

Daniel De Leon

## **Editorial: An Excellent Sign**

Last Sunday the Central Labor Union of this city gave one of the best and most encouraging signs of the times. It dropped its "No Politics" hypocritical dogma, dragged Henry George out of his polluted political grave, and appointed a committee consisting, with one or two exceptions, of Labor fakirs to establish harmony; and the committee has begun to boom George for Mayor next year.

The first sign of this sort was given at the last elections when another lot of Labor fakirs put up the now defunct Sammy Gompers for office. The growth of the Socialist movement is appalling to the men who traffic in labor votes, and who set themselves up as labor leaders to promote themselves into political jobs. Much as the capitalist class fears and hates Socialism, it feels so firmly entrenched that it does not yet quite believe that it will be actually overthrown by the Socialist Labor Party, and, consequently, it does not yet go into hysterics at the victorious march of Socialism. It is different with the Labor fakirs. They, many of them, may be too ignorant to realize that the S.L.P. is coming into power, and they are too dull to apprehend danger that lies beyond the morrow. If all they had to fear from Socialism would not befall them until, as with the capitalist, Socialism shall have conquered, they would not much care. But they know that they are the outward breast-works of capitalism; that they must stand the brunt of the battle; in fact, they have already realized that the progress made by an incorruptible and soundly based party, like the S.L.P., is playing havoc with them. Their chances for political

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jobs are sinking; they have lost credit with the politicians; the bones, thrown at them during campaign times, are fewer and fewer, drier and drier. It is natural that such a crew should be the first to go wild with rage and be seized with a panic. The nomination of Sammy Gompers, "The Champion," was born of this rage and this panic. The crew of Labor fakirs felt like a ship in distress, they began to throw over their cargo, and first to go overboard was the hypocritical dogma of "No Politics in Unions." The scheme was to put a spoke in the Socialist wheel. Every knave is a fool, said Carlyle. These Labor fakirs illustrate the saying. Their spoke was broken into splinters, and the chariot of the S.L.P. rode on triumphant.

This experience—the utter discomfiture of "The Champion," and the magnificent growth of the Socialist vote—threw Labor Fakirdom into consternation. Something had to be done quickly—we know not whether they added profanity to the "quickly," but certain it is that they were in a frightful hurry—and, as it always happens with people taken with a panic, they did the most stupid thing they could have done—grabbed for George, as a drowning man grabs for a straw. George is now to be used to do the work before which "The Champion" bit the dust.

Excellent! By all means put up George for Mayor or for anything else. That spoke will also be broken into splinters. Already once before did George collide, to his sorrow, with the Socialist movement; the next will be the last.

Poor, silly Labor Fakirs! The pinch you now feel will squeeze you yet a good deal tighter. As well may you try to sweep the ocean back with a played-out broom as stem the Socialist Labor Party with your Gompers and your Georges!

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