

Convention Statement on Proposed Unity with the
Springfield SDP
[excerpt]
(January 15, 1901)

On a motion to return [an] objectionable communication to Springfield without consideration, Debs said:

While my personal feeling is such as would warrant me in voting for the resolution, yet in a convention of this sort I am the last man who will deny any man or men a fair hearing. If the “kangaroos” desire harmony, as they profess to do, why do they insult us in this manner? I am in favor of having the committee on resolutions give this letter the most considerate attention, but in their reply, let it be made manifest who is seeking to disrupt the socialistic movement in this country.

Last summer I accepted the nomination for the office of President at their hands in the interests of harmony, because I felt it my duty to accept it. My experiences after that time were most humiliating. Instead of the expected harmony we took into our midst a lot of hissing snakes.¹ However, for the sake of our principles I propose that every effort shall be made to conciliate the factions now at variance.

Acting on this suggestion, the convention appointed a committee of 16 on organization, with full power to outline the future policy of the Debs faction with reference to its enemies. That committee is as follows: Seymour Stedman (Illinois), chairman; Eugene V. Debs (Indiana), G.C. Clemens (Kansas), W.J. McSweeney (Illinois), F. W. Rehfeld (Wisconsin), C.F. Meier (Missouri), Margaret Haile (Massachusetts), G.H. Strobell (New Jersey), F.O. MacCartney (Massachusetts), M. Gillis (Pennsylvania), H. Larson (Illinois), V.L. Berger (Wisconsin), A. Hicks (Colorado), P. Brown (Illinois), F.A. Lymbarger (Iowa), W.J. Croke (Indiana).

¹ In an unsigned editorial on the front page of the February 2, 1901 issue of the *Social Democratic Herald* inveterate polemicist editor A.S. Edwards upbraids the Springfield SDP for republishing this line, declaring “this language was not used by Comrade Debs or any other speaker, and since there was no justification for printing it in *The People* we hope that paper will correct the false impression its incomplete and erroneous report may have created.”