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EDITORIAL

BLURTING THE TRUTH.

By DANIEL DE LEON

TO-DAY'S "[Explosion—More to Come](#)" suggests the idea of publishing the serial—when complete—in pamphlet form. Such a pamphlet would be a valuable contribution to the Socialist Movement, that is, to the Labor Movement, in other words, to the Social Question.

On the European continent, a thousand and one things—as has been amply and incontrovertibly demonstrated in these columns—combine to compel the Socialist Movement to grapple with bourgeois issues, issues which the bourgeois revolution of those countries left unsolved. As a consequence, the political movement of Socialism could not there choose but precede the economic, and, as a further consequence, the economic movement in those countries is but a loose appendage, dangling from the tail of the political movement—an appendage that worries, but that the political movement realizes it may neither neglect nor fail to keep control of. In short, a misappreciation of the relation of basis to superstructure, in which the economic stands to the political organization, is essentially a European, continental European, feature of the Socialist Movement. It reflects the degree in which the Socialist Movement is trammled by bourgeois exigencies: it accounts for the unavoidable opportunistic hue, that—despite all protestations to the contrary, and despite all efforts on the part of our comrades of the European continent to escape it—shades their Socialist movement, and enables it to make a progress that it could not otherwise boast of.

If this reasoning is correct, it is of deepest importance for us in America. Before accepting and proceeding from such premises, let us test the reasoning. If the reasoning is correct, it must follow that in America, where the Socialist Movement has no bourgeois issues left unsolved by the bourgeois revolution to grapple with, two manifestations must be found:

First, that the economic, and not the political, movement is the first formation to rise to the surface; and

Second, that the economic and logical predecessor of the political movement is

the inevitable basis for all subsequent political formation.

We find both manifestations in America. The first is a matter of history; the second, and crowning one, is being demonstrated by the press of the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic, alias Public Ownership party since the day the Chicago Manifesto was issued; and they are demonstrating the fact in a manner most valuable according to all law of evidence—they are demonstrating it despite themselves, despite the theory of their party's structure that they proclaim, in short, they are demonstrating it as "unwilling witnesses." This is the gist and value of the "Explosion—More to Come" published in this issue.

The vote of the Socialist Labor Party not only is small, but has remained at a standstill—34,000 in round figures—during the last four years; on the other hand the vote of the said so-called Socialist party has bounded up to 400,000. And yet what is the spectacle that strikes the eyes of the observer? The small S.L.P. attests the solidity of its foundation by its steadiness and enthusiasm; while on the other hand, it required but the issuing of the Chicago Manifesto—although wisely, as we hold, it calls for the formation of an economic organization "without affiliation with any political party"—to throw the huge S.P. into convulsions. That this is the fact, this issue's "Explosion—More to Come" proves to perfection. The customary dirty-nosed-boy's insolence and flippancy, characteristic of the said S.P. press, reaches an unusual pitch in this "Explosion—More to Come"; the customary heels-over-head logic, that likewise characterizes that press, approaches in this instance a sublimity never reached before in the attempt to prove the Chicago Manifesto a bad thing on the allegation that it "pleased Gompers and De Leon at the same time," whereas the fact is that the Chicago Manifesto has "DISpleased Gompers and the S.P. press at the same time," and upon that system of reasoning ought to be very good; and, finally, the customary ignorance, another unfailing characteristic of that press, "beats all" in this instance by declaring that the belief that the economic organization of labor is more important than the political "is the Anarchist position"—the Anarchist does not attach secondary importance to politics: he rejects politics altogether.

Now, why the seething rage that leads to such exhibitions? Effect equals cause. The cause must be fierce. We need not theorize upon it. What is it? The "Explosion—More to Come" answers the question categorically. It refers to the Chicago Manifesto as a thing that "foment discord in the Socialist party"; it grinds its teeth at the thought that "some of the best men [aye, "there are others"] in the

Socialist party should be . . . aiming to disrupt the Socialist party”; etc., etc., etc.;—all on account of the Chicago Manifesto!

What! Can the Manifesto be doing all that? Is it not the S.P. theory that the political movement is not dependent upon the economic? Such language may become the lips of the S.L.P.: it is an “impossibilist” affair: it has the “novel notion” that the political movement, true to the materialist conception of history, is but the reflex of the economic organization of the working class—an “absurd notion” which the “possibilist” S.P. scornfully rejects. Let the “impossibilist” S.L.P. “rapidly sinking into oblivion” bother about such economic organization matters as the Manifesto conjures up—but the lofty S.P. “Intellectuals”? Why should these “Intellectuals” shiver? What can it matter to their party—according to their theory—whether Belmont’s A.F. of L. should go down or not? Why such frantic rage and calling of names? Surely the A.F. of L. scab-herding brigade of “noble wagers of the class struggle” is not their basis—or is it?—seeing they deny having any particular economic organization for their basis?—Why these weeps?

Aye! It does not stand with one’s nose in the air and imagine that the ground-foundation is in the clouds. The first volcanic eruption brings down the lofty nose and bumps it hard against the stony fact. In America the Social Revolution started, with socio-geologic logic, with the Union formation. The economic organization is in America, by socio-geologic logic, the basis of all Labor political organization. Ignorance of the fact or the denial of it will not change the fact—and the truth will, when least expected, be spurted out explosively.

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TENTH EXPLOSION

MORE TO COME

[From the April 8, 1905, issue of the Toledo *Socialist*, the latest privately owned venture of the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic, alias Public Ownership party, on the flanks of the Labor Movement.]

DE LEON, HAGERTY & CO.

Daniel De Leon and Father Hagerty are fast killing the proposed new movement in favor of Industrial Unionism.

The Socialist has always favored the organization of the Labor Unions along industrial lines and proposed a resolution to that effect for the consideration of the Chicago convention last May. But we have never believed that the economic organization of Labor was more important than the political. That is the anarchist position rather than the Socialist. Yet this is the position now assumed by De Leon and his paper week after week.

Father Hagerty has been more active than almost any other man in pushing the new organization. He is editorially connected with the *Voice of Labor*, the organ of the American Labor Union, the Western organization behind the new movement. It was Father Hagerty who drew up the diagram of the proposed new organization. And it is Father Hagerty who is now traveling over the country lecturing in behalf of the proposed new National Union.

From the testimony of Local San Francisco as given below, it appears that Hagerty is bitterly denouncing the Socialist Party, from the platform, while De Leon is doing the same thing, as he has always done, in the columns of his paper, *The People*.

De Leon's paper supports Hagerty and Hagerty's recommends De Leon's paper as "the best paper for workingmen to read."

De Leon and Hagerty are not alone, but other prominent supporters of the new movement, like Trautmann, of Cincinnati, the secretary of the executive committee, seem to be De Leonized. Trautmann had a letter in *The Worker* last week defending De Leon, insisting on calling him "Comrade Dan De Leon," and it is De Leon's paper

which publishes Trautmann's defence of his conduct as editor of the *Brewers' Journal*.

That De Leon should seek to foment discord in the Socialist Party and at the same time save himself from rapidly approaching oblivion by another of his Trade Union schemes, was to be expected.

That Hagerty, ambitious and sore at being so little recognized, should attempt to pose as the leader of a new movement, may not be surprising.

That Trautmann, smarting at the treatment received by the Brewery Workers at the hands of Gompers, should be misled by the furious friendliness of De Leon, can be excused perhaps.

But that some of the best men in the Socialist Party should be found in company discrediting to the Socialist movement and aiming to disrupt the Socialist Party, can only be accounted for on the ground of good impulse outrunning good judgment.

Industrial Unionism, although it is bound to come, can hardly come under such leadership. Nobody is so well pleased with the present situation as Sam Gompers, who is writing I-told-you-so editorials, and sending out press dispatches galore, all to show how the Socialist Party is the enemy of Organized Labor. It is a sad playing into the hands of De Leon and Gompers. It would hardly have been thought possible that any group in the Socialist Party could have pleased Gompers and De Leon at the same time and by the same act. Yet the miracle has happened.

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

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slpns@slp.org