

EDITORIAL

“SOCIALISM” IN MILWAUKEE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Hon. Victor L. Berger, Social Democratic Congressman-elect, informed an Oklahoma audience, as set forth in *Political Action* for January 21, that “not only are the masses with us [the Social Democratic administration of Milwaukee], but the business men are applauding.”

Such a statement is calculated to cause the knowing to prick up their ears.

By “masses” is understood the workers; by “business men” is understood the skinnners of the workers. That the two frequently go together is a deplorable social fact, due to class-unconsciousness on the part of the “masses” and the deceptive language of the “business men.” One of the tasks of Socialism is to undo the fact: to expose the deceptiveness of the “business men” and thereby open the eyes of the “masses.” Something must be out of the usual run if an administration, that boasts of its Socialism, at once enjoys the applause of the skinnners and the support of the skinnees:—

Either the “business men” have been seized upon by a Pentecostal fire; have dropped their class-practices; have, in short, ceased to be skinnners,—truly a miracle;

Or the “Socialism” that is accompanied by the applause of “business men,” without receiving the hootings and catcalls of the “masses,” is the same old regulation bourgeois clap-trap of reform decked in the trappings of Socialism,—no miracle at all.

Which of the two explains the Milwaukee status as described by Congressman Berger?

It so happens that, together with the issue of *Political Action* quoted from, there reached this office a communication, found elsewhere in this issue from a Milwaukee correspondent, that helps solve the riddle.

Our correspondent sets forth that—squaring at all points with the bourgeois

conception which looks down upon and degrades Labor—the “Socialist administration” of Milwaukee is advancing the salaries of clerkships that already received a bounteous wage, while it leaves the city’s manual employes—men whom the city administration requires to work eight hours a day, six days a week, in rain or shine,—with their noses to the starvation grindstone of \$11 a week.

The riddle, presented by Congressman Berger’s account of the Milwaukee status, is solved.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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slpns@slp.org