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EDITORIAL

BRAVO!

By DANIEL DE LEON

WHAT deserves to be considered by all odds the most, if not the first, constructive thought that has yet gone up from the camp of the Socialist party is a passage in the letter of Wm. E. Towne, published in the Minneapolis *Minnesota Socialist* of last January 24th.

The passage is this:

“The action of Van Lear [a Minneapolis pure and simple politician and A.F. of L. “labor leader”] shows one thing is necessary and that is a house cleaning, and the place to begin with these so-called Socialists who are prominent in the A.F. of L., and who hold paying positions in its affiliated organizations. The quicker the party bounces these A.F. of L. labor fakirs the better off we will be.

“The quicker we stop this idiotic ‘boring from within’ and tell the American Federation of Labor to take its votes and go, the quicker we get down on a class-conscious basis.

“We have a Max Hayes movement, a Barnes movement, a Berger movement, a Van Lear movement, a Haywood movement, an *Appeal to Reason* movement, and, shades of Marx and Engels, the 12th Ward local of Minneapolis wants to start a co-operative movement; in fact we got everything under the sun except a Socialist movement. Comrades and fellows; it is time to clean house.”

This is healthy; and, not merely healthy, but healthily constructive language, with the crack of the whip embodied in the sentiment “the quicker the party bounces these A.F. of L. labor fakirs, and stops the idiotic ‘boring from within,’ and tells the A.F. of L. to take its votes and go” all the quicker will the S.P. cease to be the ridiculous and disgraceful thing that it is; all the quicker will a strong and healthy Socialist movement take shape in this country.

What does it boot to bounce the Bergerish Hillquit with the Bakouninistic criminal, besides corrupt, Haywood element? What does it boot to turn down the

said Haywood with a Bergerish Hillquit, or a Hillquitic Berger? Of what earthly use is it to dump Barnes with Christian Socialist sentimentalism, or try to check Christian Socialist twaddle with a Barnes “vindication”?

The nerve that aches in the S.P. is subservience to the criminal conspiracy against the American Proletariat, hence, against the Socialist Movement in the land, known as the Civic-Federationized and Militia-of-Christized A.F. of L. That is the gangrenous center. It is the center from which radiates the corruption of Socialist mentality and the debauchery of Socialist morality.

At an early day the Socialist Labor Party made the discovery, and boldly announced the same, and, unterrified, has hewed close to that line. “Boring from within” is a cloak under which to justify all the economic iniquities, all the sociologic absurdities, all the tactical indecencies, that the Van Lears, the Max Hayeses, the Barneses, the Bergers, the Haywoods, the Appeal-to-Reasons, and the Piet Vlags with their co-operative penny-catching schemes have made the S.P. guilty of, and that have checked the actual progress or actual Socialism in the land.

Bravo! A full throated bravo to the Comrade—he is indeed a Comrade—and to those who with him have seized the flaming sword of purification in the S.P., and thereby brought within sight the possibility of Socialist Unity.

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