

EUGENE V. DEBS
JOINT CRISIS COMMITTEE

In the heartland of the United States of America, Indiana, on November 5, 1855, an advocate for the rights of the working class and a firm opponent of the establishment was born, and that advocate's name is Eugene Victor Debs. From working on the railroad scraping paint off of carriages, to eventually becoming a fireman, my life is a testament to the power of solidarity and the importance of action. I have witnessed firsthand all the disparities between the laborers, and those who profit from their work. From this perspective, I founded first the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and later the American Railway Union, one of the largest unions currently, not only to improve conditions for workers but to spark a broader and larger movement for social and economic reform. In my journey, I have faced prison multiple times, but these experiences only strengthened my determination and resolve. My life is more than a story; it serves as an ongoing diary of the worker's collective struggle. Despite any relentless adversity, we will always aim for justice and equality. We yearn for a society where every man and woman is afforded the product of their labor, where the chains of economic servitude are broken asunder. My goal in this lifetime is to ensure that a laborer is not just known as a mere instrument in the industrial field, but is known as a dignified member of society, gaining rights and respect for their contributions.

The beauty of our nation's labor is tainted by the misuse and exploitation of its most vital contributors: the workers. I have unwavering dedication to the cause of labor, aiming for a new narrative of fairness and dignity for all. The Great Railroad Strike of 1877 and its chaotic events and strikes, which brought our trains and therefore our revenue to an abrupt stop, were a stark reminder of the deep-seated conflicts between labor and capital. As the leader of the American Railway Union, I spearheaded the Pullman Strike, which, despite its ultimate defeat, sparked a national dialogue on the rights of workers and the responsibilities of employers. My policy vision is crystal clear: the empowerment of labor through the right to organize, the establishment of fair wages, and the protection of workers' rights are fundamental to a just society. These principles are not merely economic considerations; they are the moral bedrock of a fair and equitable society. The labor movement, with its rich tapestry of struggles and triumphs, is a reflection of America's enduring commitment to justice and the pursuit of a more perfect union. It is a movement that demands unwavering support and action, a call to dismantle the oppressive structures that have stifled the voices of the working class and to forge a new path of progress and prosperity for all. The plight of the worker extends beyond the factories and railroads; it is found in the fields of the agrarian worker, the workshops of the artisan, and the burgeoning cities where the industrial laborer seeks a better life. It is a universal struggle that transcends borders and unites us in a common cause for dignity and respect.

The ideals of the United States democracy are tainted by the shadow of corruption that hovers over our government. The election of 1876 exposed our political system's fragility and the simplicity with which it can be manipulated by those with negative intentions. My campaign against such corruption has been marked by a call for merit-based civil service and a refusal of the spoils system that has long plagued our political institutions and hurt the reputation of America. The American Railway Union's stance against the corrupt alliance of government and industry is a symbol of our unwavering commitment to the cause of the working class. The

socialist principles I advocate for envision a government that is accountable to its citizens, one that serves the common good rather than the interests of just a privileged few. The fight against corruption is not simply a battle of policy; it is a struggle for the integrity of our republic, ensuring that the will of the people is not subverted by the schemes of the powerful. It is a struggle that calls for the eradication of the political patronage system, the establishment of transparent governance, and the empowerment of the common man in the political process. This battle against the corrupt forces that seek to undermine our democracy is not for the faint of heart; it requires a steadfast commitment to the principles of justice and a willingness to confront the entrenched interests that have long dictated the course of our nation's history.

The Joint Crisis Committee has the responsibility of shaping the future of the United States of America, a responsibility that should not be taken lightly. I propose a comprehensive agenda that will usher in an era of social justice and equality for all Americans regardless of social and economic status. We must preserve the right of workers to organize into the fabric of our laws, establish a living wage as the cornerstone of our economic policy, and dismantle the monopolistic enterprises that stifle competition and innovation. In addition, we must enact anti-corruption measures, create a transparent and accountable civil service, and utilize the Sherman Antitrust Act, which outlawed monopolistic business practices, in order to break up the industrial monopolies that threaten the democratic foundations of our society. These proposals are not merely policy directions; they will be the pillars of a society that focuses on the well-being of all American citizens, which is grounded in the principles of socialism and democracy. The committee must adopt these reforms with resolve, which will not only redefine the American landscape but also secure a legacy of progress and fairness for future generations. Furthermore, I urge the committee to consider additional measures: the implementation of a progressive tax system to redistribute wealth more equitably to benefit the laborers of our industrial field, the introduction of universal education to enlighten and empower the members of our society, and the establishment of public ownership of utilities to prevent exploitation by private interests. I also advocate for the end of child labor, the establishment of an eight-hour workday, and the provision of pensions for the elderly and disabled. These courses of action are essential to the creation of a society that values human dignity and respect over profit, and that strives to provide for the common welfare of all its citizens. The committee should also explore the creation of a national health service to ensure that all citizens have access to equal quality healthcare, the development of a comprehensive public transportation system to facilitate the movement of workers and reduce our reliance on private automobiles, and the establishment of a national housing program to address the crisis of homelessness and provide affordable housing for all. These initiatives are not only morally imperative but are also economically sound, fostering a more productive and harmonious society. In conclusion, I implore the committee to act decisively and without delay. Our deliberations and decisions have the potential to transform the lives of countless Americans and to bring about a society where labor is not just a means to an end but a dignified and respected vocation. As a delegate and a champion of the working class, I am committed to advocating for these reforms and to ensuring that our collective will manifests as tangible, impactful change. Let us proceed with the knowledge that our actions will resonate through history, and let us commit to a path that honors the dignity of every American worker.