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EDITORIAL

## CONCESSIONS? WHAT CONCESSIONS, PRAY?

By DANIEL DE LEON

**B**eginning with almost the day after election, and, since then increasing in numbers, letters in all sorts of languages have come to this office from Social Democratic sources in this city, proposing “harmony,” “peace,” a “stoppage of hostilities between brothers,” an “end of internecine feud between Socialists,” etc., etc. One of these correspondents, gifted with a more practical mind than the rest, and speaking in the same vein, asks “what concessions would the Socialist Labor Party be willing to make to bring about harmony?”

It would greatly facilitate business if our charming correspondents would indicate the S.L.P. principles that they would wish the S.L.P. to abandon.

For instance:

The principle of the Class Struggle is a principle of the S.L.P. It is a principle with the S.L.P. that no help can come to the Working Class except to the extent that itself strikes the blow, and downs the Capitalist Class; and that capitalist governments are inevitably engines of hostility to the Working Class. Accordingly, the S.L.P. prohibits its members from filling any public office except such office is conquered by the workers themselves; it does not allow them to take office by the grace of the Capitalist Class; and the Party ruthlessly expels and brands as a traitor the member who would accept public office at the blood-stained hands of a capitalist government. The Social Democracy holds otherwise. Its San Francisco organization applied for public offices to the capitalist municipal government of that city; that government granted them two jobs, and the two were accepted, and are now filled with the consent of the Social Democracy.—Is the S.L.P. expected to abandon the principle of the Class Struggle?

It is a principle with the S.L.P. that the men it elects to public office shall use the position thus wrested from the clutches of capitalism, wholly in the interest of the Working Class; that they shall unswervingly resist any and all measures that accrue to the power of the Capitalist Class and that strengthen its capacity to

oppress the Working Class. The Social Democracy holds otherwise. James F. Carey, its man in Haverhill, Mass., gave his vote to a \$15,000 appropriation for an armory in the industrial center of that town: with factories in not one of which there is not some violation of the factory acts; with the children of the workers in that town unable to enjoy proper school facilities; with measures untold, that would ease the burdens of the workers,—with all this left neglected or unprovided for, the Social Democratic representative gives his support to an armory, to a notorious engine of Working Class oppression, and his conduct as approved by his party.—Is the S.L.P. expected to abandon the principle of keeping faith with the Working Class?

It is a principle with the S.L.P. that always and at all times it is to stand by the Working Class in all its endeavors to improve its condition, and, consequently, that the Party is always and at all times to resist the manoeuvres of the fleecers of the Working Class to sacrifice the workers' to the fleecers' interests. Accordingly, when a class of men, whom Hanna correctly calls his "Labor Lieutenants," and who are otherwise known as Labor Fakirs, or the Organized Scabbery, start strikes, that cannot be won, and start them for the sole reason of having a pretext to plunder the workers by means of assessments for Fakirs' salaries and strike committee dues; and when these scamps refuse to settle a strike for the exclusive reason that, the strike being off, their Strike Committee revenues would be at end;—when such crimes are perpetrated on the workers, then the S.L.P., strictly holding to its principles, falls with sledge-hammer blows upon the "Labor Lieutenants" of Capitalism, and stands by the workers amid shot and shell. The Social Democracy holds otherwise. Right here in this city, its organ, the *Volkszeitung* is the ready handmaid of the "Labor Lieutenants" of Capitalism, aiding them at every point in their schemes whereby to keep the workers in ignorance and delude them to their undoing.—Is the S.L.P. expected to abandon the principle that makes it one with the Working Class, and shall it forsake the proletariat?

It is a principle with the S.L.P. that internal Party dissensions shall be settled within the Party itself, and never, under no circumstance, shall the Capitalist Courts be made the arbiter in Party disputes. The Social Democracy holds otherwise. Its Kangaroo organization in this city rushed for protection, on July 14, 1899, to the labor-browbeating Courts and thus introduced the judicial henchmen of the Capitalist Class right into the political camp of the Working Class.—Is the S.L.P. expected to abandon the principle that alliances with the Capitalist foe are a betrayal of the proletariat?

It is unnecessary to enumerate any further cardinal principles that to-day draw sharp the line between the Socialist Labor Party and the Social Democracy, or the Kangaroo party.

It will be well, henceforth, if any proposition for harmony and request for concessions are addressed to the Socialist Labor Party, that the exact principles which the Party is expected to concede be clearly specified, to the end that the Party may know the extent to which any babe-in-the-woods may be silly enough to imagine that the fighting Socialist Labor Party would betray its sacred trust, and become a boodle concern.

There is but one concession the S.L.P. will ever make, and that concession is to stave in the heads of the lackeys of the Capitalist Class as readily as the Party will stave in the head of Capitalism itself.

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

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