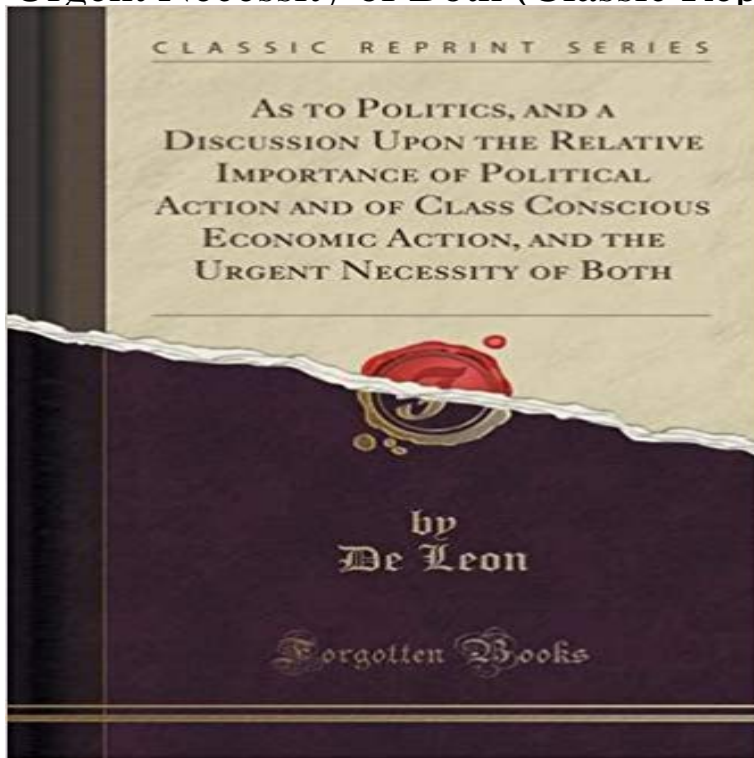


As to Politics, and a Discussion Upon the Relative Importance of Political Action and of Class Conscious Economic Action, and the Urgent Necessity of Both (Classic Reprint)



Excerpt from *As to Politics, and a Discussion Upon the Relative Importance of Political Action and of Class Conscious Economic Action, and the Urgent Necessity of Both*

The most important issue confronting the working class to-day is the question of the proper method, the proper tactics, to adopt in order to attain the aim upon which even the most hostile factions agree, namely the overthrow of the capitalist system. A discussion of this kind leads us immediately to the question: shall it be accomplished through political organization, or through economic organization, or through both. It is imperative that this question should be openly, honestly, and widely discussed, in order to arrive at a solid basis upon which all workmen may unite; it is imperative that the cloudiness and uncertainty which now divides revolutionary workmen and frustrates in part their best energies and efforts, should be dispelled. Having very decided opinions on the subject, I beg leave to submit my views, hoping they will be received in the same good faith as they are given, without prejudice or rancor, solely with the aim of benefiting the working class movement.

The first preamble of the Industrial Workers of the World says that the workers must come together on the political, as well as the industrial field and take and hold that which they produce by their labor through an economic organization without affiliation with any political party. The second convention of the I. W. W., held this year, adopted an amendment to this clause to the effect that the I. W. W. does not wish to endorse or to be endorsed by any political party, which amendment will no doubt be adopted by referendum vote. The amendment does not materially change the original clause. This clause declaring for political unity, but at the same time striking a nolle-me-tangere, dont-touch-me attitude to all political parties, has been, is, and will be subject to

an endless variety of interpretations. A document like the preamble should be positive in its statements, not negative. It should outline a definite, absolutely definite, policy, which could leave no room for essential disagreement, between those who endorse its program at least. Its weakness on this point lies in enumerating two things out of the thousand and one things which it does not want, namely, it does not want to endorse any political party and it does not want to be endorsed by a political party. Instead of doing this, the preamble ought to state most positively what the I. W. W. does want and thus serve as a fixed star to steer by, instead of presenting us with a moving cloud to steer by, on this most essential point, the question of tactics. About the Publisher Forgotten Books publishes hundreds of thousands of rare and classic books. Find more at www.forgottenbooks.com This book is a reproduction of an important historical work. Forgotten Books uses state-of-the-art technology to digitally reconstruct the work, preserving the original format whilst repairing imperfections present in the aged copy. In rare cases, an imperfection in the original, such as a blemish or missing page, may be replicated in our edition. We do, however, repair the vast majority of imperfections successfully; any imperfections that remain are intentionally left to preserve the state of such historical works.

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