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ONE CENT.

CORRESPONDENCE

DOCUMENTS FOR HISTORY.

Indianapolis, Ind., Dec. 3, 1908.

Daniel De Leon,
New York City.
Dear Comrade:

A few days ago I received several copies of the *Wahrheit* of November 3rd, also a letter from Henry Traurig.

A letter like this *naturally demands some sort of an explanation*. I have not replied to the same, nor have I as much as acknowledged receipt as yet. I have shown it to several members of our section and they are anxious to have some explanation.

Below is an exact copy of the letter:

“I suppose you remember his (De Leon’s) argument of two years ago, when Hillquit ran for the first time in the ninth congressional district. He accused them {sic} of having placed watchers on the streets for the purpose of teaching voters how to split their tickets in favor of Hillquit. The S.P. replied that they did not do so, but that it was the Professional League (an independent organization favoring Hillquit’s election) which did so, and that they (the S.P.) could not control the acts of this league. Well, De Leon replied that they should at least have repudiated such acts, etc., which the S.P. would surely have done, and consider it its duty to do.

“Another argument which he advanced this year against the S.P. was that the Times and Post of this city boomed Hillquit, because they wrote up an account of the situation in the 9th district. The charge is of course false. They didn’t boom him at all”; they merely wrote up the situation, an act that is a frequent occurrence for capitalist papers to do to Socialist parties. I merely remind you of his arguments, so as to enable you to better judge how it comes that De Leon, nor the S.L.P. have as yet repudiated the *Wahrheit*’s booming of De Leon in the campaign just closed. Under separate cover I send you some copies of this paper which I have underlined. See Pages 1 and 6. On the former it advises and shows the voters how to split an S.P. ticket and vote for De Leon. On the latter page it contains a paid ad. from Tammany Hall. There’s no question about this at all. This ad. was run during the whole campaign. The *Wahrheit* boosted De Leon right along, and not a word of repudiation from the S.L.P. or De

Leon, for fear no doubt of losing a few of the small vote they got—97 for the head of the ticket and 157 for De Leon, after devoting almost all their time and men to that district only and neglecting the entire city. They've degenerated into a lot of vote-catchers in spite of their strenuous denials. They've conducted what is known here as a 'personal campaign'; told the crowd that De Leon is a professor and this and that, and that he gets only \$12 per.

"Oh, yes, I forgot to say, Tammany you know is very strong in this district, Hillquit was a factor, although I guess he wasn't fool enough to expect to be elected. It certainly will surprise some S.L.P. men to see Tammany use them against the S.P. in this manner.

"Henry Traurig,
"741 E 5th St.,
"New York,
"N.Y.

"(Formerly member of S.L.P.)

"Hope you will distribute these for information of those interested."

We have reserved all action and criticism until we have an explanation from headquarters.

Yours fraternally,
Frank P. Janke.

DAILY PEOPLE,
New York, Dec. 9, 1908.

Frank P. Janke,
Indianapolis, Ind.

Dear Comrade:

That Traurig letter is an insult—to you. A many-sided insult.

The insults it implied is the taking of you for so unalert a Party member as not to be likely to detect its obvious mendacity; the taking of you for a man so imposable-upon as would not detect its slime and flim-flam; and the taking of you for so inexperienced a man as to give a minute's attention to the whisperings of a perfect stranger against one whom, whatever opinion you may otherwise ascertain of his "democracy" or "tyranny," as the case may be, you never had reason to question his integrity, or ever did.

The allegations made against me in the letter are known by readers of *The People* to be substantially untrue. Directly and indirectly most of the matters have

come up in these columns all along and have been disposed of.

Readers of *The People* know that the articles in the capitalist papers about Hillquit boomed him. They know that those papers did not “merely write up the situation” as “an act that is of frequent occurrence for a capitalist paper to do to Socialist parties.” Readers of *The People* know the bitter language that the capitalist press used in “writing up the situation” with regard to the S.L.P. in general and with regard to the S.L.P. campaign in the Ninth Congressional District in particular. Readers of *The People* are aware that the capitalist, especially the Republican and covertly Taft press, wrote with positive enthusiasm about the S.P. generally, and especially so about the S.P. in the Ninth Congressional District. Readers of *The People* know that, besides numerous references made in *The People* to this fact, and to the supplementary fact of the vicious language used by the same press towards the S.L.P., *The People* of Oct. 14 reproduced in full a column-long article from a Taft paper, the *New York Evening Post*, which exuberantly proclaimed the magnificent (!) chances of Hillquit’s election, and which “wrote up the situation” as to the S.L.P. by throwing out the slur that I, the S.L.P. candidate, was in the pay of Tammany. Readers of *The People* know all this.

Likewise do readers of *The People* know that *Wahrheit* is an independent S.P. paper, which, in this campaign, for instance, supported the S.P. national ticket, but opposed the local S.P. candidates of the District (Congressional and Assembly) for the good and sufficient S.L.P. reason that they, Hunter and Hillquit at the head of them, were anti-immigrationists.

What readers of *The People* may not be posted on is the matter of the advertisement stated to have appeared, in *Wahrheit* —but the tone of the letter should be enough to warn any one that its writer is a falsifier with an animus. The rattle of the rattlesnake should give warning of the snake.

On this particular head, it is not true that the said Tammany ad. “was run during the whole of the campaign” in *Wahrheit*. It is true that the ad. appeared for a time. But even this truth is of the nature of that worst of falsehoods{,} which consist in telling a half truth. The whole truth is that several times during the campaign *Wahrheit* contained Republican party advertisements as well. This part of the truth

your correspondent found it necessary to suppress. It injured his “Tammany theory.”

We of the S.L.P. condemn the taking of capitalist political advertisements by a Socialist paper. But the taking of a Tammany ad. does not make *Wahrheit* a Tammany agent, seeing the paper took Republican ads. as well. While disapproving of *Wahrheit's* ethics in the matter of its business (ad. department) there was no occasion to repudiate its endorsement of my candidature. *Wahrheit* did not only recommend the defeat of the S.P. reactionists in the District, it urged support for the S.L.P. Congressional candidate with editorial, reportorial and other articles that were everything but “booms,” such as Hillquit and his colleagues were receiving from the Republican press. It took leaf after leaf from S.L.P. principles on matters of immigration, and thereby contributed powerfully toward the education imparted by the S.L.P. in the district, the crushing results of which upon the Hillquits is justly a sore spot with the Traurigs.

It is not true that the entire city was neglected for the Ninth Congressional District. Never before did we have so strong a campaign throughout the city. It was strongest in that District for good and effective reasons.

It is not true that the S.L.P. campaign was a “personal campaign” in my behalf. Readers of *The People* are acquainted with the literature spread in the District. Its high tone and principles struck the keynote for the addresses there delivered by the Party speakers. The only ones who tried to lower the campaign to their own low level, by making it a personal one, were the Traurigs and Bohns, together with their recently adopted fellow S.P. men. Personal calumny against me filled the air—and helped to brace me up. Among other things the bunch circulated the slander that I was paid by Tammany and even mentioned the amount—only it was never the same. A Party member, Meyer Goldsmith, having heard the charge as emanating from Bohn, wrote to him for a written statement. Bohn, characteristically, slipped through the danger of a manful, and written and open accusation, and denied the whole thing. Nevertheless, he and his fellows continued to whisper the same slander—a slander with which my ears have grown familiar since Kangaroo, and subsequent Kanglet days, and which varies according to the season—one day it being the Republicans, another the Democrats, who furnish me cash.

The tone of Traurig's letter should be sufficient to characterize the gentleman in general. More specifically, he seems to be the Secretary of a Bureau of Guttersnipes consisting in this city of a bunch, some of whom falsified the Party documents, all of whom plotted with "Bush Temple Headquarters" to capture the Party and its press, and most of whom, Bohn and Traurig among the job lot—one-time pretenders to loyalty to S.L.P. principles, and subsequent pretenders that the I.W.W. was all-sufficient—are now rooters for the anti-I.W.W. S.P., with no greater cause to serve than their sores for the complete collapse of their intrigue to scuttle the *Daily People* plant, and thereby the Party itself.

I repeat, in closing, Traurig's letter is an insult to you—an insult that "naturally demands," not an explanation from me, but a demand from you for an explanation by him how he dares pick you out as a centre for the distribution of his reptile poison.

Yours fraternally,

DANIEL DE LEON.

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

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