
Be a Socialist — Join the Party

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If you are a member of the Methodist Church, and next Sunday morning when the services are over, a stranger approaches you and, extending his hand says, "My name is Smith, I am a newcomer in the community and in the neighborhood; as I am a good Methodist, I thought I would take this first opportunity of coming up and getting acquainted with you brethren," you would be delighted and you would grab his hand and shake it vigorously, saying, "I am glad to know you, Brother Smith, glad to know that you are living in the neighborhood and are a member of our church."

Suppose he interrupted and said, "But I am not a member of the church."

You would say, "Why, I beg your pardon, but I certainly understood you to say that you were a good Methodist."

"Well, I am a good Methodist, just as good a Methodist as you are, but I have never joined the church."

You would sadly shake your head and say, "Brother, you are not my kind of Methodist."

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Suppose you are a Mason. Some day, when you go in to get a drink, a stranger sidles up along the bar and says, "I'm a Mason, too."

I do not know literally what you would say, but in effect you would say, "So? Member of the Masonic order?"

"Oh, no, I am not a member of the Masonic order, but I am a Mason all right. I am just as good a Mason as you are, I believe in Free Masonry."

You would refuse to recognize him as a Brother Mason.

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Suppose you are a union man and some day a new workman appears on the job where you are working. You would say, "Are you a union man, brother?"

"Sure, I am a union man."

"Let's see your card."

"I haven't any card."

"I thought you said you were a union man?"

"Well, I am a union man, just as good a union man as you are, but, durned if I'll join the union."

You would probably say, "You're one hell of a union man."

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This is the way I feel when, after a meeting, a stranger comes up and shakes hands with me and says I made a good speech and he was glad to hear it, that he's a Socialist, too, and I say, "That's good. Are you a member of the party?"

"Oh, no, I am not a member of the party, but I am a Socialist all right. I am just as good a Socialist as you are. I vote the ticket."

I am proud to admit that there are thousands of my comrades that are better Socialists than I am, and tens of thousands who are just as good Socialists as I am — but they are all members of the party.

There is no man outside of the party organization that is as good a Socialist as I am. There is no man outside the party organization — I care not how educated he is, or how prominent and influential he may be — that is as good a Socialist as the humblest washer-woman in the red card membership of the Socialist Party.

I know of but two reasons why a man who calls himself a Socialist does not join the organization.

The first is that, while he believes in the principles of Socialism, he does not realize the need of the party organization. In this case he has missed the essence of Socialism — cooperation, organization, concerted effort, and united action on the part of the working class for their own advancement and their own emancipation. If a man does not understand the necessity of these things, he does not understand Socialism, and is not yet a Socialist.

If, on the other hand, he realizes the need of organization — if he knows that the capitalists are not going to give us Socialism — that we are not going to wake up some morning and find it descended upon us out of heaven — but that the working class must organize to get it for themselves — and then he refuses to get into that organization which he knows to be necessary — he is unfaithful to his principles, to the party and to his class, and is unworthy of being called a "com-

rade" or a "Socialist."

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There would be no ticket for you to vote if there was not an organization which nominates the candidates and attends to all the preliminaries of getting their names upon the ballot. There would be no platform for you to endorse if there was no organization to adopt it as the statement of principles of the members and adherents of the organization. It is not enough that you vote the ticket, that you support the platform, that you distribute literature and secure subscribers to Socialist papers, and talk Socialism to your friends and shopmates all the time.

All that is good, and a necessary part of the agitation and of the propaganda — but in itself, it is not enough. If no one did more than that, we would never have Socialism. You may continue that kind of agitation, if such a thing were conceivable, until every man, woman, and child in America was converted to a belief in the principles of Socialism — and then you would still not have it. Although every human being knew what Socialism was, and wanted it, you would still have capitalism and all its evils.

That condition would continue year after year, until someone had intelligence enough to get up and say, "Now fellow citizens, we all believe in Socialism. We know that collective ownership would be better than private ownership. We know that cooperation is better than competition. Now let us get together and organize for the purpose of carrying our principles into effect."

That "getting together" would be the first absolutely necessary step before the people would be able to put their principles into effect and realize the benefit of Socialism.

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It is well to agitate, it is good to educate, but

it is absolutely necessary to organize. In this day and age of the world, no work, no business, no movement succeeds except through organization. In business, politics, war, religion, sport, in every avenue of human endeavor, organization is the keynote of success. Nothing worthwhile is accomplished, no victory is won, except through organization.

You may be one of those who believe in the principles of Socialism and, calling yourself a Socialist, have not seen fit to join the party organization. If that is the case, you should do your duty now. If for any reason you have failed, or neglected, or refused to join the organization, resolve now that you will do your part and your share of the organization work that is necessary, if ever Socialism is to be a fact.

Get in touch with the party organization in your community. Ask for an application for membership card and fill it out. Get into the organization where you belong and line up shoulder to shoulder with the men and women in your community who are struggling and striving to build up a political movement that will become a power for the benefit of the working class in your city and in the nation.

When you get into this organization of ours, the Socialist Party, you will, for the first time in your life, if you war a working man, be supporting and building a political party whose ultimate victory means the emancipation of your class.

BE A SOCIALIST!
JOIN THE PARTY!
DO IT NOW!

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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