

EDITORIAL

WHAT MIKELSON STOOD FOR.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THIS office has been furnished with a poster, used at the recent Milwaukee election. It is as follows:

First line:—M. Mikelson.

Second line:—For Alderman—5th Ward.

Below that is the picture of the candidate, a rather good face, flanked with the lettering: Social Democratic Candidate.

And below the whole of that—

WHAT I STAND FOR

TRACK ELEVATION IN THE FIFTH WARD—

PURCHASE OF A PARK FOR THE FIFTH WARD.

By a Referendum of the 5th Ward Voters as to Location

A REGULAR OFFICE AT THE ALDERMAN'S EXPENSE

*For the Transaction of the Business of the Ward on Business Principles, Where
Citizens Can Transact Business*

WITH THEIR ALDERMAN.

He who would sneer at an army, because every single one of its human units is not expert on strategy and holds language unlike a general, would be justly put down as an idiot. No less idiotic would be the expectation of seeing every unit of the army using field glasses scanning the horizon and attending upon the manoeuvres that the field demands. Though not exactly idiotic, still it would be unreasonable, if not irrational, to look for military men only in the composition of an army. An army needs, no doubt, generals, colonels and soldiers, but it also needs cooks and nurses, people whose function is not military at all, yet needed for the army's functions. The

bearing of the principle is obvious upon a political party, however revolutionary the same may be.

Like an army, a political party can not consist of militants only engaged exclusively in its political work. Like an army, a political party has many a subdivision, each attending to its special function. In short, like an army, a political party also has its “nurses” and “cooks,” so to speak. Hence, like army, a political party can not be correctly judged by the functions of its “nurses” and “cooks,” that is, by what these “stand for”; and, for that very reason, on the same principle that an army, into whose councils of war “cooks” and “nurses” were to be seen pushing the things they especially “stood for,” would be a thing to laugh at, the corresponding “nurses” and “cook” things that some departments of a political party “stand for” can not figure in battle without imparting their color to the whole body. This is obvious with regard to all political parties, however conservative; it is all the more obvious with regard to a political party which, flying the colors of Socialism, points to a social revolution as its ultimate goal.

In sight of these obvious facts, principles and conclusions, the question thrown up by what the Milwaukee Social Democratic 5th Ward candidate for Alderman, Mikelson, “stood for” is this—

Is the legislative function of a Milwaukee Alderman in the nature of a “cook” or “nurse” function in an army?

Or is the Milwaukee Social Democracy itself in the nature of a “cook” and “nurse” concern?

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