

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 4, NO. 197.

NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 13, 1904.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

BREWERIES ON TOP.

By DANIEL DE LEON

EVERY sensible man has somewhere on the tablets of his mind a broad margin, on which to enter the facts that experience furnishes him on matters that he has not yet made up his mind on. Eventually these gathered facts are numerous and strong enough to enable him to arrive at the correct conclusion. On that broad margin on the tablet of the minds of the vast numbers of those who are watching the duel that is going on between the Socialist Labor Party and the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic party, can now be entered a fact that is valuable on the subject of the sort of organization that a bona fide Socialist organization requires. The fact in this instance is furnished by the figures (and the manner in which they were obtained) that defeated a recent motion in this State to transfer the seat of the State Committee of the Social Democratic party from New York to Rochester.

The motion came from outside of New York city; 1,103 votes were cast, and New York and Brooklyn alone polled 571 votes, that is, 19 votes more than the absolute majority, and carried the day.

Who is it that came out on top?—Three breweries!

There are three nerve centres in the organization of the New York Social Democracy. They are: the Brooklyn Labor Lyceum, the New York Labor Lyceum and the Eighty-sixth-street (New York) Emporium—all three out-houses of, or feeders for breweries with which they “do business,” to which they are deeply mortgaged, and who have a dollars-and-cents interest in seeing the places boom—that is, consume the largest possible quantity of the dirty domestic stuff. A motion to transfer the headquarters from New York quickly touches a sensitive nerve in the pockets of the breweries in question. So did this motion. With the beer-trade-hustling State Committee away, prospective drinkers might, could or would

not gather as numerously. The whip was cracked, and the hustlers hustled. The Volkszeitung Corporation started to work; its German organ, the *Volkszeitung*, issued editorially the order to vote against Rochester; its English poodle, *The Worker*, suppressed protests against the manner in which meetings were called to agitate against Rochester; and the scores of “genossen,” who, as employes of the three beer centres, are but employes of the said breweries, stirred their stumps to “get out the voters.” Thus, with the “organs of the party” taking a stand against the motion; with rafts of the party’s “genossen,” essentially employes of the breweries, getting up bogus meetings against Rochester; and with postponings of the date of closing the ballot, so as to whip the voters of the city in line—with all that, the beer breweries were aided in defeating a motion that could only have tended towards the purification of a concern, whose rottenness cries to heaven.—No wonder calls are now coming up for a recount. It seems that, besides all the above corrupt methods, fraud took place also in the counting. No wonder—corruption breeds corruption.

What happened was inevitable. As well expect to bore Socialism from within the capitalist parties, as expect to bore Socialist cleanliness from within a body that, while aiming at public ownership, allows itself to be a vest-pocket counter of a private publishing concern. By allowing its organ to be the private property of the Volkszeitung Corporation—a corporation that can and does stick its tongue out to the party—the Social Democratic party has constructed its organization in defiance of Socialist principle. As a result, private capitalistic interests get their clutches upon its members, through these become vocal and active in its councils, and presently sway the party obedient to the impure interests of self—as has just happened again with the Social Democratic party in this Rochester matter.

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

Uploaded March 2007

slpns@igc.org