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EDITORIAL

WHAT SHALL LABOR CELEBRATE TO-DAY?

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ONCE more does the cycle of Time bring to our thoughts, attention and activities, Labor Day. Once more, as it has annually done for the three past decades, shall Labor, organized in the American Federation, form itself in marching order and, amid the sounds of martial music and the cheers of friends, celebrate—what?—

Shall Labor celebrate the machinists' strike on the Santa Fe Railroad, which, after one year of struggle, amid persecution and difficulty, is admittedly defeated?

Shall Labor celebrate the ignominious end of the Great Pacific telegraphers' strike, recently fought and won by J.J. Hill with hands down?

Shall Labor celebrate the Chicago teamsters' strike, with its defeat, forty-two deaths, and the disclosures of corruption made by Gompers' friend, John Driscoll?

Shall Labor celebrate the Subway strike, with its infamous betrayal of the 6,000 employes involved, by the Stones, Hannahans, Mahons, Gompers, et al.?

Shall Labor celebrate the conclusion of the Fall River strike, that was lost after six months of heroic struggle, compelling the acceptance of a twenty per cent wage cut in one year?

Shall Labor celebrate the 1,500 Parry open shops, with their decreased wages, longer hours and increased output?

Shall Labor celebrate the building trades closed shops, which are inaugurated according to an arbitration agreement written and enforced in the interests of the Employers' Association exclusively?

Shall Labor celebrate the growing number of unemployed, which the reports of the *American Federationist* show to be greater in 1905 than in the panic year of 1903?

Shall Labor celebrate the decrease in its organized membership, amounting, according to the State Labor Bureau, to more than 17,000 in the State of New York?

Shall Labor celebrate the dismemberment of its organizations, as in the case of the Brewery Workers' Union, through jurisdiction decisions and mutual, organized scabbery?

If Labor shall not celebrate these, what is there for Labor to celebrate? What can Gompers and the American Federation of Labor produce as a cause for jubilation, besides lost strikes, corruption, betrayals, wage reductions, the Parry open shops, the Employers' closed shop, the growing unemployed, a decreasing membership, and fratricidal jurisdiction fights? What, we repeat, can Gompers produce besides these? What shall Labor celebrate to-day?

Though Gompers can produce naught but disaster and ignominy for Labor to celebrate, there is no cause for despondency; on the contrary, there is every cause for rejoicing. Labor is not celebrating its own downfall—Labor is revolting against the trades unionism and the capitalist system, which cause it. Labor is up in arms against the causes of the evils which beset it, and is determined to remove them. This revolt is organized by the Industrial Workers of the World, which was launched, amid the vain opposition of Gompers and a malignant capitalist press, at Chicago on July 8. The Industrial Workers of the World is based on the recognition of the fact that the employing and employed classes have nothing in common; that the men in one industry, or all industries combined if necessary, must act as a unit, an injury to one being an injury to all; that the final aim of Labor organization is to take and hold that which Labor produces, thus making way for the overthrow of Capitalism and the inauguration of the Workers' Republic. Compare these principles with those of the Gompers' Civic Federationized A.F. of L., which proclaim the mutual interests of employer and employe, despite the increase of strikes; believe in craft autonomy and trade agreements, which divide Labor into warring factions; and regard Capitalism as a permanent system, to be tinkered with and patched—all of which produces the corruption and disaster which Labor is asked to celebrate on this Labor Day.

It is needless to say that, launched under such circumstances and with such principles, the Industrial Workers of the World is growing. Its officers report great

and substantial interest in its work, resulting in the steady formation of locals and the issuance of charters. The times are ripe for it, and it is bound to succeed.

Labor has its own revolt and redemption from vicious trades unionism and Capitalism to celebrate.

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

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