

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 8, NO. 247.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, MARCH 3, 1908.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

CLEAR THE DECKS!

By DANIEL DE LEON

ON the 2nd instant the National Secretary of the Socialist Labor Party received official notification from the Chicago national headquarters of the Socialist party that the S.L.P. invitation for a Unity Conference had been rejected by an overwhelming vote of the members of the National Committee of the S.P.

The S.L.P. invitation to a conference stipulated no conditions, except adherence to the principles of the International Congress. Affecting the swagger of a Goliath toward a David, business interests of the most grovelling, guild and craft-Union interests of the most reactionary, “intellectual” schemes of the most treasonable to the proletariat, trembled behind the mask of Socialism, worn by a large majority of the S.P. National Committeemen;—trembled at the bare thought of confronting an S.L.P. delegation of conferees;—aye, trembled at the, to them, even more dreadful thought of having to submit their conference deliberations to that rank and file, around whom they seek to build a Chinese Wall, and whom they seek to pluck as their special dupes. The S.L.P. invitation contained the express provision that the findings of the proposed Unity Conference were to be submitted to a referendum of both memberships. Had the S.L.P. invitation contained no such provision, the invitation might have been accepted by the National Committee of the S.P.; with that provision, the invitation was unacceptable.

In a matter so important that the International Congress found it necessary to urge—the unification of the Socialist forces—and obedient to which the S.L.P. acted, the large majority of the S.P. National Committeemen slighted the International Congress, and insulted its own membership by disfranchising them.

Thus, once more, the truth of the principle has been demonstrated—the loudest shouters of “Democracy!” are the worst contemners of the people; the loudest

inveighers against “Bossism” are the schemers after “Bossdom.” Accordingly, with the Bergers and the Simonses leading the van, and the New Yorker Volkszeitung Corporation furnishing the music, a decisive majority of the S.P. National Committee refused even to confer.

The action of the National Committee of the S.P. clarifies the situation immensely. It does more. It is the strongest justification imaginable of the indomitable persistence shown by the S.L.P. not to allow itself to be swept off its feet by the hurrah chaff of votes, gathered any old way. It is the latest and most convincing proof that the S.P. is all that the S.L.P. has charged it with, and that the continued existence of the Fighting S.L.P. is a continued necessity to the bona fide Socialist Movement of America.

If, when there might have been a theoretical doubt that the S.P. is not a member of the Socialist family, but a hideous changeling smuggled into the cradle at the hearth of the Socialist family, the S.L.P. stood firm to its colors, and upheld these against all assaults, open and covert, now that a decisive majority of the S.P. National Committee have been compelled to come out for what they are, there can no longer be any doubt as to the duty of the S.L.P. towards the American Working Class. Not rejoicing at the discovery of the correctness of its old estimate concerning the S.P., but regretfully, yet with jaws all the more firmly set and with countenance all the serener, the Fighting S.L.P. will pursue, unterrified, its undeterred career—freed now in the eyes of all thinking men of all blame for the continued spectacle of a “divided Socialist Movement.”

There is a double foe to fight: the capitalist despot, and his political caricature.

Clear the decks!

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

Uploaded January 2010

slpns@slp.org