

EDITORIAL

THE ASHTABULA FUSION.

By DANIEL DE LEON

A GAIN with apologies to the members of the Socialist party's Officialdom when on the war-path after one another's scalp—"this is not headhunting." Under the above title, there will be found on another column in this issue two documents that deserve careful perusal.¹

Deliberately, and for reasons of its own, the Ashtabula Local of the Socialist party fused at the primaries with the Republican party upon the candidate for City Solicitor. Not only was the fusion the act of the Local; it was an act that the Local endorsed, as appears from the list of the S.P.'s candidates, published in the Local's organ, the *Ashtabula Socialist*. The Local was content. Decidedly so. And loud was the blow about "our vote."

Suddenly the tune changed. What had happened? Fusion was charged and proved, officially and documentarily. Whereupon there followed a series of capers, of dodgings, of doublings, and of hedgings.

First the regulation S.P. answer—"It is a lie!"—was fired. Presently, seeing the "Lie," like all these "*Daily People Lies*," had hands, and feet and the solidarity of Fact, the blame was thrown upon "the tricky capitalist politicians"; and then upon the "capitalist primary laws." Mr. Ruthenberg of the Ohio State Executive Committee of the S.P., located in Cleveland, throws the blame upon "Socialist sympathizers or Republicans," he knows not which, whereas the only "tricky politicians," "Socialist sympathizers or Republicans" in the case were the members of Local Ashtabula themselves, under the leadership of two of their leading lights, Whiting and Fox.

All of which is luminous. Out of its own mouth the pure and simple politicianism of S.P. Officialdom stands exposed. The pure and simple politicianism, which, in one breath announces itself as all-sufficient to encompass Socialist Revolution, in

¹ [Identify, etc.]

the next breath exhibits itself as impotent against the machinations of the “tricky politicians” and against the wickedness of the “capitalist primary laws.”

Of course all these S.P. pleas are wretched three-card-monte performances.

Even granting—and the granting can be done only for the sake of the argument—that the “capitalist primary laws” and the “tricky politicians” can play with the ballot of a bona fide party of bona fide Socialism in the manner claimed, even then a bona fide party of bona fide Socialism is not powerless to set itself right and thwart the alleged “tricksters.” The instant the name of a member of a bona fide party of bona fide Socialism is taken by the “tricky politicians” upon their ballot, or the instant any of the “tricky politicians” forces himself upon the ballot of a bona fide party of bona fide Socialism, that instant such a party of Socialism could and would repudiate the “trick” so loudly as actually to cancel it. Fact is that not in a single instance where the *Daily People* has charged the S.P. with the corruption of fusion was there any such repudiation. Fact is that in all such instances—commencing with the instance of Mr. Morris Eichman in West Hoboken, N.J., ten years ago, down to the St. Louis double fusion of two years ago, and this year’s fusions which the *Daily People* has enumerated, Ashtabula included,—in all these instances, the fusion was deliberately planned; it was considered an act of “cleverness,” of “broadness” and of “practical common sense”; and the vote polled by the fusion was boasted over. There was no repudiation, no talk of “tricky politicians,” until after election day, and then only when the *Daily People* drew up the indictment.

The S.P. Officialdom-Press is a center from which mental strabismus radiates. For such folks to stand straight is out of all question for them to reason straightforwardly is an impossibility;—a consequent and equal impossibility is their attracting the manhood and womanhood that a great social revolution demands for its success.

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