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EDITORIAL

AMENDMENT VII.

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THIS, the last of the amendments of special importance adopted by the recent I.W.W. convention, will be found as the 23rd in the Second Bulletin of *The Industrial Worker*. It is a new paragraph and provides “No member of the I.W.W. shall be an officer in a pure and simple trade Union.”

What a “pure and simple trade Union” is, though often explained, will bear repetition.

A “pure and simple trade Union” is an economic organization of workingmen constructed by the plummet of the theory that the working class and the employing class are peers. As a consequence of so absurd a principle the pure and simple economic organization conducts itself, not along the class lines of the proletariat, but along the class lines of the capitalist class—its economics are capitalist, its sociology is capitalist. In point of economics, capitalism is divided into warring factions: the pure and simple Union holds to the identical idea—conflicting economic interests; in point of sociology, capitalism holds that the welfare of the workingman is predicated upon the welfare of his employer: the pure and simple Union, holding the identical view, adjusts itself to the interests of its masters. In short, capitalism holds that it is of all and for all time, the best of all possible social systems: {the} pure and simple Union, gulping down the same view, strains to keep up the capitalist social system.

Industrial Unionism is exactly the opposite of pure and simple Unionism. Industrial Unionism holds that between the employing, or capitalist, class and the employed, or working class, there is nothing in common; that between the two there is an irrepressible conflict; that the conflict is a historic one having for its issue the liberation of the human race from economic bondage, if the working class prevails, or the collapse of civilization, if the capitalist class remains on top.

Industrial Unionism holds that the welfare of capitalism spells the doom of freedom, the welfare of the working class spells the doom of capitalism. Industrial Unionism holds that the identity of interests prevails only among the workers, and not among the workers and their plunderers. In short Industrial Unionism rears its structure by the plummet of the Class War.

Two such organizations are irreconcilable. There is no middle ground between them. A patching up is impossible; there is no room for log-rolling or dickering. Due to the very intimacy of views between capitalism and pure and simple Unionism, the pure and simple Union often is a portal through which the workingman is forced to pass before he is admitted by the employer to enter the shop and earn his living. Recognizing this fact the I.W.W., not only recognizes the card of a workingman in a craft Union, but gladly accepts craft Union members to membership in its own ranks. One thing, however, is to accept a craft Union member, a wage slave, who is compelled to pay blackmail to the capitalist outpost of craft Unionism, and another is to accept as a member an officer or beneficiary of such a capitalist outpost. In the former case, the I.W.W. may safely open its doors: it opens them to a victim of capitalism; in the latter case, to accept such a member would be to open its doors to one who is a beneficiary, perchance, if not 10 to 1, a “labor lieutenant” of the capitalist. In the face of these the convention shut the doors of the organization. The amendment excludes admission to officers of craft Unions, and it cancels the membership of any who becomes such an officer.

This provision is intended to minimize—to wholly abolish is impossible—the danger of capitalist influences worming themselves into the camp of the Working Class. Like all the other decisions of the convention Amendment VII. is the fruit of ripe experience.

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