

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 3, NO. 92.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1902.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

WE SHOULD STUTTER!

By DANIEL DE LEON

BEFORE us lies the semi-annual report of the national committee of the “Socialist,” alias Social Democratic party. It is too long a document to reproduce at this place. It is, however, valuable enough to reproduce in full elsewhere on some later day. In the meantime a foretaste of its contents will justify the estimate that the document is invaluable as a homage to the soundness and wisdom of the Socialist Labor Party.

The report sets forth that the stability of the said “Socialist,” alias Social Democratic party is threatened. And it explains that “the most serious danger lies in the questions of principles and tactics,” seeing that “organizations in new States consist of elements inexperienced in the philosophy and tactics of the international Socialist movement,” which “leads to political expressions, platform, and party tactics which conflict with Socialist principles and practices and which are essentially middle class.” These few passages are a sample of the lugubrious document, which admits moreover that since their “Unity convention” their party has, so far from being united, presented the aspect of being hopelessly divided against itself.

We should stutter! We said so at the start. It is now proved at the end. Nor could it be otherwise. And yet the document is interesting; it is fresh. It is all that by reason of its mixture of puerility and crookedness.

It is puerile for people who objected to the “tyranny of the Socialist Labor Party” and who claimed that “millions of votes could be gathered for Socialism by new tactics,” to now complain that the votes have not materialized and that “untyrannical policies and tactics” lead but to political bankruptcy. On the other hand, it is crookedness to have the complaint against “unphilosophic tactics” proceed from a set of men such as sign the document.

One of these signers is G.A. Hoehn, a gentleman, who, at the recent St. Louis street car strike took the job of deputy marshal to shoot and club the strikers into submission.

Another of these signers is the illustrious M. Ballard Dunn, known to our readers as the original Duncie for his opinion that the working class will not be able to emancipate itself.

A third of these signers is the no less illustrious L.E. Hildebrand{,} who supported motions for the building of battleships.

A pretty collection these are as exponents of philosophic international Socialism.

The Socialist Labor Party, as the fighting exponent of the rights and aspirations of the working class, and as the uncompromising pursuer of these rights, will always be in “hot water.” The child of struggle, its struggles will never be ended until it has broken wide a breach in the capitalist wall for the working class to march through to its deliverance. Consequently the S.L.P. will ever present the aspect of the advancing column amid the foes—often hidden from sight by the smoke, ever bleeding, ever and anon seemingly undone, and ever reappearing with firm tread pursuing its destination.

On the other hand, the “Socialist,” alias Social Democratic party, like all such concerns will prove that “dupe” and “knave” are ever reverse and obverse of the same medal. They will start with a flare; brag on their “progress”; get tangled up in their own meshes and then find fault with the conditions that enabled them to flare up temporarily; and finally go to smash—as all lie inevitably does.

This Social Democratic document which attests, officially, the fact its party is foundered is no surprise, and yet it is a valuable sign post for the movement.

*Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded October 2006*