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EDITORIAL

SENSE, NOT SPITE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

A CONNECTICUT correspondent angrily writes to this office: “When Haywood was recently around here he went about slandering the S.L.P., he traveled around saying that the S.L.P. supports the Detroit I.W.W. against his so-called ‘I.W.W.’ out of spite.”

In this particular instance, we must speak Haywood free of “slander.” In order to “slander” a man must deliberately speak against his better knowledge. Haywood does not know better. A contemner of information, hence a sincere glorifier of the slummery of Anarchy, the man is what the February 28 circular of the Paterson I.W.W. Strike Committee said of him—“not abreast of the times”; a victim of their Hatred, Egotism and Vainglory that Anarchy breeds, he believes others are prompted by what prompts him. But what Haywood believes, however sincerely in this instance, does not change facts.

The Socialist Labor Party is equipped with all the Experience of its Age. If it were not, then the hurricanes and tornadoes that have been let loose against it would long ago have wiped it out.

The S.L.P. knows the significance that attaches to a clause that is either amended into, or amended out of, a document. The preamble of the I.W.W., obedient to the express language of the Manifesto that called the I.W.W. into existence, proclaimed the necessity of proletarian unity “upon the political as well as the industrial field.” The body that Haywood has elected to affiliate with struck that clause from its program.

Even if one were to ignore the arguments that carried the amendment, it was a loud enough pronouncement against the necessity of Political Action for Labor’s emancipation. The loudness of the pronouncement was raised to its highest power by the arguments, backed as they since have been by the organs of Haywood’s body.

“Strike at the ballot box with an ax,” advocated in printed words, pictorially accompanied with declamations in favor of “Direct Action” and “sabotage,” flanked with the theory that theft is a weapon in the arsenal of the Labor Movement, and seconded with songs to match to the refrain: “I’m a bum!” confirmed the conclusion that the amendment unerringly pointed to, to wit, that the Haywood body was an Anarchist outfit.

Upon Anarchy the Labor and Socialist Movement has pronounced itself in terms not to be mistaken—a recrudescence of the Stone and Cave-Dweller’s Age; an atavistic manifestation of the gorilla stage of man’s one-time mentality; a menace to the workingmen, to their integrity, their character, their progress, their limb and life, and their advance toward emancipation; hence, a smut that the Movement must keep its skirts clean of.

These are all scientific conclusions. The conclusions are applied with no more “spite” than there is “spite” in the conclusion that a tarantula is not a nightingale. That the tarantula should feel “spited” for not being treated with the loving tenderness bestowed upon the nightingale is not surprising. Neither is it surprising that the Haywood body should feel “spited” for not being admired and for being treated for what it is by the S.L.P.

With malice toward none, with charity for all, the S.L.P. moves by chart, its path lighted from above by a firmament where the North Star shines distinctly in its place, and is for never an instant confused with the rush light, or the fitful phosphorous of a lightning-bug.

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