

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 2, NO. 278.

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 1902.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

CHICAGO SIMIANS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE collection of simians, that, during the late Chicago municipal election, strutted the stage under the colors of “Socialism,” and who, simian-like, imagined they could promote the deception by putting on the uniform of the Socialist Labor Party, are to-day a shivering lot, a spectacle to behold, a sight to profit by.

The Socialist Labor Party,—equipped with all the experience of the age, and inspired with the noblest aspirations of the race—knows that a Revolutionary Movement must never throw sops to the elements called upon to carry the Revolution through. If it does, it is gone. The foe can always out-sop it. Accordingly, the Socialist Labor Party holds up only the Revolutionary issue; it holds that up in the distinctest manner possible; it demands the unconditional surrender of the Capitalist Class,—JUST THAT; and it concentrates all its efforts to make that issue clear. The Party cannot be out-sopped along that line. Votes may thus be slow in coming; votes may by such tactics be even repelled for a while. But all the while the educational process on the Revolution will progress un-confused, and, in the fullness of time, the votes, or, what is more to the point, the MEN will be there to accomplish the Revolution. Such a posture, while it is one befitting MEN only, monkeys do not fail to admire, and, simian-like, occasionally try to ape. This is what the Chicago simians did,—and are now shivering for.

The Chicago simians belong to that Kangaroo collection that is variously styled “Social Democratic,” “Public Ownership,” or “Socialist” party, and that has been tersely dubbed the “Multi-Cocoa Party.” It goes without saying that that Chicago crew lacks the moral, intellectual and physical fibre necessary for S.L.P. posture. The general trend of its officers betrays the fact. They are in the sops-throwing business: anything to catch votes: a regular fly-paper affair, all things to all men,

and pliant like a soiled dish-clout. Nevertheless, like genuine simians, the Chicago aggregation would like, and in this municipal campaign did try, to ape the Socialist Labor Party,—and O, what a chill went down the simian spines when the votes were counted!

The S.L.P.—obedient to the tactics of a militant Socialist party—has no “temporary demands.” It has none, whether on the National, State or Municipal field. “Temporary demands” are sops. Socialism is the Revolution of this Age. Revolutions, like children, are not born piece-meal, neither is ever a “temporary” child sent on ahead. The manly resoluteness of the stand taken by the S.L.P., and of which its attitude on “temporary demands” is only a part, fitting in with the whole, is known to tell, and to tell effectively. The Chicago simians perceived that, and, monkeyly imagining the fortitude of men could be acquired, and the honor thereof purloined, by simply donning the uniform of men, they cast off the “temporary demands” of their own National Platform, and put on the S.L.P. uniform of repudiating all such demands. Their fate was that of the monkey rigged in the regimentals of a General.

The monkey, tricked out in a General’s chapeau, coat, sash and sabre, does not become a General. The regimentals don’t fit him. His whole make-up is a denial of such trappings. So far from becoming a General by such outfit, he renders the outfit ridiculous. Nobody is taken in. It was so with the Chicago simians during this their municipal campaign. Their rickety anatomy could not fill the “No Temporary Demands” uniform of the S.L.P. The S.L.P. “No Temporary Demands” principle, was clean out of keeping with the simian framework made up of kowtowing to the Organized Scabbery, of parsonial smirks, of Armory-building treason, of strings of Morris Eichmann political corruption. The aping did not work. They thought to rope in 50,000 votes. Instead of that they lost chunks of what they had. Their vote of two years ago went down. The S.L.P. recks not votes. That’s a pure transient matter: a chaste woman maintains her character in plain calico: the strumpet cannot live without paste diamonds and imitation silks and velvets. A decline in votes to the Chicago simians is like a decline in her frippery to the strumpet: it relegates both to the dark lanes of their respective pursuits.

* * *

Nor yet is the lesson complete. On the same day that the municipal election in

Chicago left the simians of that city—fittingly headed by their Simple Simons—exposed for the apes that they are, another municipal election took place, barely eighty miles away, that goes far to supplement the Chicago lesson.

Barely eighty miles from Chicago lies Milwaukee. There also a municipal campaign came to a close on April 1. In that city and its State is to be found all that is to-day left tangibly organized of the old Debs-Berger Utopian Socialist Movement of five years ago. That Movement proceeded from untenable premises, it was necessarily hostile to the Socialist Labor Party and had to be fought, it chased illusions, it was not always careful whom it took in and some crooks managed to fasten themselves on it, but, for all that, it did not have Kangaroo corruption at its root, and was a bona fide affair. Born of Utopian aspirations, it was a genuine product of Utopianism. The Wisconsin Berger-Debs Socialist party has developed consistently along that line. Accordingly, that party was seen this spring on the field of the Municipal campaign of Milwaukee with a platform that was fully in keeping with its antecedents and its principles. True to itself, it stood out in the campaign upon its own Utopian lines: its platform bristled with “temporary demands,” from free concerts, almost to free boutonniers; and what it was after it got,—at least partly. It is after votes; it lost none that it had, and gained 2,000. Unlike the Chicago simians, the Debs-Berger Socialist party of Milwaukee did not stultify itself, it did not repudiate itself, it did not turn itself into a ridiculous ape. Utopianly it believes in sops, it believes in the crowds thus attracted, and it acted true to its convictions: net results, it does not, could under no circumstances, present the ridiculous aspect that the Chicago simians are presenting to-day.

In such people there is hope, as there is always hope in people true to themselves. It is to be hoped that the Berger-Debs Socialist party of Milwaukee realizes to-day that their increase is not at all in keeping with the expectations that water their tactics; it is to be hoped that the fact is dawning upon them that the Socialist Republic is no hurrah affair, but a tree of slow growth, and that there is no safe building upon elements that are drag-netted; it is to be hoped they will perceive the truth of this, and, perceiving it, proceed with the characterfulness of consistent men to cast off the slough of Utopianism.

At any rate, hap what may, the Chicago-Milwaukee Municipal elections of this year contribute strong corroboration to the characterfulness and the soundness of

the S.L.P. tactics:

Seeing the Socialist Republic is the work of men, the tricks of simians are wholly unavailable; seeing the Socialist Republic can not be “rushed,” as well build surely and safely, however slowly.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded September 2006