
Face to Face with Facts.

by Eugene V. Debs

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To Our Comrades and Friends:

A few vital facts need to be clearly understood in this hour of darkness and dawn.

First. Let us think as never before.

Second. Let us unite as never before.

Third. Let us act as never before.

Everything the working class holds dear now trembles in the balance; everything will be won or lost as the workers themselves may now determine.

Five facts of vital importance must be recognized by our people if the educational and political campaign now in progress is to be followed by an era of light and hope and progressive freedom or by a harvest of darkness, despair, and disaster.

These facts should be blazoned upon our banners and burned into the consciousness of ev-

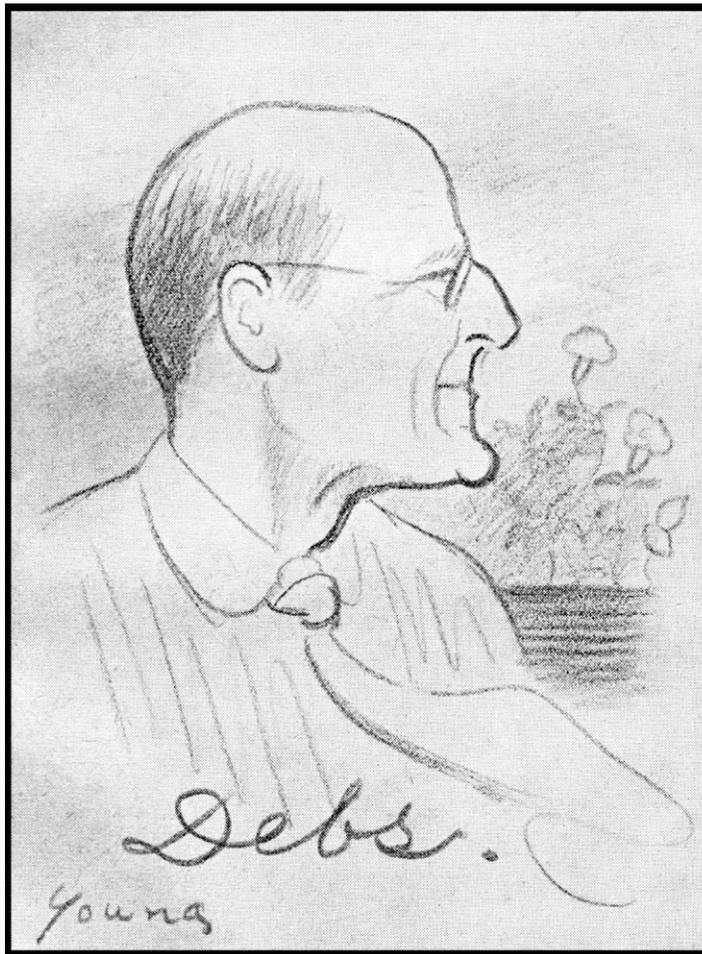
ery proletarian voter in the land. Briefly stated, they are as follows:

First. The issue — the one and only issue — in this campaign is Socialism. Be not deceived. The capitalist politicians understand it thoroughly,

for while they declare the war to be the issue they combine their rotten old parties into one to beat the Socialists. Socialism is the issue. There is no other. Stick to it! Proclaim it everywhere! Socialism or capitalism. Freedom or slavery? Which? That is the issue and the only issue that appeals to the intelligence of the working class.

Second. It is of supreme importance that we elect Socialists to Congress this year. Make that the central and commanding feature of the campaign. On to Washington must be our battle cry. Let it ring and reverberate throughout the

land. Make the fight of your life to elect the Socialist Congressman in your district. Socialism must have its campaigns on the floor of the coming Congress.



Third. The constitutional right of free speech, free press, and free assemblage must be maintained at any cost. In making that fight we are not only upon solid ground, but we win thousands to our party's standard. Had it been intended that this constitutional guarantee should be suspended in time of war the constitution itself would have explicitly so provided. In war as in peace we believe in the fundamental democratic right of free speech and upon that rock we shall fight it out without compromise to the end.

Fourth. Every comrade now under indictment is entitled to proper legal defense and protection of the party. Every one of them. These comrades — hundreds of them — are under arrest, imprisoned and persecuted because they are Socialists. Deny it as the ruling class authorities may, that is the fact. These men and women are guilty of the crime of being Socialists and standing staunchly for the Socialist Party and its principles. To defend these persecuted comrades and secure their freedom and vindication will cost thousands upon thousands of dollars. Only they who have

had experience in federal courts of litigation know how enormously expensive it is. Every comrade and every friend and sympathizer should strain every nerve between now and Nov. 5 to secure every dollar and every dime within reach for our defense fund and our national campaign fund. More depends upon this than upon all else, for without means to defend our comrades and to wage our warfare against capitalism we shall fall wretchedly and our cause fall prey to the ruthless enemy.

Fifth. The answer of the Socialist Party to capitalism's challenge and assault must be made at the ballot box on Nov. 5, and this answer must consist of the election of a score of Socialist Congressmen and at least double the Socialist vote ever cast before in the United States.

Gird on your armor and plunge into the struggle with every atom of your energy and every drop of your blood and score a victory that will thrill with joy the heart of every worker and strike terror to their ruthless masters and exploiters!

Edited by Tim Davenport.

Sketch of Gene Debs by Art Young, 1918.

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