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EDITORIAL

ANOTHER DIFFERENCE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

FACTS sufficient have come into court to establish the maxim that either the political must dominate the economic, or the economic is bound to dominate the political movement of Labor; and the maxim implies that if the political dominates the economic movement of Labor, then the elevation which the broad political spirit imparts to the otherwise narrow trade interests will raise the latter and free it from the corruption that it is otherwise prone to; whereas, if the economic dominates the political movement, then the narrowness and selfishness of the trade interests will drag the latter down, and the two will insensibly roll down into the corruption that the former naturally tends to. The late national convention of the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic party is furnishing the latest illustration of this pregnant truth.

Dominated as the convention was by the pets of Gompers' A.F. of L., the resolution introduced by the unsophisticated delegate Ott of Wyoming and which condemned the Civic Federation, was brushed aside. Delegate Ott's resolution was as follows:

“The Socialist Party also wishes to denounce before the workers of this land the treacherous, deceitful work of the conglomeration between several labor leaders, so-called, and the captains of industry, such as the National Civic Federation, and other like institutions, and brand these combinations as instruments of the capitalist class to perpetuate the system of to-day, and to use organized labor as tools for that purpose.”

This was a test, and the convention went under before it. As stated last week in these columns by the S.L.P. men who witnessed the convention and saw the performance, delegate Ott's resolution went down under speeches that virtually declared that “If the S.P. ever dare to attack the labor fakir it will be ruined”—and

in the fitness of things, Ben Hanford, who is recognized as a fakir by the rank and file of his own trades union, and who is the party's nominee for Vice-President, led in those speeches.

Nor is that all. The trades union resolution that was adopted in lieu of delegate Ott's, emphasized and emphasizes the point, nor would we here emphasize that emphasis better than by here reproducing literally the article on the subject from the *American Labor Union Journal* of last May 26:

THE TRADE UNION RESOLUTION.

Does the concluding paragraph of the trades union resolution adopted by the Chicago convention of the Socialist Party reflect the sentiment of the organization on this now important question.

The paragraph referred to contains the following significant sentence, "neither political nor other differences of opinion justify the division of the forces of labor on the industrial field."

The resolution was framed by a committee composed almost entirely of those Socialists who are known as "borers from within." The complexion of the committee was the result of slate making and lobbying on the part of these same "borers." The debate on the resolution was bitter at times and the opponents of the committee attempted to point out that the passage of such a resolution was un-Socialistic, since it was a covert indorsement of one kind of unionism and a covert stab at another. It was further attempted, in the limited time allowed for debate to show, that the New Trades Unionism was born of necessity, to meet changed industrial conditions and that it was in keeping with the purposes of Socialism, since by organizing the workers industrially it was equipping them for when the time became ripe for the change. It was also argued that the trade autonomy plan of unionism was only a stalking horse for capitalism, since it split the workers into a thousand and one divisions each one making its own agreement and taking its own beating all by itself at the hands of the master class. It was further shown that in addition to keeping the workers divided industrially it was also dividing them politically. The men who spoke in support of the resolution from Ben Hanford to Hilquit did not attempt to reply to these arguments. They kept up a constant reiteration of the charges that those who opposed the resolution are opposed to trades unions, which was a thousand miles from the truth, the facts being that the opposition was not to trades union indorsement, but to the kind of trades unionism it was sought to indorse. As it stands the Socialist Party is committed to scab herding, organization of dual unions, misleading of the working class, the expenditure of union funds to defeat Socialist candidates, the segregation of the working class into craft units which are powerless to accomplish anything and it has been committed to this

because a few ambitious eastern comrades were anxious to make things pleasant for themselves in the “pure and simple” “unions.” A referendum by paragraphs should be demanded on the trade union resolution.

Aye! Aye! As stated above, “The Socialist Party is committed to scab-herding” and “it has been committed to this because a few ambitious comrades are anxious to make things pleasant for themselves in the pure and simple unions”—in other words, the corruption of their scabbery dominated their political conduct.

The S.L.P. is a tail to the Gompers scab-herders’ kite, together with the latter’s private Volkszeitung corporation that only recently sold out the brewery workers for advertisements. The S.L.P., on the contrary, is run by no scab-herding concern, and it ruthlessly, heresy-hunting, drives out whatever member of the pack it finds in its camp—that’s one of the differences between the two.

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

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