

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 9, NO. 254.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, MARCH 11, 1909.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

“DOING THINGS.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

FROM Socialist party premises its only consistent body is located in Wisconsin, and its ablest head, naturally, is Victor L. Berger, the leader of the Wisconsin organization with headquarters in Milwaukee. It is natural, in turn, that Berger's slogans should permeate the national organization. The boast and brag “We are doing things,” so common on the lips of S.P. speakers everywhere, is a slogan that started with Berger, and has been handed down, or around. Up to now it was a difficult matter to discover what the “things” were that the S.P. was “doing.” Like the Irishman's flea, the “things” never could be caught, so to speak. The mystery is finally solved—and solved at headsprings. Berger, and, through him, the S.P., is, indeed, “doing things,” at least one “thing,” and a valuable thing it is.

From the theoretic economic view-point the principle is elemental, from the practical political view-point in order to help disentangle the proletariat from the tangle-foot platforms of capitalist parties, the principle is essential that the working class does not pay the taxes, these being paid by the capitalist class out of that portion of the wealth produced by Labor which Labor never gets, it being plundered from Labor in the process of production. Is it possible for the S.P., through Berger, to be helping to establish so important a principle? Strange as it may seem the S.P., through Berger, is “doing” this very “thing.”

Through the influence, underground or overground, of Milwaukee's A.F. of L. organizations, in general, and, in particular, through the influence of the Milwaukee Typographical Union, of which Berger is an indefatigable member, the, City Council decided to make the Union Label a requisite in specifications for printing contracts. As everybody knows, such specifications imply dearer printing contracts; as everybody also knows, the higher the expenses of Government all the higher the taxes; as, furthermore, it is well known, Berger's Milwaukee S.P. is

“feared and respected and heard from” in Milwaukee’s City Council, into which he has elected a large number of his party members; finally, as every cat and dog, in Milwaukee particularly, is aware of, the elected Berger city officials sit up at night to protect the working class from being burdened. Seeing all this, here, accordingly, we have Berger proving that the working class does not pay the taxes. How else could he strain after city contracts with specifications that can not choose but jack up the taxes?

Class-consciously enough, the Milwaukee Court, knowing full well that taxes are paid by its own paymaster, the capitalist class, and alert to keep what burdens it can from being dumped upon the capitalist’s shoulders, hastened to sustain an injunction to restrain the City Council from incurring the more expensive printing contracts.

Thus directly by Berger’s own act, and indirectly by the act that his conduct goaded the capitalist Court to, Berger’s S.P., and thereby the whole S.P., is disproving the “*Daily People* lie” that is so unsound and bourgeois as to claim that Labor pays the taxes; it is illustrating with obverse and reverse pictures the Socialist truth that the capitalist is the taxpayer;—it is “doing things.”

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

Uploaded July 2010

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