

EDITORIAL

## HAYWOOD BLUNDERBUSSING.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**W**HILE nothing but applause is due to William D. Haywood for not allowing, as reported elsewhere from Bridgeport in this issue,<sup>1</sup> the threats of the Bridgeport Local of the Socialist party to keep him from addressing the “Socialist Club” of that city in the interest of the Lawrence strike, only the opposite of applause is due to him upon the score of the passage to the effect that, seeing that only a very insignificant number of the Lawrence workers on strike have a vote, their only available weapon was Direct Action, or strike.

The working class is sufficiently confused upon terms by the capitalist press. Foremost is the duty among the leaders of the workers to remove the confusion, and establish clearness of thought. Haywood’s words give the confusion a boost.

For one thing, “Direct Action” and “Strike” are not the same thing. “Direct Action” means the denial of the ballot, or political action. The strike has no such flavor, color, or meaning. To use the two terms inversely is to promote confusion in Labor’s mind.

For another thing, the circumstance of a worker’s not having the ballot by no means bars him from activity, effective activity, upon the political field.

Political action does not begin and end with voting, or being voted for. Political action includes as one of its most useful features the feature of propaganda. A worker need not be equipped with the right of the suffrage in order actively and effectively to exercise activity on the political field. Whether the worker, being a woman, is disfranchised, or whether, for one of the many reasons bearing upon the subject, he is not yet equipped with the right of the suffrage,—however that may be, the worker so situated CAN take the political platform, and, with all the ability he

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<sup>1</sup> [To be appended.]

or she may possess, CAN advocate the principles of the political party of his or her class. Even if unable to do that, the worker can render a mass of services necessary in political action; among other services, distribute the printed word.

Political action enables the Social Revolution to be preached in the open, promoted in the open, organized in the open—the only way to drill for the overthrow of the Capitalist Order of disorder, rapine and vandalism.

So valuable is Political Action to the Working Class, so necessary is it towards the emancipation of the Working Class, that the Capitalist Class is at its wits' end for schemes to render Labor Political Action impossible. It ill becomes a leader in Labor's Camp to play into the capitalist's hand. Haywood's words do so. By propagating the error that those workers who hold not the ballot have no weapon other than "Direct Action," he lames the political arm of these other workers who do hold the ballot; he ruptures the political power of the whole Working Class; he smites with impotence a large portion of the proletariat upon a field that is essential for their joint deliverance.

It is quite enough for us to know that the "Socialist Club," before which Haywood spoke despite the threats of the "regular S.P.," consists of expelled, or resigned, members of that party's Bridgeport organization. That is presumptive evidence of the Club's consisting of true material. Nevertheless, it is not enough for one who sets up himself as teacher in the Socialist Movement to DARE wrongful anger, he must also KNOW how to chastise that anger. By holding before the Bridgeport "Socialist Club" the confusing, the fallacious, the, to Labor, harmful language that he did, so far from chastising the wrongful anger of the Bridgeport pure-and-simple politician and A.F. of L.-ized S.P., Haywood lent a color of justice to them, and queered the "Socialist Club."

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
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