

## **The Socialist Labor Party (April 20, 1912)**

The time has come when there should be but one socialist party in the United States. There is no longer sufficient reason to keep apart, and with two parties in the field, more or less antagonistic, the situation is complicated and the progress of the movement impeded.

It is foolish to say that the Socialist Labor Party is dead. It is not dead, and for my part I do not want to see it die. I would much prefer to see it live in a united party. The rank and file of both parties are, I am sure, favorable to unity. And why not? We have nothing to fear. On the contrary, we need the SLP comrades. As a rule they are sound in their economics, and they are honest, even if they are inclined to be fanatical, and the Socialist Party needs just that element to neutralize and hold in check the political opportunists who want office at any price. The impossibilists and opportunists will then balance each other and cease to retard the progress of the party. The great body of the comrades who are of neither extreme will keep the united party true to its course and its growth in the next year or two will surprise us all.

These are my personal views and no one else is responsible for them.

In days past no one was more bitterly assailed by the SLP than myself. But I also learned from its press and its speakers. Many of my early lessons in socialist economics were taught me by that little “bunch of fanatics,” and I am not in the least ashamed of it. They sometimes lied about me, but what they did for me far outweighs what they did against me.

I can never forget that little band of valiant comrades — frenzied fanatics if you please, but still of the stuff out of which revolutions are made. For years they were a mere handful, and yet they fought as if they had legions behind them. Staunchly they upheld the red banner in the face of an indifferent and hostile world — and this, years before some of those who now scoff at them had shed their bourgeois politics.

There are not many of them but few as they are they have the backbone to stand alone. There are no trimmers and traders among them. In a united party they will be assimilated for their own good and for the good of the party.

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