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EDITORIAL

THE FIRST TWO ROUNDS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IT is now nearly two months since the Industrial Workers of the World has been launched. During these two months a polemic has been going on between the A.F. of L. press and the privately owned papers of the Socialist or Social Democratic party, on the one hand, who uphold the A.F. of L. and similar craft organizations, and, on the other hand, the press of the Socialist Labor Party, which stands by the I.W.W. Each of these two months may be said to be a “round” in the contest. Summing up the arguments made during these two rounds, we have the following record:

To the argument made by the S.L.P. press that craft unionism ruptures the Labor Movement, and to the citations of fact by which the S.L.P. press supports this argument, the answering “argument” from the privately owned S.P. or S.D.P. press and the A.F. of L. papers is the howl—“Intriguer, dancing dervish, disrupter, trickster, Loeb!”

To the argument made by the S.L.P. press that the press of the A.F. of L. and of the kindred craft organizations derive their economics and their sociology from the Civic Federation, and that, as a consequence, that press echoes capitalist false teachings, and to the citations of fact with which the S.L.P. press supports this argument, the answering “argument” from the privately owned S.P. or S.D.P. press and the A.F. of L. papers is the screech—“Dancing dervish, disrupter, trickster, Loeb, intriguer!”

To the argument made by the S.L.P. press that the capitalist class has left it to the officers of the A.F. of L. and of kindred craft organizations to establish the censorship of the press and of speech, and thereby to gag the rank and file of the Union, and to the citations of fact with which the S.L.P. press supports these arguments, the answering “argument” from the privately owned S.P. or S.D.P. press

and the A.F. of L. papers is the yap—“Disrupter, trickster, Loeb, intriguer, dancing dervish!”

To the argument made by the S.L.P. press that the officers of the A.F. of L. and of kindred craft bodies are corrupt, and that they are used by the capitalist as his labor-lieutenants in order to betray the rank and file, and to the citations of fact with which the S.L.P. press backs up this argument, the answering “argument” from the privately owned S.P. or S.D.P. press and the A.F. of L. papers is the growl—“Trickster, Loeb, intriguer, dancing dervish, disrupter!”

To the argument made by the S.L.P. press that a political party of Socialism, without an economic organization for its basis, is like a balloon in the air; that no such party does exist; that all parties that claim to be of Socialism are pivoted upon economic organization; that if such a party is not pivoted upon right-headed Unionism it cannot choose but be pivoted upon wrong-headed Unionism; that, consequently, a bona fide party of Socialism is bound to be the paladin of a bona fide Unionism; and, finally, that the acting as gouger or bruiser for a mala fide Unionism on the part of a party that claims to be of Socialism is proof positive of its unfitness, if not corruption; and to the citations of fact with which the S.L.P. press backs up this argument, the answering “argument” from the privately owned S.P. or S.D.P. press is the squeak—“Loeb, intriguer, dancing dervish, disrupter, trickster!”

On to the fray, ye men of the I.W.W.! The battle is ours! Where such sputterings and imbecility as proceeds from the A.F. of L. and the privately owned press of the S.P. or S.D.P. is the only argument available, the “argument” is proof positive of mental bankruptcy—aye, it is proof positive that behind such “argument” crouches the cowering criminal, who knows he has been got “on to.”

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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