

EDITORIAL

S.P. AT WORK IN GREAT FALLS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

UNDER the above heading a correspondence is published elsewhere from Great Falls¹ that comes in as a timely illustration of the peculiar relations existing between the guilds, misnamed Unions, that constitute the staple of the A.F. of L., and the so-called Socialist party.

That there is love and affection between the two bodies can not be denied. That, on the contrary, between the two other bodies—the Socialist Labor Party and the A.F. of L.—as bodies, there is little love lost can not be denied either. Superficially considered the contrast would make for the S.P. The political organization of Socialism must enjoy the confidence of Organized Labor: without that a political party of Socialism can not make real progress, leastwise can it fulfill its mission. It would, accordingly, seem that the S.P. has struck the right chord. 'Tis so in seeming only.

Such is the nature of the separate functions of the economic and the political Movement of Socialism, that, according as one looks from one side or the other one time the political, another time the economic appears to be the dominant factor. The point, long ago made by John Stuart Mill, is applicable to the case. If it requires 2 to be multiplied with 20 in order to produce 40, then, 20 one moment, 2 another, will seem the dominant factor. The conclusion in either case is false. From the nature of the result expected both figures are of equal importance, seeing that they are both necessary; consequently, neither is dominant. Precisely so in the instance of the political and the economic wing of Socialism. Without the political the ship is prowless; without the economic it is sternless. It follows that the love and affection of an economic for a political Socialist body, is not, in itself, a determining circumstance. The determining circumstance must be looked for deeper. The

¹ [To be appended at a later date.]

determining circumstance is the posture of the political body that enlists the love and affection. If such posture is one that betrays Socialism then the love and affection reveals the reason for the same, and enables an accurate conclusion to be drawn as to the character of the bestower of the love and affection, and as to his conduct.

The correspondence from Great Falls furnishes a striking illustration, among scores of others, of what it is that the A.F. of L. loves and affects the S.P. for. It loves and affects the S.P. because the S.P. cultivates the anti-Socialistic spirit of the A.F. of L. The correspondence from Great Falls thereby gives in hand the key with which to unlock the secret of whether the A.F. of L. will support the S.P. It will not; it can not.

The Socialism in the S.P. is just enough to justify the A.F. of L. unto itself. For that very reason the A.F. of L. will remain shattered politically, scattering its forces among the capitalist parties, and bagged generally by the top capitalist one—leaving the S.P. jilted.

The election figures demonstrate the reasoning.

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