working class government, retaining the use (for a period) of "the armed forces of the nation", & believing that these can be used for workers' self-emancipation.

       I.O.
Dear Comrades,

In the final paragraph of his letter in DBL4, Comrade Leight expresses his belief that most DB readers "have a healthy hatred for capitalism," to which I would add, "and a healthy desire to replace it with a socialist society -- one that would differ in no important way from the socialist society Com. Leight envisions (but has no blueprint for).

While Com. Leight's wrote his letter as part of an ongoing discussion of two leaflets produced by the Grand Rapids Discussion Group, he eventually got around to stating that his and his party's view of socialism differed fundamentally from that of the SLP and presumably all syndicalists or SUIists, whether political, like the DeLeonists, or non-political, like the IWW or WSA. To determine just how "fundamentally different" his socialism is from ours, let's list the basic characteristics of "our socialism. Com. Leight can then tell us the differences he sees.

1. Our socialism will replace private ownership of the means of production with social or common ownership immediately.

2. Our socialism will abolish the political state immediately.

3. We will disband any socialist political organization or other purely revolutionary organizations immediately.

4. Our socialist revolution will abolish the wages system immediately.

5. Our socialism will immediately abolish exchange and with it the means of exchange: money.

6. Our socialism will produce things for use.

7. People themselves in our socialist society will develop the social organization they need to administer (or govern or control or manage) production.

To these propositions, I would add some corollaries:

A. We can not predict whether a socialist society will organize according to the syndicalist (SUIist) model of the IWW/SLP/WSA or the factory committee/workers council model or -- since we can envision only what our experience and imagination permit - through neither of these but some entirely different system of social organization that develops spontaneously from existing social conditions.

B. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century Marx, Bellamy, and DeLeon proposed labor-time vouchers as a device to assure equitable
distribution of both labor and product in a society in the process of industrialization but still unable to produce goods in excess of needs. Quite rightly Com. Leight regards such vouchers as a limitation on the right of free access to goods. While cheerfully admitting that despite the technological advances since 1900 there will still be limitations on how much can be produced he doesn't tell us how these limitations will be handled except to say that 1) they won't be very important or serious and 2) a population capable of transforming society from capitalism to socialism would refrain from making demands that would place an undue strain on its productive capacity. While the latter seems to put considerable faith (and I use the word deliberately) in the perfectability of human nature I suspect Com. Leight is correct. As a species we have an untapped capacity for responding to the needs of others of our species and voluntarily subordinating our whims to the greater good. And what he suggests may work in that part of the world Marx and Deleon were thinking about when they proposed vouchers: that portion, with perhaps one fourth of the world's population, in which today agriculture and manufacturing have been industrialised. It will work if everyone doesn't immediately demand two cars in his garage and a six-room house—the acceptable minimum standard of living for an auto assemblyline worker in the U.S.

C. As to socialist internationalism, Com. Leight is right in taking exception to the idea of a revolution that isn't international in scope. When capitalism is destroyed in the industrialized world, it will collapse worldwide. But I'm less convinced than he that the result will be world socialism if such a revolution occurs soon. For one thing, the third world proletarians will not be taking over and running a productive system capable of of producing goods in excess of needs. They will be in the a position analogous to that of the landless Chinese peasantry in 1949 immediately after a small part of them led by the Chinese Communist Party had driven the Kuomintang, Chiang Kai Chek, and Chinese capitalism to Taiwan. Could these peasants—the proletariat of an agricultural nation—have finished the Chinese Revolution by destroying the new administration of Chinese capitalism; Mao, the Red Army, and the CCP leadership and establishing socialism? Certainly not unless a lot of unlikely things had occurred almost simultaneously and at high speed: mass education, a revolution in the West, the industrialization of Chinese agriculture and manufacturing. And the same doubts must arise today regarding the three quarters of the human race in third world nations. Com. Leight says that we don't have to "convince the last Hottentot." But I think he would agree that we can't have real socialism until the great majority of our class--of the people--want it and until the development of the forces of production make it possible. Neither communism seems likely to obtain in places like China, India, Ethiopia, or Iran in the near future regardless of the imminence of revolution in the advanced capitalist nations.

Language and Meaning

In the future I'll be very careful to write so that no one can
infer that "our class" will exist as a class under socialism. I understand and appreciate Com. Leight's hangup on the words "government" and "trade union". The problem is that all the words we use have the meaning capitalism lends them. It's a major problem in socialist evangelism, one that forces us to choose our terms very carefully. But I think that he goes too far when he says (DB14 p. 11):

"Under capitalism "governments" and "trade unions" not only exist but they have an economic base, in addition to their own clear connotation. When one transfers these expressions, which literally constitute part of the capitalist system of society, to a society labeled "socialism" we are in effect substituting institutions that form an integral part of the system."

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I especially want to point out Com. Leight's idea that when one transfers these words to a socialist society one is in effect substituting the capitalist institution itself. This is the sort of thing that whizzes past one's head in oral debate; in a written polemic, though, one can examine the idea and see it for what it is.

Incidentally, Com. Leight's favorite word, administration, has an "economic basis" in capitalism also. In legal parlance "administrators" are appointed by courts to "administer" collections of capital called estates. And we speak of a Democratic Party or Republican Party administration of the capitalist state. Also, the bureaucratic masters in the education industry are called administrators and collectively, the administration. Com. Leight obviously doesn't think that "word power" will transform socialism into capitalism if uses the word administration.

The SLP's NEC and the Government of the Future

Next is Com. Leight's assertion that "the SLP even described the National Executive Committee of the Party as 'the government of the future.'" In a note to him last October I pointed out the absurdity of the allegation given DeLeon's statement in Socialist Reconstruction of Society and the SLP's frequent references in its own literature to the disbanding of the party after the revolution and offered to let him revise the allegation out his letter. Having read the same charge years ago in a now defunct World Socialist Party publication, I was familiar with it and suggested that it must be the work of a not too acute WSP zealot who had misread an SLP publication. My guess was the old large size SIU leaflet, no longer published by the party, "Socialist Industrial Unionism: The Workers' Power," which
has a chart and quotes DeLeon about the nation's capital being the place where the General Executive Board of the Socialist Industrial Union sits. For I couldn't think of anything called the "Visualized Graph..." published by the party.

Com Leight chose not to take me up on the offer and told me I would probably hear from one Harro of the WSP, who had written the original article. I haven't heard from Harro in the ensuing two months, but the mystery of the "Visualized Graph" has been cleared up by Louis Lazarus, whose knowledge of DeLeon and DeLeonist publications is encyclopedic. He preferred not to write an article but responded to the allegation as follows (later sending a copy of the "graph" reproduced on page 11):

"It is sheer fabrication. I have before me "Industrial Unionism" by Olive M. Johnson (New York Labor News, 1935) which contains the graph mentioned by Leight. There is no such statement as he mentions. But it clearly asserts: "by following the black arrow perceive how direct is the connection with the center and shop representation in the National Executive Council, the government of the future."

The Labor Day Leaflet

Now to Com. Leight's analysis of the Grand Rapids Discussion Group's leaflet, "Some Questions for Labor Day." Several of his criticisms have merit. The word share, for instance, does indeed carry with it a connotation not only of a limited supply, as Com. Leight says, but of individual ownership as well. In many respects his criticisms are like our own. The problems with this and our other leaflets, I think, are two-fold. One is simply the difficulties that any small group of amateur writers have in writing and editing a leaflet in a hurry. The other is the question of aiming at a particular readership. While I agree with him that our language must not mislead readers, it must also be readable and understandable, written in language they are familiar with. The 4200 people who for the first time in their lives got a leaflet advocating socialism, however tentatively, are not readers in the sense that they habitually read for information, they have a gut hostility to the word "socialism," and they are not very likely to have noticed the implications and nuances that upset Com. Leight.

The purpose of the leaflet was to raise questions and doubts about the capitalist system in readers' minds. And in the main we feel that the leaflet succeeded. The "litany of questions" spotlighted the basic helplessness of unions and unionism in the fight against the effects of capitalism. Far from being an "invitation to reformism," the leaflet, by raising the idea of production for use in the "Question for Everybody," was suggesting a revolutionary socialist solution, especially when coupled with the quotation from the Declaration of Independence. And we do not feel that any worker was led to think that "our country" is actually ours. As for the precise nature of what we are advocating, that can wait for a new revised
VISUALIZED GRAPH

OF

SOCIALIST INDUSTRIAL UNION

EXPLANATORY.

This chart is not a "blueprint" but a simplified graph of the Industrial Union and the Socialist Industrial Republic. Seven principal industries have been chosen, and under each, four industrial branches, which self-evidently leaves room for expansion as well as enlargement of detail after organization of the Union and the Revolution. The important point conveyed by the chart is that the Industrial Government rests on the broad base of the nation's industry. Any worker may place himself in "shop A," substitute his own branch of industry and his own industrial department for "mining," and by following the black arrow perceive how direct is the connection with the center and the shop representation in the National Executive Council, the government of the future, representation being in direct ascent on a truly broad democratic basis—from below and up.

Copyright, 1919, by the National Executive Committee, Socialist Labor Party.

Reduced: Original 9x14
version of "What Is Socialism" preferably one edited by Com. Leight.

One more thing: I think criticisms of the language and ideas in leaflets is legitimate. I can't say the same thing for Com. Leight's struggle to find "basic differences" between his socialism and that of most other readers. One finds the same frantic effort to justify exclusiveness--and superiority--among protestant religious sects: the Two-Souls-in-the-Spirit Primitive Baptists versus the Free Will Primitive Baptists --and the same magnification of minor doctrinal differences to matters of GREAT IMPORTANCE.

I hope Com. Leight will examine the six points on the first page of this letter (which I think most anti-state capitalism socialists will accept--though not all, I'm sure) and let us know how they should be changed to mesh with his thinking.

Fraternally,       Frank Girard

WAR OR REVOLUTION?

The past few years have seen a wholesale rewriting of the history of American involvement in Vietnam. From the official government versions of the events to extremely violent television shows and movies like The Deer Hunter and Rambo, the people who rule us are attempting to glamorize the slaughter of the Indochinese Wars as a prelude to the next war. It might be in the Philippines or Southern Africa, Central America or Korea. It might be fought on five or ten fronts simultaneously with the Soviet Union. Or maybe they'll send us off to massacre the populations of Spain or Italy or Britain in the suppression of a revolutionary civil war in Western Europe.

The pressures of the world-wide economic crisis are pushing the rulers of the United States towards war. And the corporate executives, politicians and bureaucrats who will profit most from a war are preparing us for the war by a reproduction of extremely nationalistic values and hatred of people from other parts of the world, pushing everything from Saturday morning cartoons and toys for children that glamorize nuclear war and bacteriological weapons to the camouflage clothing that became fashionable shortly after the Iranian Hostage crisis of 1979-1980. The rulers of Russia are using similar propaganda tactics to get the Soviet working class lined up to fight and die for their bosses.

The ruling circles of the United States are preparing for a big war. A war for which they hope that the people in the Army and the Navy and the kids they'll draft will quietly and unquestioningly work, kill, and die. And a part of their reason for wanting us to forget what really happened in Vietnam is so we'll forget what defeated their war efforts--and the importance of the resistance of the enlisted men and women against the war effort.

SOLDIERS IN REVOLT--"SEASICK SAILORS"

The first major symptoms of the breakdown of respect for authority in the military emerged among the ground troops of the Army and the Marine Corps. For soldiers in the combat zone, a radical opposition to the war became an important part of avoiding horrible injury or death. From the more mild forms of political protest and disobedience of war orders the resistance among the ground troops grew into a massive and widespread "quasi-mutiny" by 1970 and 1971. Soldiers would go on "search and avoid" missions, intentionally skirting clashes with the Vietnamese and often holding three-day-long pot parties instead of fighting. Commanders would be threatened with "fraggings", forcing them to worry more about their own troops than about the "enemy." War equipment would be sabotaged and destroyed. By 1972 roughly three hundred anti-war and anti-military newspapers, with names like Harass the Beast, All Hands Abandon Ship, and Star-Spangled Rummer had been put out by enlisted people. Riots and anti-war demonstrations broke out on bases in Asia, Europe and in the United States. By the early 1970's the government had to begin pulling out of the ground war and switching to an "air war", largely because the ground troops who were supposed to do the fighting were paralyzing the world's mightiest military force by their sabotage and resistance.

With the shifting over to an "air war" strategy, the Navy
became an important source of resistance to the war. In response to the racism that prevailed inside the Navy, black and white sailors often rebelled together. The most significant of these rebellions took place on board the U.S.S. Constellation off of Southern California in November 1972. In response to a threat of less-than-honorable discharges against several black sailors, a group of over one hundred black and white sailors staged a day and a half long sit-in. After docking in San Diego, 132 sailors were allowed to go ashore, and refused orders to reboard the ship several days later, staging a defiant dockside strike on the morning of November 9th—perhaps the largest act of mass defiance during the war. In spite of the seriousness of the rebellion, not one of the 132 sailors involved was arrested.

Sabotage was a very useful tactic. On May 26, 1970, the U.S.S. Anderson was preparing to steam from San Diego into the Pacific for Vietnam. But someone had dropped nuts, bolts and chains down the main gear shaft. A major breakdown occurred, resulting in several thousand dollars worth of damage and a delay of several weeks. Several sailors were charged, but because of a lack of evidence the case was dismissed. With the escalation of Naval involvement in the war the level of sabotage grew. In July of 1972, within the space of three weeks, two of the Navy's aircraft carriers were put out of commission by sabotage. On July 10, a massive fire swept through the Admiral's quarters and radar center of the U.S.S. Forrestal, causing over seven million dollars in damage, and delaying the ship's deployment for over two months. In late July, the U.S.S. Ranger was docked at Alameda. Just days before the ship's scheduled departure for Vietnam, a paint-scraper and two twelve-inch bolts were inserted into the number-four-engine reduction gear causing nearly one million dollars damage and forcing a three and a half month delay in operations for extensive repairs. The sailor charged in the case was acquitted. In other cases, sailors tossed equipment over the sides of ships while at sea.

The House Armed Services Committee summed up the crisis of rebellion in the Navy:

"The U.S. Navy is now confronted with pressures...which, if not controlled, will surely destroy its enviable tradition of discipline. Recent instances of sabotage, riot, willful disobedience of orders, and contempt for authority...are clear-cut symptoms of a dangerous deterioration of discipline."

That resistance and contempt for the military by enlisted people was often directly linked to civilian resistance to the war, and to the beginning of social unrest in the United States itself. Men who had learned to rebel inside the Navy, the Army, the Marine Corps and Air Force contributed to the beginnings of a wildcat worker's movement in the auto factories of Michigan and Ohio, and the coalminer's strike in 1977.

Along with the uprisings in the inner cities of the United States, the rebellions in the armed forces were the American expression of a wave of world-wide working class revolt, occurring in the same period as the General Strike in France in May 1968, the big strikes in Italy and Germany in 1969, the insurrection in Poland in 1970, a series of big strikes and riots in Brazil, Argentina, the General Strike in Shanghai, China against the state-capitalist dictatorship of Mao-Tse Tung.

The era finds us in, an era of the re-emergence of working-class combative on an international scale since the late 1960's, recalls in many ways the years following the first World War. World War I, like the Second World War, was a direct result of the competition between the major capitalist powers of the day for control of the world market. But unlike the Second World War, World War I did not end with the total defeat of one set of capitalist nations by their rivals. World War I wasn't ended by any liberal "peace movement", by middle class pacifists or "disarmament negotiations", World War I was ended by the wholesale collapse of the armies and navies of major combatant nations like Russia and Germany in revolutionary mutiny, by mass strikes and insurrection across Russia and Central Europe. The soldiers and sailors of different nations, who were supposed to hate and murder one another, fraternized with each other, turned their guns against their officers and went home to fight for revolution in their own countries. There were mutinies in the British Navy and in the armies of the British colonial empire in Asia. Naval bases like Kronstadt in Russia and Kiel and Wilhelmshaven in Germany became important centers of revolutionary organizations and action. The French invasion of Revolutionary Russia was crippled by the mutiny of the French fleet in the Black Sea, centered around the battleships France and the Jean Bart. A revolutionary in the French Navy was quoted at the time as saying, "The workers of Germany, Austria, and Hungary were fighting an armed struggle, and revolutionary strikes were raging in Italy, Spain, Switzerland, all over Europe, and in faraway Argentina...the French soldiers and sailors saw before them the revolution which was rousing the masses of the people in France."

The horrible world wars of this century, the more than 40 "small" wars raging all over the world today, the threat of extermination of the human race and of all life on this planet, the butchering governments and death by starvation and malnutrition of one out of every six human beings aren't caused by "human nature". They are the direct result of capitalist society, the world of social relations based on the exchange of objects and activity through money, the system
There are no "free societies" anywhere in the world today. No ruling class in history has ever given up its power and its existence without a fight, and the men who rule the world today won't be any exception. It may not be very long before the crisis of capitalist society forces into being an authentic anti-authoritarian rebellion against capitalism, in other parts of the world, and even here in the United States - one that goes beyond even the most radical moments of the worker's movement in Poland in 1980 and 1981. At that point in time, the conscious revolutionary collapse of the army and navy will be necessary not just for the possibility of a successful social revolution, but for the very survival of humanity.

The managers of capitalist society in the East Bloc and in the West find their system heading into the gravenest crisis in the history of the capitalist world. The response they are planning to "save" capitalism could lead to our total extinction as a species - unless the basis of their economy and power is collapsed from within by the working class men and women who they depend on.

Comrade Mike Conderloy:

I am writing in response to your letter to the Discussion Bulletin of May, 1973. I am associated with the D.B. (a letter I wrote also appears in the same issue). I would like to deal with several points which you made in D.B. number 11, in the hope of furthering a constructive dialogue within the anti-authoritarian left towards developing greater unity within the "Third Force" developing around the framework established in the Discussion Bulletin.

In the first paragraph of your letter, you made a statement that "It may be possible to help many workers who have not achieved perfection - and who are happier, more productive and better provided for - with more time to consider making deeper changes in their society." This was preceded by the statement that "We cannot achieve a really desirable society simply by reforming and patching our existing society. However, this does not necessarily mean that we should refuse to even consider working towards any reforms."

We must realize that we cannot achieve the necessary social changes dictated by the replacement of the outdated and decrepit capitalist system of exploitation by making minor modifications within the system. You seem to accept this in the first paragraph of your letter. Also, we must not negate the desire to provide for reasonable means of survival for all human beings. Although people who are happier, more productive and better provided for will have more time to consider making deeper changes in their society, historical precedent has shown us that the simple action of achieving such a state of being does not guarantee the development of a social consciousness, and has many times resulted in the opposite, or rather, a false sense of security that the capitalist system will
be able to take care of their needs and a rejection of the need for
the necessary changes dictated by the replacement of capitalist
exploitation with a society based upon the abolition of exploitative
social relationships. Any attempts at reforming capitalism must of
necessity be accompanied by the realization that our goals must
involve a total rectification of our economic and social relationships.

In the third paragraph of your letter, you state "In our
discussions here, we all seem to be assuming that a certain amount
of work is inherent in civilized society, and perhaps it is. Yet
I feel that this necessary work may amount to much less than we
believe it will."

As active agents of the course of social change, we all must
realize that the necessary changes in social relationships
and the means of production will logically involve a reduction of
the amount of socially necessary labor time for all members of our
society. We will be able to make use of the resources available to
use through the usage of all members of our society as active partici-
pants in the means of production as well as to bring technological
developments to further reduce the amount of labor time necessary
for each individual as we adjust the means of production towards the
fulfillment of social needs rather than production for profit, which is
inherently wasteful and destructive.

The last sentence of paragraph three says "If anarchists and others
really want to have an effect on the future, we will be striving to
develop a voice in the direction of the coming automation, rather than
accepting the shape of automation decreed by those now in power."

This sentence seems to agree basically with what I have written
above. I am very cautious, however, about the implications in the idea
of striving to develop a voice in the direction of the coming automation.
We must realize that automation under capitalism will continue under the
basis it has for the last two hundred years, that of being a means for
furthering private production for the profit of the capitalist parasites.
Perhaps we should strive to increase our understanding of the process of
automation and technology, but we must constantly bear in mind that the
full development of these resources can only be carried out for the
benefit of the working-class (employed, underemployed, and unemployed)
after the capitalist system has been cast into the scrapheap of the
antiquated social systems of days gone by.

Do you consider yourself an anarchist? Where do you find agreements
and/or disagreements with the positions of others involved in the
Discussions Bulletin? Also, as I am not fluent in French, what mean
"L'Etat, C'est Merde" mean in English? Does it mean "The State is shit?"

In revolutionary solidarity,

Thomas L. Johncock

Thomas L. Johncock
THE STRUCTURE OF SOLIDARITY

"Industrialism," wrote Daniel De Leon, "is a trinity that constitutes one leaf; it is a term that embraces three domains, closely interdependent, and all three requisites to the whole. The three domains are form, tactic and goal. The goal is the substitution of the industrial for the political government, another term for the Socialist Republic; the tactics are the unification of the useful labor of the land and politics as well as the economic field; the form concerns the structure of the organization."

Socialist Industrial Unionism aims to achieve solidarity of labor. Solidarity of labor presupposes class-consciousness, that is, (on the part of labor), that it is conscious of the fact that the interests of the skinners (the capitalists) are the direct opposite of the interests of those (the workers) who are being skinned.

All existing unions are founded upon job-consciousness. Their appeal to the worker is on the basis of protecting her/his job - not against layoffs or displacement by machines, but against fellow wage slaves who compete for the job! The AFL-CIO, Teamsters, United Auto Workers, etc. are, in fact, job trusts. It is this job-trust character that is the primary cause of the miserable disunity so apparent in the labor movement today.

JURISDICTION SQUABBLES

Unions that are job trusts are frequently separated by jurisdictional disputes. They vigilantly guard their own jurisdiction, but are ever on the alert for territory which can be invaded. Not only do they "protect" their jobs against the unorganized, but also against rival unions. As a consequence of jurisdiction rules, wars are frequent in which weapons of violence, even assassination at the hands of hired thugs, are employed.

The victors in these feuds are frequently the unions that promise the exploiters more for their money.

Samuel Gompers, one of the founders of the AFL, and long a leading capitalist labor lieutenant, once told a union convention:

"Jurisdiction controversies are unavoidable. They are, though, only a phase in the struggle for the survival of the fittest. The craft in whose membership the greatest amount of efficiency is crystallized will finally win out in the fight for jurisdiction and control of the job."

A slave class torn by destructive conflict with fellow workers is an easy class to rule.

As most union members have learned to their dismay, no matter
how determined the membership is to achieve "rank-and-file" control, the real control over the jobs is located in the officials. Closed shop or "union shop" agreements make this power of the officials absolute. Once the closed shop or union shop is granted, the rank and file must toe the mark or suffer the consequences, for the labor faker has control methods for quelling malcontents from the "union army" from their jobs. Control of jobs forms the base of the faker's pyramid of power.

Before genuine solidarity of labor can be achieved, the workers must lose their job-consciousness and acquire class-consciousness. Then, and not until then, can we organize as a class, employed and unemployed, skilled and unskilled, office workers and factory workers. United, we will no longer be an easy class to rule. On the contrary, the exploiters and their labor lieutenants will learn to their sorrow that their ruling days are over.

Journey Tom Johncock

Dear Friends,

I find the DB very interesting and informative, as well as a good means to begin ways to create closer unity.

The Socialist Party USA, of which I am a member, was created out of the old SP, whose lineage comes from the Party of Eugene V. Debs and Norman Thomas. We formed, or rather re-formed an independent SP after Harrington and the Social Democrat stole the Party and made its primary strategy to be a caucus within the Democratoc Party—following the so-called "realignment strategy'' which seeks to transform the Social Democratic Party into a kind of labor party.

The Socialist Party USA today can be described as "an independent political party of the democratic socialist Left.' We are to the left of DSA, for a socialist transformation from below, with workers control of the economy, with public ownership and democratic control of the major means of production, with concern and protection of civil and political liberties. We are a multi-tendedency party, with political tendencies from revolutionary to reformist. We ran David McReynolds of the War Resisters League for President in 1980, and are planning a 1988 SF Presidential Campaign.

The description of a previous writer in the DB of our Santa Bar bara, CA, chapter local as "revolutionary industrial unionist" is not accurate. That may be the way SLPers describe things. We would rather call them "revolutionary democratic socialist to be more accurate. They do not, I believe, follow a strict industrial plan for socialist reconstruction, as does the SLP and its split-offs, but do support workers control of the economy.

More information about the SP USA can be had by writing for a
packet of information ($2.00) at our National Office:
Socialist Party USA, 7109 N. Glenwood Ave., Chicago, IL 60656.

In Solidarity,

Bill Shakalis,
National Co-Chair

(Cont'd from p. 2)

Group, and the Revolutionary Socialist League, a Trotskyist group, as well as a couple of long letters taking issue with WSA stands on various matters. The current issue, number six, devotes well over a page to a continuation of the RSL debate, this time about the role of syndicalism in the Spanish Civil War. With issue number six, I and A went to a 32-page tabloid format.

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Review

World Socialist, 52 Clapham High St., London SW4 7UN, England $1 per copy; L1.50 for a two-issue sub.

The World Socialist is the "Journal of the World Socialist Movement," which is the Socialist Party of Great Britain together with its "companion parties" in Canada, Australia, Ireland, Austria, New Zealand, and the U.S. As the twice yearly frequency of publication would suggest, it is essentially a "theoretical" publication with articles by supporters of the WSM worldwide. Of the four issues that have appeared so far, number three featured several articles devoted to the "Social Revolution and the State" and number four to "How Socialism Can Organise Production without Money." All articles reflect the anti-reformist, anti-statist, anti-authoritarian positions of what we call "third force" socialism. The WSM comes from a Marxist perspective, differing from the other major Marxist grouping, the
Socialist Labor Party, in only minor details.

The Socialist Standard, see Clapham High St. address above, 30p per copy, L5.50 for a one-year, twelve-issue sub.

The Socialist Standard is the monthly publication of the Socialist Party of Great Britain. It has been around since the party was organized in 1904. It too is in magazine format and differs from the World Socialist by concentrating on current events to greater extent. Its articles remind me those in the SLP's People except that they focus less on union and third world issues and more on the domestic problems created by capitalism.

One more thing, the rate of exchange 12/27/85 was L1 = $1.38.

With this issue we begin Part III of Comrade Laurens Otter's analysis of the paradox of DeLeonist/Anarchist ideological similarity and mutual hostility. Earlier installments of the series were published in DBs 8, 11, and 12.

De Leon & Anarchism _part III (or C)_

De Leon's _contribution_ to wider anarchist theory.

I have argued - at some length - that De Leon's "Socialism versus Anarchism" was unworthy of a great socialist thinker; that he chose as a target a person whose connection with anarchism was to say the least, mendacious, & an attitude (which he alleged was central to anarchism) which he knew to be opposed by most major anarchist theorists or his knowledge of these latter was slighter than he suggested; and that he argued less cogently than was his norm. (Recalling Orwell's claim that when a writer, who normally writes with clarity, produces something that is opaque, & unclear, then one should suspect that he is either consciously or unconsciously being dishonest.)

I have argued further that the early De Leon had a definition of anarchism that would have included the later De Leon. I am far from alone in believing that De Leon's views developed over the years he was in the movement; not merely does Delia Reynolds show this in his DB article, but even Petersen - with whose ideas I am not unduly prone to agree - states this emphatically in Socialist Landmarks.

I would suggest that - without admitting his earlier repudiation of anarchism had been wrong, whether in substance or in detail, - De Leon could not have adopted SIUism had he not redefined anarchism as something it is not, and created an aunt sally to deflect attention from the fact that he had begun to adopt what was effectively at least a quasi-anarchist position.

No doubt there will be those who disagree with my argument at the earlier stages; that there will be debate on them; I can only hope that it is only serious debate.
However, since anarchists have long adopted Marx's argument, originally used against us (however unjustly) that means are ends in embryo, (a quotation which when I have given without attribution Marxists generally describe as obvious petit bourgeois moralism,) anarchism, however much it is properly defined as socialism without the state, is not merely an aim but a means to attain that aim. The means being - by most anarchists who use the term - defined as non-government oriented direct action (industrial, civil disobedience, squatting-occupation of buildings by the homeless, etc.),

means not normally associated with De Leonism: and anarchists - those using the term - oppose the electoral-associated means that form the centre-piece of mainstream De Leonist politics.

It is this that I wish to reconcile here, not by saying that the distinction doesn't matter, & certainly not by saying that I think mainstream De Leonism is right, but (a) by saying that there is in the De Leonist concept of Take & Hold, (not an original concept, syndicalists and others had already talked of it, but a concept built by De Leon into a more comprehensive theory than those who had gone before him,) & in associated arguments, the germ of the next most important advance in revolutionary theory, (one which others, without fully rationalising it, have begun to make;)

and (b) saying that whereas De Leon was advancing towards this further great advance, his heirs put De Leonism into reverse, & retreated from it.

Two passages to which I have already referred showed De Leon understood in a way that his epigonni did not the need for socialists to fight alongside ordinary workers in their spontaneous struggles, even though the methods they use are at first limited to pure & simpleism. I neglected to point out his answer to a question of Reconstruction, which shows that he was also aware of the difficulties involved for people who, while convinced of the need for the IW,, could not transfer until their comrades were ready to move.

It would indeed be presumptuous in me not to add an acknowledgement at this point that the very existence of the American groups associated with the DB, & even the somewhat erratic evolution of the American SLP itself stems from a burgeoning appreciation that De Leon was no mere ivory tower abstentionist, and a breach with the Petersen tradition. So we can take it that even now awareness of the meaning of De Leon is not controversial.

Let us then go on & try to look beneath the surface; look in particular at those very facets of the De Leonist mainstream tradition that most sharply divide it from anarchist practice: the insistence on the vote in election, the opposition to "direct action" as "propaganda by the deed" (& I would stress that only a very small minority of anarchists and the slightly larger minority of Marxists, the nihilists have ever equated "propaganda by the deed" with assassination attempts,) the insistence that the SLP exclude all members (or voters for) socialist groups other than the SLP.

I will attempt to show that the reasons that De Leon came to these opinions...
are often reasons an anarchist would applaud, that indeed most anarchists - if the reasons had been properly presented - would have preferred the De Leonist position to that advanced by many with whom they were associated in rejecting him.

No other points of division, which cut across both those who consider themselves anarchists and those who consider themselves De Leonists, have been instanced in this debate:

De Leon's insistence on non-violence, which he, to some extent, & his followers to a great extent, have illogically equated with constitutionalism;

the differing conceptions of internal democracy within the SIU.

I will only attempt to discuss aspects of these two, (those aspects that are relevant to my general case,) since, as I say, there is no defined consensus, whether anarchists or De Leonists on either or these issues, and in any debate on either issue (excluding a mere name-calling one alleging that this or that side believes something arbitrarily concocted by the protagonist) there would be both anarchists & De Leonists on both sides of the argument.

De Leon's insistence on the vote was always explained by his fear of a premature accession of a socialist organization to power before it was a majority, before the working class was ready. Given some of Bakunin's concept on the matter, his willingness to work with supposedly non-socialists & the nature of some of those who while sharing Marxian principles or a workers state had in the 1870s become identified as anarchists (because of their anti-parliamentarianism; De Leon's fears in this were not unmerited.

His was an anti-vanguardist testimony, (although he would indigently have repudiated the term and insisted that the SLP was the vanguard,) that modern anarchists would applaud.

However, as so often, there was a divorce between the reasons advanced & the strategy being employed. If De Leon wanted to ensure that there would be no premature attempt at a social general strike, no minority of the workers would attempt to apply the proposals to "take & hold", it would be easy to insist that the stay-in strikes should only be launched when the majority of the people in the specified geographical unit were active participants in the life of the union; or since he advocated occasional mass parades of workers to further the cause of recruiting workers to the SIU away from craft unions, when the majority could be seen on such parades; (though there would be a danger in a pre-revolutionary situation, unless the police and army were already adequately subverted, that parades under such conditions would be suicidal.)

Coupled with this in De Leon there is the valid argument that violence does not make for fraternity, & that it would embitter relations, so that those who had - without economic cause - been duped into supporting the capitalistic would be permanently alienated. He might have added (had the jargon been invented) that by preventing communication, violence prevents the subversion of the police and military agents of the capitalist system.

Moreover had he lived to see capitalism transformed (whether in the Eastern of stalinist form, or in the supposedly free enterprise West) into bureauocratic collectivism; he might well have added that efficient violence could only be waged by an hierarchical organisation, embodying within
itself the very characteristics of the collectivised bureaucratic capitalism against which socialists struggle.

But such argumentation is only logical if underlying it is an assumed equation of lack-of-violence with constitutionalism; (or at the very least a failure to distinguish between the two;)- how it is obvious that De Leon did not consciously equate the two, he was well aware that strikes were no less bitter about the actions of the police, (however when the police xxxxx are allegedly or in fact, merely the agents of a democratically elected government.) Such bitterness would be quite as strong, if (in the not merely unlikely but impossible event) the police were the agents of a government responsive to the desires of the workers and against those of the scabs.

So, it is not merely the fact that the state is so formed that it cannot be an agency of socialism, it is also the fact that if it could be, it would still have to use coercion against those who have been brain-washed by the old order; and that De Leon's arguments against violent revolution are - every bit as strongly - arguments against a constitutional access to power.

Regrettably De Leon did not live long enough to develop this theory. (Obviously I cannot know that he would so have done had he lived, I believe that had he lived to see the Great War that would have made him extend his earlier theories appreciably, others have argued - & I would not disagree - that had he lived to see the Bolshevik Revolution there would have been a major development of his thought, - though generally I don't agree with the presumed way in which that thought would have developed, - & I would think that had he lived to see the development of the Gandhian campaigns in India, we would no be talking about his synthesis of the ideas of Gandhi & those of Stalinism... But such speculations as to whether a great theorist would have taken this or that further step along a road on which he appeared to be travelling; - whether it is with De Leon or whether one is arguing, against Trotskyists, that Trotsky had he lived to see the Third International wound up, & Russia play a classically imperialist role in Eastern Europe, would have accepted the bureaucratic collectivist analysis - & no revolutionary wave follow the end of the war, would, as he promised in his Testament, have adopted the bureaucratic collectivist analysis; - is unfortunately fruitless.)

1 This is not just impressionistic, still less wishful-thinking; the two major theorists of the civil disobedience movements in the English-speaking world, (acknowledged as a formative influence by Martin Luther King in "Stride Towards Freedom") & J.A. Skinner (acknowledged by successive secretaries of the Committee of 100;) these had both in autobiographical essays published in the early fifties, acknowledged De Leon as the major formative influence in their conversion to full socialism and their choice of a broad theory. As it happens, I once had an opportunity, in the interval in a Third Way Conference, (I think in 1954,) to ask them both to what extent De Leon's ideas had remained an influence, as they developed as major theorists in their own right. Basically Muftie's answer boiled down to "with the obvious exception of the time I was associated with Trotsky, - though xxxxxxx even then
there is another argument that comes up — not just in De Leon, despite his polemical insistence on equating Continental Syndicalism with violence, it is an argument used by French syndicalists before De Leon’s conversion to Syndicalism, but nevertheless De Leon’s was probably the clearest exposition of the belief, though since it is 35 years since I read the relevant article I cannot give chapter and verse, or even remember the article’s title. — & this is that the capitalists would not risk the destruction of factories, (since if they destroyed them, there would be no point in a restoration of capitalist power, with their capital possessions destroyed; ****) that therefore if workers occupy factories, they not merely alienate the capitalists from the source of their wealth and thus of their power, but they also disarm the capitalists who could not combat them without destroying the source of capitalist power.

Others have argued that this is an over-stated argument, that a declining ruling class is not always rational in its actions, that those workers who are accustomed to doing the capitalists’ dirty work for them would go on being differential, & believing in the capitalists’ right to own the money — & thus reward them — after the capitalists had been deprived of the actual capital. (Both in the French & in the Russian Revolution, there are numerous instances of such difference among employers with no economic interest in the old order into making personal sacrifices to shield the deposed aristocrats.) Yet pick at it, as you may, there is a kernel of truth in this argument. 2

Once again De Leon appears to be pointing towards conclusions he never quite reached. His position is supported by the fact that there was indeed a very considerable cross-fertilization between syndicalism and Gandhi thought. That the Harial was meant to be an Indian application of the General Strike is commonly recognized. Obviously in a primary producing country, there were not enough mass industries to "take & hold", and the producers' end of the strike linked back to the "Grand National Holiday" concept of the Chartists, with the real emphasis being on the consumers' strike and the illegal production of equivalent of British goods that were

2 Arguably this argument is psychologically weak, failing to appreciate a destructive urge that might lead the old order to decide that if it cannot rule, it will ensure that it destroys the world with it.

I continued from page 22

it wasn’t obvious to me at the time — I think I have always been a De Leonist. (Regrettably in the mid-Sixties Muste had another lapse when he became to some extent an apologist for the Castro regime, — though never as much so as Petersen was for Stalin.) Allen (Skinner) replied: "Well everyone knows the influence the De Leonists had on the Clydeside Workers’ Committee. which was reflected by the influence of the Maxton Group within the ILP (Maxton became leader of the ILP; we (the Guild Socialists in the ILP) claimed to be the authentic expression of De Leonism in Britain, & I think I have remained true to what I was then." (Allen, because of the manoeuvring of a Stalinist faction within the London ILP had had to resign London ILP after helping to form it, then had to work on the Labour Party, though he remained linked to SIUists in the ILP, & was largely responsible in large part, responsible for the fact that Common Wealth was evolving in a revolutionary FIUist direction. He had not & did not ever deviate(d) from this.)
Not quite so well known is the fact that Indian Satyagrahi adopted a number of local tactics from the Wobblies and French Syndicalists - (confining ourselves to one craft):

- bus drivers & conductors taking out buses and refusing to collect fares, rather than refusing to run the buses at all, (thus winning the support of the consumers) (a wobbly method)
- bus drivers taking out buses in the early morning & then - at the height of the rush-hour, halting them in the middle of the town, preferably across the line of the traffic, & making their own way home, (a tactic copied from syndicalist French cooks in London)
- bus drivers and their supporters preventing snail-driven buses proceeding, by, in a constant line, crossing one pedestrian crossing, going along the pavement and returning across another such crossing, (a wobbly tactic)

The Peteresanite of course, because India is not yet ready for socialism, disregards its struggles as irrelevant, and so ignores them; and applies De Leon's strictures against minority actions to those Wobbly & syndicalist pioneer uses of new forms of struggle. I think I have instanced enough evidence to show that De Leon would probably have disagreed with the latter argument, & the works of Marx are full of evidence that he would have rejected the former.

(to be continued)