
Publishing Statements:

Letter to the Editor of *The American Socialist*, Jan. 8, 1916.

by I.T. Barron

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Though I have read every issue of *The American Socialist* ever published I have managed to keep out of the “open forum,” having long ago learned that the average human being feeling an irritation near the brain, instead of investigating the cause with a fine-toothed comb or otherwise, think they have an idea and rush into print with it. The illusion is infectious and I caught it from Local Indianapolis. They resolved that the public statement of Charles Edward Russell at Philadelphia on Nov. 29 [1915] favoring preparedness be published in *The American Socialist*. I say Amen to the proposition. Our party paper should keep the members informed on what our lecturers are saying and should not repress items which in the opinion of the editor it we better not to let the members know about, forcing them thereby to depend on uncertain information. Tell the truth and shame the devil if the ship goes down in the storm. “Truth crushed to earth will rise again.” Let us have democracy in practice as well as in theory.

William D. Haywood was recalled from the National Executive Committee [in 1912] and it’s a cinch that not 1 in 25 who voted to recall him knew what he said or that he actually said anything. I voted to recall him but do not know to this day whether I was justified in doing so. I would like to see *The American Socialist* make it its business to obtain and print verbatim all statements made by comrades who are

acknowledged lecturers for the party, not in conformity with the Socialist Party, whether constitutional or unwritten.

The resolve that Comrade Russell be not considered a Presidential candidate is premature. He was not my choice nor the choice of Local Keene [NH] but we believe that both he and the locals which nominated him are entitled to a fair trial before he is turned down. Allan Benson has probably made the soundest arguments against preparedness of anyone and yet he could be charged with advocating preparedness. He advocates defense which without a verbatim copy could be twisted into advocating preparedness.

Let us get at the facts before we act. If Comrade Russell lacks class consciousness to the extent that he advocates principles to which the Socialist Party is unanimously opposed he is not fit to be a candidate for President or a member of the Socialist Party. Let’s fire him. Comrade Russell has been an effective lecturer, writer, and worker in the Socialist Party. We cannot afford to lose any active members nor can we afford to be misrepresented by lecturers.

There are three principles which we must maintain at any cost. I should value them in this order: Collective Ownership; Democracy; Anti-Militarism.

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Keene, NH.

Edited by Tim Davenport.

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