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EDITORIAL

ORIGINAL, IF NOTHING ELSE.

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WHILE trying to make the “carom” of fastening ridicule upon the approaching Chicago Convention, and, of course, failing, the Evansville, Ind., *Socialist* of the 9th instant “pockets the ball”, so to speak, by giving the first clear insight, so far given, upon the structural theory according to which the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic, alias Public Ownership party is builded.

Arguing against the purpose of the Chicago Manifesto to establish an economic or industrial Union “founded on the class struggle”, the Evansville *Socialist* pronounces the notion absurd, “confused”; and its reason for so holding is that “the class struggle has been, is and will remain until the class interests causing this struggle are removed.” In short, the Evansville *Socialist* holds that the class struggle being a fact “which can neither be introduced into nor left out of the social movement”, therefore it is nonsense to “found a labor organization upon the class struggle”; the structure of the Social Movement, that is to emancipate the working class and eliminate class antagonisms, will rise soundly all of itself: the inherent, latent class struggle will take care of that.

Whatever may be said of this style of reasoning, the palm for originality can not be denied it.

According thereto, “arrant nonsense is the notion of building a house obedient to the law of gravitation: the law of gravitation ‘can neither be introduced into nor left out of the building construction’: it is there: ‘fools’, ‘confusionists’ and what not are those who would seek to raise the house by bevel and plumbline: all such people are ‘Moseses’ and ‘Messiahs’, intent upon the silly scheme of introducing into a structure the law of gravitation that is there anyhow: the sensible man lets the law of gravitation work out its own salvation: comfortable apartments, safe and solid

walls, secure roofs, sound flooring will all shape themselves of themselves and in their right places, thanks to the inherent law of gravitation."

Or, to take another illustration, "arrant nonsense is the notion of building a ship obedient to the laws of mechanics: the laws of mechanics are not and can not be invented by anyone: they 'can not be introduced nor can they be left out of' a ship-yard: they are there, a part of the universe: 'fools', 'confusionists' and what not are those who would seek to rear a ship by mechanical laws: all such people are 'Moseses' and 'Messiahs', intent upon the silly scheme of introducing into shipbuilding the mechanical laws that no man has invented or could invent: the sensible man lets the laws of mechanics work out their own salvation: strong prow, solid ribs, water-tight side-planking, masts at proper distances will all of themselves shape themselves in their right places, thanks to the inherent laws of mechanics."

That such reasoning is idiotic is obvious: the idiocy thereof lies in the ignoring of the function of the human agency. Neither the laws of gravitation nor of mechanics are constructive forces: they are "powers": and these powers it is for the human agency, according to its intellect, to hitch and harness for constructive purposes. The laws of gravitation or of mechanics will not construct a house, or build a seaworthy ship. The functions that these laws exercise in the premises will be constructive or destructive according as the human agency that avails itself of them be intelligent or unintelligent. The identical laws of gravitation or of mechanics, which when intelligently applied, will aid in rearing habitable buildings and seaworthy ships, will, when ignored or unintelligently applied, smash both house and ship into a heap of ruins. Exactly so with the sociologic law of the class struggle. It lies latent and palpitating in social evolution—just as the laws of mechanics and of gravitation lie latent and palpitating in nature; just as these, the class struggle is not a "constructive force", it is a "power", the capacity of which to construct the Socialist Republic depends upon the intelligence of the human agency that handles it; and just as with gravitation and mechanics, the identical "power" of the class struggle, which, when intelligently applied, will aid in rearing the Socialist Republic, will, if ignored or unintelligently applied, smash society into a heap of ruins. As the intelligent builder of ships and houses will found these upon the laws

of gravitation and mechanics, so will the intelligent militant in the Labor Movement found the organizations of Labor upon the class struggle.

Of all this the Evansville *Socialist* evidently is blissfully ignorant, and, consequently, misses egregiously the “carom” that it attempted against the movement to build at Chicago a national economic organization of Labor founded upon the class struggle. But in missing the “carom”, it “pocketed a ball”. Its theory luminously explains the structural theory upon which its party is reared. By the light of its theory one is at last able to understand the system in the madness that expects the Socialist Republic to rise out of the jumble of Civic Federationized Unions, of party locals that fuse with capitalist candidates, of party papers that sell out the workers for advertisements, of party leaders who endorse capitalist papers as “acceptable”, of party representatives who sign resolutions against “backward” workingmen, of party candidates who kowtow to pro-Cragg-Jorgensen resolutions in their Unions of party platforms that echo bourgeois reforms—in short of conduct that is not founded on the class struggle. The system in the madness lies in the grotesque theory announced by the Evansville *Socialist* that only confusionists will think of founding a Labor organization upon the class struggle—the class struggle being there, anyhow, it will see to the rest (sic.)!

Of course it will—like all ignored laws of nature or society, by smashing things into a cocked hat, and bringing the falsely constructed edifice, as is happening with the party of the Evansville *Socialist*, down over the ears of those paragons of wisdom who would handle the Social Question like Indians who have found a watch.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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