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# Where We Stand

by Charles W. Ervin

Published in the *New York Call*, v. 14, no. 287 (Oct. 13, 1921), pg. 8.

In these days of “splits” it is well to take account of just where we stand toward the ever-changing battle for human rights.

Nearly 14 years ago this paper was founded to carry the message of Socialism to the people of this country. Those who founded it believed, just as those who support it now believe, that Socialism is the hope of the world; that only when the producers in the world organize their political and industrial power to take and keep possession of the wealth created by them can real liberty be achieved.

The majority of the founders of this paper, just like the majority of those who now support it, are not doctrinaires. While subscribing to what are named “Marxian principles,” they were intelligent enough to know that just as Marx had not said the first word in economic science, neither had he uttered the last. In other words, they took the same position as Marx himself took toward the sciences, both physical and economic.

From the very first this paper not only adhered to the Socialist movement of the world at large, but it was one of the organs of the Socialist Party of America. It believed then, as it believes now, in the immense value of political education.

It does not go into a political campaign merely for the sake of bringing its ideas to the people. It believes in striving for political power to use it in securing industrial control.

It believes, and always has believed, in the great importance of immediate demands. If it did not, it certainly would not support the battle of the labor unions as it does.

It believes that every advantage, no matter how slight, that is wrested from the capitalist class puts the

workers in a position where they will be able to secure still further advantages until they become sufficiently organized to stretch out and grasp all the good things of life.

This paper does not believe that things have to get worse before they get better. It does not believe that when men and women rise to a higher standard of life they become so contented that they cease to strive to reach toward higher things.

On the contrary, it strives for and welcomes every improvement in the human mind and body, every improvement in physical environment, every step toward a higher spiritual development that mankind succeeds in making.

This paper believes in fighting for every tool of democracy it is possible to lay hold of. It believes that the human mind must be reached and convinced before efficient action can accomplish anything.

It therefore believes in fighting for and preserving the rights of free speech, free press, and free assemblage, the right of representation in the lawmaking bodies, the preservation of the purity of the ballot so that men and women can express their ideas in votes that will be counted; and it is glad of the privilege of joining other groups in fighting for these things, whether or not these other groups happen to subscribe to the same economic beliefs this paper does.

When we can convince a majority of our fellows that the putting into practice of our principles will bring about an era of industrial freedom — the only true freedom — then we know our goal will be achieved. It cannot be gained until we do this.

**We do not believe in minority rule of any kind, no matter by whom.**

We do not believe in dictatorship, whether of

the plutocracy or the misnamed “dictatorship of the proletariat.” We have been for centuries and are now suffering from dictatorships, and we want to help abolish them from the face of the earth.

We subscribe to the right of a majority to decide under what kind of system we shall live. Any other method means chaos. Our business is to do our part in convincing the majority that they must use their organized industrial and political power to achieve their freedom.

We believe in using every effort to overthrow the present economic system called capitalism. We believe in using every effort to capture the political power of the state to be used in overthrowing this system. We believe in it because we also believe that the peaceable method of the ballot is the most efficient method; that it is real “direct action.”

This paper has always been abused by the capitalist class. It is now being abused and vilified not only by that class but by a group of pseudo-revolutionists who hope and strive for its destruction because we refuse to allow ourselves to be moved from our position by the hysterical shriekings of a few romanticists who think they can “create” a revolution by following the methods of those in other countries where the industrial environment and institutions of government were very different.

We have to the utmost of our power upheld the Russian revolution; and for this we were deprived of our mailing privileges for nearly 3 years after the war ended. We are still upholding the Russian comrades to the best of our ability and will continue to do so. They must solve their problems in their own way, and our business is to do what we can to keep our capitalist governing class from interfering with the Russian

people’s right to conduct their affairs as they see fit to conduct them.

For us even to attempt to dictate to or advise the Russian Communists would be as impudent as it is for the Russian Communists to attempt to advise the American Socialists regarding the methods that we should follow in our fight for freedom here.

Those Communists in America whose activity is given to propagating their ideas here have a right to present them freely to the American people. We have insisted upon their right to do this while in thorough disagreement with many of their principles, just as we have insisted upon the right of other groups to be heard.

But we also believe that the tactics they follow toward those who happen not to be Communists are thoroughly disreputable.

The constructive work done in Russia by the Communists has no part with the destructive activity of the Communists in America, who seem to be straining every nerve to destroy the present labor unions and the Socialist Party.

The *New York Call* is a Socialist paper. It has never failed in its loyalty, either to the Socialist Party or to the labor unions of this country, no matter what their form of organization might happen to be. Through good and evil report, it has stood for everything that makes for a little larger measure of life for all mankind and for the final achievement of industrial liberty for all the people.

It is privileged to serve the greatest cause in the world. It will keep the faith to the last, and will not be swerved from its course by the attempts of the capitalist class to suppress it or the abuse of those who have abandoned the cause of Socialism.

***Edited by Tim Davenport.***

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