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The Work of Propaganda

Henry Addis

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From 1895–1897 the journal was known as *The Firebrand*; and
then from 1897–1904 as *Free Society*.

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It may be interesting to the comrades to know how the propaganda is progressing on the Western Coast.

There is here a rich field for work. “Times” and the mental condition of the people make propaganda very easy work. I found that one comrade in Tacoma—Clemencic [Andrew Klemencic, *ed.*], who has a little tailor shop at 1542 R.R. st.—had, in less than eighteen months, started such a wave of anarchistic sentiment that a goodly number of persons are avowed anarchists, while many more seemed “almost persuaded.” The Glennis Co-operative Colony has, through his interest in its welfare, and his exposition of anarchist principles, become much nearer an anarchist settlement than a nationalist colony, as originally designed. He has also carried the propaganda into the Free Church, and convinced one of the Episcopal ministers that he—the minister—is an anarchist-communist. The revolutionary sentiment around Tacoma is quite strong, although no public meetings are held—except an occasional “silver” meeting.

Yet the propaganda is growing.

In Seattle I found considerable activity in pushing various schemes, such as the “single tax” “free silver” and the referen-

dum. Luckily the state socialists were scattered and not working [...illegible...] dictatorship of the "staid old socialist labor party" as dictator De Laon calls it. Many of them are reasonable and ready to learn of something better. Some of them were anxious to know more about anarchism and where to get literature. The populists and more reasonable single-taxers were usually willing to hear what anarchism is and gave it favorable consideration. the revolutionary spirit is strong and while the "silver craze" has but little effect on the thinking public it is stirring many of the business and professional men into willingness to learn the cause of economic and industrial troubles. Almost any working-man can give them pointers.

Before I went to Seattle the only propaganda carried on in the city was a little by the German comrades. No newsdealer in the city had any anarchist literature of any description. Although only a few copies of *The Firebrand* had been going there I heard it mentioned in a number of places and no one condemned it. We formed a club, to be called the Free Thought Club, for the purpose of free discussion and agitation, the club to meet in the University park every Sunday afternoon.

At Whatcom I found the people blue enough to shame an indigo bag. Nevertheless when they heard something different from the free silver and fiat money humbuggery they became interested and wanted to know more about anarchism and its purposes. At Fairhaven, an adjoining town, I found the people reduced to the "clam diet" in reality. They dig clams, catch fish and chop driftwood for their own use. When their clothes are worn out "active resistance" will be a necessity, and I was informed by the shoemaker, whose shop is headquarters, that they had "their knives sharp and their guns primed." A clear headed anarchist among them could do much for the propaganda. A Methodist preacher in Seattle who had to leave the pulpit because he became too populist, in speaking of his experience among the farmers along the Snoqualmie river said

he could not get subscribers to the populist papers he was canvassing for because, the farmers said, they were "not radical enough."

What we lack in the Puget Sound country is a few good workers who could devote their time to the propaganda. Owing to comrade Morris' necessary absence I had to return to Portland.