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SECOND EDITORIAL

## Philip Bauer as a Specimen.

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**N**ot a few close watchers of the Socialist Labor party, who approve, in the abstract, the party's tactics, but who see the violence with which the party is attacked on the score of its close affiliation with the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance, question whether, on the whole, the organizing of the S.T. & L.A., and its endorsement by the party, does not do more harm than good. They reason that men who are not inherently corrupt, but still are blind to the wisdom of the S.T. & L.A., could be more easily won over into our ranks by the party's not adopting tactics that throw such men into paroxysms of rage; and those that argue this way clinch their point by pointing out here and there a man, who, once considered a worthy member of the S.L.P., has, through the party's affiliation with the S.T. & L.A., so far soured as to pull out, and virtually assume a posture of hostility.

The serious error that underlies this reasoning, rendered all the more dangerous by reason of its plausibility, would, in itself, justify consideration. The taking it up is, however, rendered all the more useful because it will help to illustrate principles that are basic in the movement.

A type of the men above referred to is Phillip Bauer. The issue is made all around clear by examining it by the light shed upon it by this specimen.

Philip Bauer is a member of a New York bricklayers' union. The present President of that organization is the notorious Labor Fakir Klein, a heeler of the Democratic party, and of David B. Hill in particular. A firm attitude on the part of the Socialists in that union might or might not have overthrown Klein and purified the organization, but what such an attitude would certainly have resulted in would have been the earning of the ill-will of Klein and his fellows for the Socialist members. Klein and such other officers have the dispensing of favors in their power; no favors would or could flow from such hands to inconvenient Socialists. Now, then, not long ago, there was a "job" or favor to be bestowed. Someone of the union had to be sent on a mission to distant Milwaukee. It is not very essential to the point whether the mission was

really necessary, or whether it was a mere pretext, of the many devised by the genus Klein, to “throw something in the way” of the faithful. The mission was there, and whether bona fide or otherwise it was a plum. On whom did Klein bestow that plum?—On Philip Bauer, who, at the time, was a member of the S.L.P., and had been for some time.

Again, a member of Philip Bauer’s organization was more recently very anxious to be elected delegate to a convention of his trade. The reason for his anxiety was that, as delegate, he had a better chance to advertise himself to the capitalist politicians and get a job that he coveted; in other words, he was anxious for an opportunity to traffic upon his organization. Philip Bauer admits these facts frankly, and—he frankly adds that, with full knowledge of these facts, he voted for that candidate, adding, furthermore, that, if the man did get the job he was after, it would do his (Bauer’s) union good.

The specimen is complete. It is a basic principle with Socialism that material interests dominate the masses of men. It is a sequence of the principle of the class struggle that men will rank themselves on the side of this principle or that {or not?} according as their interests direct. The man who sees his personal interests in the plumful good graces of a Klein, the man who further sees his and his fellow union men’s interests in the prostitution to capitalist purposes of a union’s delegate to a convention—such a man belongs to a sub-division of a class that is radically at variance with the Socialist movement. The connection of such a man with the S.L.P. has not for its purpose to inject Socialism into pure and simpledom, but to inject pure and simpledom into Socialism. The hostility of such a man is natural; and what is more—THE TACTICS THAT BRING HIS HOSTILITY OUT INTO THE OPEN, AND DRIVE THEM OUT OF THE S.L.P., ARE THE RIGHT ONES.

It is not only in the camps of the several capitalist parties that a re-arrangement is going on to-day. As the Social Revolution approaches the jumping off place, class interests must assert themselves with increasing intensity. This process is needful to clear up the situation. It is a process to be welcomed; likewise, to be welcomed are the tactics that stimulate it. The organization of the S.T. & L.A. was a move in that sense; the party’s decision to join hands with it was a further move in the same sense. Instinctively every one whose specialized class interests are hostile to the rock-bed class interests of the S.L.P. must take alarm; the conduct of these and their final withdrawal can only be applauded.

The test of tactics, especially at this constructive period, is their effect upon the solidifying of the basic principles of the party, and their helping to set forth these principles with all the greater sharpness and clearness. While, temporarily, the

process may cause disturbances, in the end it cannot but be beneficent.

The S.L.P. is organized for battle; not to run away.

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

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