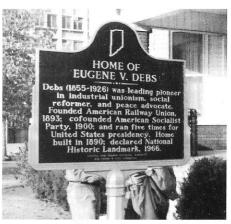


SPRING, 1993





RALPH NADER

HISTORICAL MARKER

The 1992 Award Banquet Ralph Nader's Challenge

To the assembled guests, Ralph Nader could have been a shoo-in nominee for several positions, from labor party presidential candidate, or leader for a labor press, to reform union leader in the Debs tradition. All these areas were dwelt on convincingly in Nader's acceptance speech at the annual banquet where he was presented the 1992 Debs Award. Nader's well prepared speech was punctuated numerous times with applause from the audience. Both in presentation and reception this was a somewhat different Ralph Nader from the one often seen in news coverage of some congressional committee hearing or press conference.

Nader alternately challenged, chided, and inspired his listeners. His early career focused on consumer rights, and has broadened to include citizenship rights as well. His overriding vision and concern is for citizen empowerment to create a responsive government, one which responds to citizen's needs, and for an economic system which serves, not exploits ordinary people. He makes a convincing case for citizen participation, for involvement. When enough people get involved, things get done!

Another treat for banquet guests was the special offer accompanying the announcement of the re-release of Ray Ginger's award winning biography of Debs, *The Bending Cross*. This is a book you should own and may wish to

SPRING BUSINESS MEETING

Saturday, 1:00 p.m. May 8, 1993 at Debs Home present as a gift. Added to the original are an introduction and updated bibliography by Robert Constantine, and numerous historic photographs from Debs' life. See elsewhere in this *Newsletter* for the purchase offer available to you.

Historical Site Marker

An unveiling ceremony was held on the grounds of the Debs Home the afternoon of the annual award banquet. A representative of the Indiana Historical Bureau participated in the ceremony, assisting Noel Beasley, Foundation Executive Vice President, in the unveiling. The state historical bureau had supplied most of the funds for production of the attractive, informative marker which identifies the Home as a State of Indiana historic site. It is beneficial for publicity as well as appropriate that the home be credited with this honor. Another prestige factor is that the Debs Home is one of only eleven Indiana sites on the registry of National Historic Landmarks, a status granted in 1966. Landmark status is more than a prestige factor, for it carries the legal status which protects the home against sale or seizure by right of eminent domain. The property is inspected annually by a person from the National Park Service, Department of Interior, and helpful hints are given occasionally on preservation practices.

It was the National Park Service visitor, incidentally, who briefed us on requirements and limitations for sites such as the historic Debs Home as regards compliance with the recently enacted Disabled Americans Act. The Memorial Gardens is fully wheelchair accessible, including access to the memorial wall, but not so the 1890-built private resident, the historical authenticity of which would be destroyed, not to mention the foundation's financial resources, by the installation of an elevator for handicapped access to its three floors.

ACTIVITIES FOR 1993

The most important activity always for the Debs Foundation is preservation and maintenance of the Debs Home and opening it to the public free of charge Wednesday thru Sunday, 1:00 to 4:30 p.m., other times by appointment. A new brochure is available which describes the historic exhibits inside the museum. Another main activity is the annual award banquet held in October or early November, requiring much planning and preparation. The banquet date will be announced at the spring business meeting. We try also to acknowledge in special ways significant dates such as the 25th anniversary of the foundation's charter (1987), and the 100th anniversary of the construction of the Debs home (1990). A major turning point in Eugene Debs' life occurred 100 years ago, in 1893. Those events are described in this Newsletter, and will be given additional attention of an informative, commemorative sort in the fall Newsletter and at the banquet.

Commemorative Stamp Drive on Hold

The idea of a U.S. Postal Service commemorative stamp for Debs makes sense, but would not be easy to pull off! Such a drive is on hold for the moment. The major stumbling block is the requirement that stamps in this series, unlike an Elvis Presley stamp, must be keyed to an anniversary-50th or 100th-in the person's life, this in addition to a massive letter writing campaign, which requirement we could meet with a bit of effort and planning, for numerous indications of willingness to help have come in. The time frame on which the postal service operates for all this is three years. Hindsight tells us that the process should have been initiated as early as 1990 in order for issue date to be keyed to the anniversary of the founding of the ARU, or 1991 for the Pullman strike, or in 1992 for Deb's first imprisonment. One could wonder about our chances of getting a Debs stamp through the postal service bureaucracy which commemorates a jailing (Deb's later imprisonment made him something of a martyr to a cause, but his imprisonment for leading the Pullman strike did not gain similar notoriety except among railroad workers.) How about starting a campaign in 1997 keyed to commemoration of Debs' role in the founding of the American Socialist Party? Do you think of an earlier and less controversial date in Debs' career?

THE DEBS COLLECTION Enhanced Preservation and Useability

Among the many valuable collections housed in the Rare Books and Special Collections Department of Cunningham Memorial Library, Indiana State University is the extensive Debs Collection of books, personal correspondence, newsclippings, rare photographs and microfilmed newsclippings, speeches and other historical materials from the life of Eugene V. Debs. Such valuable historical materials require not only a climate controlled environment for preservation purposes, but also special

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Foundation Officers:
Jack Sheinkman, *President*Noel Beasley, *Executive Vice President*Charles King, *Secretary*Woodrow Creason, *Treasurer*

The *Debs Foundation Newsletter* will be published twice yearly for distribution to members and friends of the Foundation. The Eugene V. Debs Foundation is a non-profit, private organization which maintains the home of Eugene and Kate Debs as a museum and shrine to labor, and carries on educational and informational programs which aim to honor and promote the goals for which Debs struggled: industrial unionism, social justice, and peace. For those wishing to become members, an application form is provided elsewhere in this issue.

security Procedures by which materials can be made available to researchers must also provide safeguards against abusive use or even thievery.



The library may not see it as integral to their security system, but a symbolic guardian of the historic treasures is the visage of Debs which peers down from the bust standing outside the entrance to the Rare Books and Special Collections Department. At one time this bust was located atop a pedestal on the spot on the ISU campus which marks Debs' birth place. This area is

now part of an ISU athletic facility. The bust had an unfortunate tendency to become "mobile" at times which seemed to coincide with celebrations for major athletic accomplishments at ISU. So the bust was donated to Cunningham Library and now stands guard near the entrance to Rare Books and Special Collections.

Access and use of the materials in the Debs Collection has been greatly enhanced by recent project completions. One step was to transfer most of the foundation's collected materials to the ISU library, this in recognition that the 100 year old structure is not the proper physical environment for storage of historic materials nor for public use for research purposes. A cooperative agreement with ISU assures that the collection will be properly housed for preservation purposes as well as for accessibility under proper supervision. The foundation makes an annual contribution to defray some of the expenses of this valuable service. The Debs Collection at ISU was written up in a special issue of Labor History, which dealt with the major libraries and archives in the United States which house special resource materials for those interested in writing or researching the history of the American working class. (See Labor History, Vol. 31) Numbers 1-2), Winter-Spring 1990.) Additions too recent for inclusion in that article include the notebook of personal correspondence between Debs and the family of William Leslie, and the microfilming and indexing of a number of recent acquisitions to the Debs Collection, efforts which greatly enhance "user-friendly" access to these materials.

A MAJOR TRANSITIONAL YEAR

Debs 100 Years Ago

The years prior to 1893 had been transitional for Eugene Debs. He had been a highly successful union organizer, and under his editorship Locomotive Firemen's Magazine had demonstrated what a labor press can do to articulate worker viewpoints. Yet, Debs increasingly was frustrated with the disunity and divisiveness in organized labor, no where more evident than among the railroad brotherhoods, the Engineers, Firemen, Brakemen and so on. The Gompers-led American Federation of Labor was little interested in organizing unskilled The industrial workers. technological revolutions had not yet spawned mass production techniques and the large scale manufacturing establishments which grew up around the radio, home appliances, and especially the automobile. There were, however, increasing numbers of workers in industry who did not possess the skill levels of carpenters, plumbers, masonry workers, etc., and such were the skill levels of many of the men working in railroading. For several years Debs had been toying with federation for the various railroad brotherhoods, but these efforts never succeeded, partly because of resistance on the part of engineers, the elites of railroading.

Debs was to conclude that all the types of workers in railroading must be united in one industrial union so that they collectively would be strong enough to stand up to the industry

owners. The result was the founding of the American Railway Union (ARU) in 1893. The outcome of the Pullman Strike one year later was to convince Debs that even industrial unionism was not enough, so the transition in career for Debs was to continue. Experiencing during the Pullman Strike consolidated opposition from both industry leaders and the legal and political systems, Debs was to come to realize that workers' rights could not be advanced given the political and legal structures of that time. So the transitional years in which Debs' position shifted from optimism for what federated brotherhoods could accomplish to a commitment to industrial unionism of the ARU type, was to prove to be for Debs an eventual career switch from union leader to political activist. But a century ago this year, for Debs the big event was the founding of the ARU, in June, 1893.

The year was to see phenomenal organizing success for the fledgling union. Enthusiasm abounded and workers joined by the thousands. No longer did the low skilled workers in railroading feel left outside the labor movement. Debs earlier had estimated that no more than twenty-five percent of railroad workers were organized by the brotherhoods. There was opposition from organized labor, from conservatives in the brotherhoods and from the American Federation of Labor. For several years Debs and Gompers had seemed to be seeing eye

to eye on many important issues, but now Gompers was vigorously opposed to the radical organizing principle of industrial unionism. But in those early months the ARU seemed unstoppable. Membership dues were nominal and benefits to be gained were great. There followed in quick succession the complete success of the strike against the Great Northern in 1894, and the disastrous outcome of the Pullman strike that same year. But 1893 was a year of innovation, of new beginnings, of optimism and hope that the disunity and internal bickering among workers organizations was giving way to a new era of solidarity and fraternity. And Gene Debs was the dynamic leader at the helm!

"Many Jobs Needed"

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A typical example of utilizing low cost labor can be seen in Mexico where there is a huge pool of readily available employees willing to work for as little as 60 cents an hour. The situation is rapidly becoming an economic bonanza for many of America's top corporations. In Juarez, Mexico, U.S. companies pay \$1 an hour for the same work that costs \$20 an hour in Detroit.

Americans seldom realize the serious nature of the relationship between cheap overseas labor and its impact on unemployment in this country.

The U.S. Department of Commerce estimates that \$1 billion in trade is the equivalent of 25,000 jobs. With the U.S. trade deficit threatening to reach \$150 billion this year, there would be an accompanying loss of 3.75 million American jobs.

In the manufacturing sector alone, the U.S. Commissioner of Labor Statistics has reported a loss of 210,000 jobs in the first eight months of the year, and 1.5 million jobs since 1979.

LAST CALL...

We are in process of identifying names on our membership list of persons from whom we have not heard in over three years. We need to know if you are dead or alive, interested or not in being on our mailing list.

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The Cost Of A Banquet

What does it cost to pull off a nice banquet? We are talking an attractive setting, space for socializing and for displays, adequate sound system, and dinner served, not buffet style.

For a couple of years we have charged \$25 per banquet ticket, when it is common to see banquet dinner prices in the \$40 to \$50 range. Approximately one-half of what we charge went for food, and \$3 to \$4 went for hall rental and for security. There are expenses for printing tickets and dinner programs, flowers, travel and lodging expenses for honored guests, and so on. Unless we sell more than 300 tickets, which we rarely do, income from ticket sales barely covers total expenses. There fortunately is income from foundation supporters who pay for space in the greetings section of the dinner program, else we would end up in the red-no politically oriented pun intended-on the banquet.

How much should we charge for a ticket? We feel that it would price us out of the market for the individuals and organizations we serve if we charged \$50 for a ticket. Our position is that we should try to avoid ticket prices which discourage individuals who must pay for their own tickets, because we know that many of our guests must foot the bill for their tickets. We know that \$25 is no trivial amount, but hopefully you will see it as affordable. I hope that you do not feel the need to open a banquet savings account, or start putting nickels in a piggybank, but hope also that you will make the resolve and say this year: "Hey, this is one I plan to attend!"

Herbert Hoover Had It Right!

"The trouble with capitalism is capitalists. They're too damn greedy." So said President Herbert Hoover. Debs knew as do we that capitalism exploits the workers, but it is surprising to read such forceful expression from Hoover of what unbridled greed does to a society. The above quote is the "hook" on an

announcement card for the new 12,000 square foot exhibit which "separates fact from myth to tell the story of the man who presided over the Great Depression." The Herbert Hoover Presidential Library is in West Branch, Iowa, about 10 miles east of Iowa City, just off Interstate 80.

Dangerous Reasoning

The arithmetic may be right, but it doesn't really add up! This was my reaction when, while writing for this newsletter, the news came of the cold blooded murder of a medical doctor in the parking lot of a women's clinic in Pensacola, Florida. One of the supporters of the killer observed that, regrettable though the slaying is, we should not forget the fact that by this action twelve lives (fetuses) were saved which would have been aborted that day.

The reasoning is all wrong. In the first place, abortions can be rescheduled and other doctors can do abortions. There also are theological and ethical questions. A fundamentalist preacher played God by deciding who should die and who live. By his theology, he may have sent one man to an eternity in Hell (an unbeliever), whereas that same theology holds that babies, not having reached the age of accountability, are saved, or at least "safe" in matters of eternal destiny.

This happened on the day the first woman Attorney General was approved by the U.S. Senate. Hopefully women's rights under the constitution will be given more support under this administration. The tactics employed by anti-abortion groups have been headed unchecked in a dangerous direction, and the slaying was a tragedy just waiting to happen. One person very appropriately observed that abortion is a highly divisive issue and both sides have very strong feelings, but no prochoice advocates are going out and killing persons on the other side.

Socially Relevant Citings

AUTOMOBILE MAKERS AND DEALERS IN THE United States spent \$4.7 billion on advertising for the model year 1991. Federal government spending on public transit for roughly the same

period totaled only \$3.3 billion. (State and local governments spent \$7.5 billion more.)

-Automotive News and the American Public Transit Association

MORE THAN A QUARTER OF THE FACTORY OWNERS in the Mexican town of Mexicali along the U.S.-Mexico border say that Mexico's lax environmental enforcement influenced their decision to locate there.

-Natural Resources Journal

"GOODS PRODUCED UNDER CON-DITIONS which do not meet a rudimentary standard of decency should be regarded as contraband and not allowed to pollute the channels of international commerce."

-Franklin Delano Roosevelt in a 1937 address to the U.S. Congress cited in the World Policy Journal

"CAN A BUSINESS MAKE A TOP-QUALITY, all-natural product, be a force for progressive change in its community, and be financially successful? Yes. Sure. Why not?

We're doing it and so is a small, but growing and(we think) influential, group of socially responsible companies. We call our approach Caring Capitalism."

> -Ben & Jerry's On Caring Capitalism and Linked Prosperity, a pamphlet given out to customers in the ice cream makers' stores.

THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY HAS INSTITUTED A single set of standards for "organic" food sold in member countries. Besides shunning pesticides, farmers must maintain soil fertility with organic techniques to qualify for the new standard.

-Food Safety Directorate Information, a publication of the E.C. Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

ABOUT 1.3 BILLION PEOPLE, mostly in developing countries, live in cities where the air is unhealthy to breathe.. Of those, 400 to 700 million people, mostly women and children, breathe indoor air that is made many times more polluted by cooking smoke.

-The World Bank, World Development Report 1992

NINE MAJOR COMPUTER MAKERS PLAN TO unveil desktop models by next year that slip into an energy-saving "sleep" mode when not in use. By the year 2000 the computers could save \$1 billion in electricity. The innovation was suggested by the Environmental Protection Agency.

-Wall Street Journal

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Socially Relevant Citings ... continued from Page 4

The Debs Collection

continued from page 2

The library's project to microfilm the new acquisitions was partially funded by Arts Illiana, the Arts Council of the Wabash Valley. The project, was described as utilizing "non-commercial preservation microfilming to safeguard in microformat fragile or hard-to-access materials." It was mentioned that a project currently underway is the creation of computerized abstracts of the more than 4,000 letters and telegrams to and from Debs housed in the collection.

Hardly a week goes by without at least one request coming to the foundation or to the ISU library for special information or clues on where to find information on the life and times of Debs. The cooperative relationship between ISU and the foundation has been constructive and fruitful for both parties. It has greatly enhanced the educational-preservational role for which the Debs Foundation was founded in 1962.

By the way, three copies were made of the famous Louis Myer bust for which Debs sat between sessions of his trial in Cleveland in 1919. One is in the Debs Home, and one in the Smithsonian, Washington, D.C.

NOT DINOSAURS, BUT...

Few technologies have evolved as rapidly as the personal computer. Today's machines are a far cry from those of even a few years ago, with the newest capable of performing basic tasks—such as printing or running a spreadsheet program—dozens of times faster than their ancestors.

However, in one respect-energy use-today's desktop computers are still dinosaurs. A typical machine uses 80 to 160 watts of power (see table), about as much as an incandescent light bulb.

This may not seem like much power, but the 30 to 35 million personal computers in the United States account for an estimated 5 percent of commercial electricity use. At the current rate of growth—the fastest of any segment of the commercial market-computers' share could reach 10 percent by the year 2000, according to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

"ONCE TELEVISION IS THERE, PEOPLE OF whatever shade, culture, or origin want roughly the same things."

-Anthony J.F. Reilly, chief executive of H.J. Heinz Company, in Fortune

THE CITIZENS FUND, A GRASS-ROOTS CITIZENS' group, found that 230 times more toxic waste was emitted in the neighborhoods near factories than in the home communities of the chief executive officers of the companies that own the factories.

Manufacturing Pollution, A Citizens
Fund study of the 50 largest
industrial toxic polluters
in the 1990 U.S. Toxics
Release Inventory

"WHEN YOU COMPARE THE [DEFORESTATION] in the Pacific Northwest to the Amazon of Brazil, the Northwest is much worse. The pictures show this amazing graphic situation—the severe fragmentation of the forest..."

-Compton J. Tucker, senior fellow at NASA's Goddard Space Center

THE VILLAGE OF FLANIZHUETTE IN THE BAVARIAN forest of Germany will soon be entirely solar-powered. A 430-square-yard solar cell array will feed 18 tons of batteries, which will provide the households in the village with a continuous source of electricity. The German Ministry of Research will cover 40 percent of the project's \$2.43-million pricetag.

-Real Good News, a publication of Real Goods, a company specializing in alternative energy products

"THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANI-ZATION'S experts estimate that tobacco kills at least 3 million people each year worldwide... Tobacco ranks alongside AIDS, famine, and pestilence as a threat to the health of the world's people."

> -Nelson Mandela, from a speech to mark the fifth World No-Tobacco Day in Johannesburg

WITH NEW POLLUTION PERMIT REGULATIONS, created by the [White House's] Council on Competitiveness, the Bush administration is "carving the heart out of the Clean Air Act that the president used to point to as the high point of his domestic program."

-Rep. Henry A. Waxman (D-CA)

"WE MUST STOP GROWING. TO STOP GROWING does not mean to stop developing. We cannot keep growing as we are. If they don't restrict the use of private cars in [Mexico City], we will never have clean air."

> -Luis Manuel Guerra, head of the Autonomous Inst. for Ecological Research in Mexico City

MORE WASTE IS GENERATED IN gold mining than in iron mining—despite the fact that 252,000 times more iron is produced globally than gold. In 1991, gold mines produced 2,100 tons of metal and generated an estimated 620 million tons of mining waste. In the same year, iron mines generated an estimated 540 million tons of waste and yielded 531 million tons of metal.

-Worldwatch Institute, based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Mines

"THE TROUBLE WITH RECYCLING IS THAT IT.. enables people to believe that they have done something about the waste they generate, to assuage any guilt they might otherwise have felt about their consumption, and gives them tacit permission to continue to live in exactly the same way."

-Warmer Bulletin, a publication of the Warmer Campaign

"WE TAX A LOT OF THINGS THAT ARE productive for the economy. But our studies show it's better for the economy to tax bad things, such as carbon dioxide emissions. Shifting taxation away from capital and labor to energy will not only reduce carbon dioxide, but make the economy grow faster."

-Alexander Cristofaro, director or Air and Energy Division, U.S. EPA

THE WINTER OLYMPICS CERTAINLY LEFT THEIR mark on the French Alps. Sites for the games spread across 74 miles and left 32 lanes of traffic entering and leaving the formerly quiet town of Albertville.

Alpine pastures were scraped smooth and new landscapes were created. Highways, bridges, tunnels, parking lots, hotels, and waste dumps were built in a mountain region the International Union for the Conservation of Nature has called "the most threatened mountain system in the world."

-John May, author of The Greenpeace Story and creative consultant to Greenpeace International

CONTRARY TO POPULAR OPINION, PROVIDING STUDENTS with sex education and contraceptives reduces sexual promiscuity, according to a Johns Hopkins University study, "Adolescent Pregnancy in an Urban Environment." In one example, junior and senior high school students who participated in a demonstration project in Baltimore not only got pregnant less frequently, but also started having sex nearly a year later on average.

-Business Week

TOO MANY NEW JOBS NEEDED!

The article below appeared in a 1986 issue of this *Newsletter* and is repeated because of its currentness in relation to the issue of so-called "free trade." FTA will link two advanced industrial economies – the United States and Canada – with Mexico, a developing nation. You will **note the frequent references to Mexico, to its population growth and its economy**, in this article, which was reproduced from the November, 1985 issue of *Popline*, published by the Population Institute in Washington, D.C. It is because of the negative link between too rapid population growth and economic development that my introduction to the essay included the observation that certain Reagan-Bush population policies will have significant and negative consequences worldwide on social and economic conditions. Those policies pawned our grandchildren's economic welfare in deficit spending to finance a massive military buildup, and cut federal funding of the UN Fund for Population Activities and International Planned parenthood Federation (which funding had amounted annually to approximately one-tenth the price of one B-1 bomber). One of the most effective programs President Clinton could adopt for improving the quality of life for all people of the world would be to place less emphasis on free trade, which is between unequal partners, and more efforts to educate and assist developing countries in dealing with their problem of rampant population growth.

750 Million New Jobs by Year 2000

Some 750 million new jobs must be created in the developing world within the next 20 years just to maintain today's employment levels, according to an analysis conducted by the Population Institute.

In contrast, the United States, with a current labor force of approximately 115 million, must provide about 20 million new jobs during the same period of time to satisfy the employment needs of young American workers.

The large increase in Third World job seekers is a legacy of continued high birth rate long after death rates began to decline.

In 1955 the United States and Latin America had about the same number of workers. Today, Latin America has 50 percent more workers than the U.S. but 20 years from now it will have more than twice as many.

At that time, Latin America will need 115 million new jobs just to equal its current employment level while Africa will need 172 million, and Asia 460 million.

Even if it were possible to create this staggering number of new jobs, the high levels of unemployment and underemployment in the developing world would not be reduced.

Serious unemployment problems in Third World

countries can have detrimental repercussions for the U.S. and other industrialized countries.

Immigrants from the overpopulated nations of the southern hemisphere are already streaming northwards into many developed nations, seeking employment their own countries cannot provide.

An estimated four to five million immigrants, mainly from Mexico and South America, have settled in the U.S. In addition, illegal immigration into the U.S. may be as high as one million per year.

A major cause for the high rate of illegal immigration can be seen in the strong growth of the Mexican labor force, which numbered 8.6 million in 1950. By 1975 it had nearly doubled to 16.3 million, causing rising unemployment and underemployment. Today, Mexico has a labor force of 23.1 million, which is projected to reach 37.7 million by the end of the century.

The quest for cheap labor in order to remain competitive in world markets has become such a thriving business in its own right that it is sometimes referred to by U.S. industrialists as the new "Gold Rush". And as populations continue to escalate in the Third World, labor is becoming the largest available resource.

Continued on Page 3

EUGENE V. DEBS FOUNDATION

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