

**THE CRISIS; THE UNIONS AND
THE COURTS, THE
TYRANNY OF INJUNCTIONS,
THE POWER OF UNITY**

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The crisis; the unions and the courts, the tyranny of injunctions, the power of unity by Robert Hunter

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ROBERT HUNTER

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THE CRISIS

THE UNIONS AND THE COURTS
THE TYRANNY OF INJUNCTIONS
THE POWER OF UNITY

BY
ROBERT HUNTER

Author
"Poverty", "Socialist at Work", Etc.



UNITED WE STAND
DIVIDED WE FALL



SAMUEL A. BLOCH
The Bookman
681 North Oakley Avenue
CHICAGO, ILL.
1909



HD 7834
.H8

SPRINGFIELD

1915

Gaylord
PAMPHLET BINDER
Syracuse, N. Y.
Stockton, Calif.



THE CRISIS

I.

My union friends, you have not one scrap of manhood left if you quietly submit to the judicial efforts now being made to deprive you of every liberty.

It is no longer a case of a few wretched miners in Colorado.

Every working man from coast to coast is now up against the real thing.

Your unemployed and starving brothers are clubbed in Chicago, branded as criminals in Los Angeles, and deprived of the right to come forth into the streets to say, "Our children starve!"

Union men are being arrested. Injunctions are being used like cudgels to beat you into insensibility. Union funds are being placed at the mercy of every predatory employer.

The great Sherman Anti-Trust Law has at last got into action—not against the trusts, but against you.

Your employers can blacklist you and force your militant brother to tramp from town to town in search of work, only to find that the employers are combining to see that he slowly starves to death.

The constitution guarantees the right of free speech.

193477

What is picketing but the right of free speech! To persuade your brother workman not to take the food out of the mouths of your families?

What is the boycott but the right to express to your friends the injustice inflicted upon you by an unfriendly employer?

The constitution declares that you have these rights.

A thousand little corporation-owned czars are annulling these rights.

If there is a scrap of manhood left among the workers they will see that these decisions do not stand. In every city, town and hamlet there should be mass meetings of Socialists and trade unionists to fight together against the common enemy.

Working-class solidarity saved Haywood.

If every man that loves liberty joins with every other man who loves liberty they will send up a protest to the powers that be that will fill this land with consternation.

II.

A crisis, a momentous crisis, faces labor. No one doubts that. The leaders and the rank and file agree to that.

A decision must be made. A foolish act means ruin; a wise act means salvation.

What shall this action be?

That is a question which every union in this broad land should be discussing.

There must be a change of policy. The old game won't work. What, then, is to be done?

For twenty years Samuel Gompers has said that politics would destroy the unions. What did he mean by that?

He meant that when the union leaders began to work for

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democratic or republican politicians the labor movement would be sold to the highest bidder.

He meant that corruption would eat its way into the ranks of labor.

He meant that leaders would desert their union brothers for the sake of good fat political jobs.

He meant that Tammany would have its representatives in the unions; that Morgan and Rockefeller would have their representatives in the unions; and that organized labor would be torn asunder and slaughtered in a futile and corrupt warfare between these political forces.

Politics in the unions meant that every corrupt leader could become rich. The union movement would become the tail of a political machine, and the organization that had cost so much toil and anguish and sacrifice to build up would end in chaos and destruction.

This is what Samuel Gompers meant. And he spoke the truth.

But he spoke these words when all was smooth sailing for the unions. To-day they are in rough seas, threatened by a tempest of adverse winds. He begins now to question his former judgment and is on the point of revising his former decisions.

The dangers ahead are great; something must be done.

All right; something must be done. Now, what is to be done?

The question can be answered right, and it can be answered wrong.

Anything which divides the forces of labor will be a wrong answer. Anything which corrupts the leaders of labor will be a wrong answer. Anything which gives fat jobs to a few will be a wrong answer.

It is a big question that has been answered, and answered right by the workmen of nearly every country of Europe.

They have answered it by adopting the same independent action in politics that they have adopted in their trade unions.

They have massed the forces of labor in one mighty and united party of labor.

They have put their trade union leaders into politics, independent of all other political parties.

A labor leader who helps one of the old political parties is looked upon as a scab and a traitor.

The workers have united. They have elected their own representatives, paid their political expenses out of their own funds, and they control their representatives as they now control their trade union leaders. Their political organization is their own, and to voice the wrongs of labor and to support the demands of labor they have their own press, owned and controlled by the workers.

The workers of Europe are in politics good and strong, and they will be there at the finish.

There is no corruption, and no inter-fraternal warfare.

The John Mitchells and the Samuel Gompers are in the parliaments of Europe, not representing a Tammany machine or a republican oligarchy, not working underground alongside of corporation attorneys, traction thieves and trust magnates. They are in parliament as the representatives of the working class, hostile to the old political machines, and to every man and every institution that represents capitalist exploitation.

A crisis faces American labor. A new policy has to be formulated. A decision has to be made.

It can be made right, and it can be made wrong.

If it is made wrong, the unions will be destroyed and the working class crucified.

If it is made right, it will mean the unity of labor and the onward march toward emancipation.



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III.

There is one word that labor needs to learn.

"Trust yourselves and yourselves alone."

Hearst is for all I know a good and sincere man.

Bryan is for all I know a good and sincere man.

Roosevelt is for all I know a good and sincere man.

But they cannot help you. You alone can help yourselves.

Hearst and Bryan and Roosevelt do not know what you want as you yourselves know what you want.

There are doubtless Republicans here and Democrats there who would like to befriend labor; but how can any man expect to have others befriend him when he does not befriend himself?

There was a time when labor was ignorant, stupid, fitted for but little else than slavery.

To-day labor can stand on its own feet; can express its own will; can fight its own battles.

And the sooner it stops seeking for some Moses to lead it out of the wilderness the better for labor.

In the past it has been looking for friends. It has been begging for sweet words, flattering phrases, and loving acts.

It has not demanded its rights. It has begged for its rights; it has pleaded for its rights.

The time arrives for it to realize that it must build up an organization of its own; it must have its own party; go to its own ward meetings and express its own will.

It must have its own representatives in every legislature in this country.

It must learn to fight, to be brave, self-reliant, and determined.

It must be suspicious of friends, and confident of itself.

It must cease to beg, and become proud of its own power.