

EDITORIAL

THE SAME ROOSEVELT, AND THE SAME EVERYTHING ELSE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

T WAS in the year 1898.

In that year of grace there were in this city, or, with headquarters in this city, two gentlemen, now little heard of, but then quite conspicuous—at least noisy in the Labor Movement.

They were Harry White and Heinrich Weissmann.

White and Weissmann hunted in couples. Their quarry was the Labor and Socialist Movement.

White was Secretary of the Garment Workers in the A.F. of L.; Weissmann, who had served a term in California for complicity in a dynamite affair, was an Anarchist, and at the time, 1898, figured as a “Labor Spellbinder.”

Needless to say, the Socialist Labor Party had its fingers, in perpetuity, in the hair of the two worthies. It exposed the corrupt practices of the former in the A.F. of L., where he ran his Union in the interest of the garment firms, with himself as a partner; and the Party exposed the Anarchically treasonable-to-Labor conduct of the latter, on account of which, equally needless to say, the two roundly vituperated the Party as a “Union Wrecker” and as a “Bunch of Impossibiism.”

’Twas, we said, 1898. The year in which Theodore Roosevelt, just returned from his make-believe exploits in Cuba, was nominated for Governor in this State. Immediately upon his nomination, Roosevelt foregathered with the two men in an East Side restaurant. There they took lunch, and mapped out a sort of plan of campaign.

All this has been mentioned more than once in the course of the years. Present, 1912, events revive the memories thereof, as the latest instance of History’s repeating itself—and thereby casting its shadows before it.

’Tis now the year 1912.

Again, in this year of grace, and again with this city as a sort of headquarters, there is to be found a certain bunch of folks, the Socialist party so-called, noisily conspicuous, and types of whom are two gentlemen.

The two are Robert W. Bruere and William D. Haywood.

For Bruere, now read White, and vice versa; for Haywood, now read Weissmann, and vice versa.

While in many ways a different type from White, Robert W. Bruere is the Harry White of the present. White was identified with that element in the old S.L.P. which found the Party too “narrow” for them to ply their “broadness” in; which held up the A.F. of L. end of so-called Unionism; and which bolted, and with their kindred, set up the Socialist party. Bruere is now identified with that very S.P., as a far more promising field for “Possibilist” political manœuvres.

While in some respects differing from Weissmann, William D. Haywood is the Heinrich Weissmann of the present. The chief spokesman for a body, the Chicago so-called I.W.W., that advocates theft, assassination, “strike at the ballot box with an axe,” in short, an Anarchist, the Haywood of 1912 is hard to distinguish from the Weissmann of 1896. Like Weissmann, and for similar good and sufficient reasons, Haywood entertains a rancorous hatred for the S.L.P., and, like Weissmann, who had his chums among the element that bolted the S.L.P., Haywood has so many admirers among the S.P. that he was elected to, and is now a member of, the S.P. National Executive.

Finally, again, in this year of grace, 1912, Theodore Roosevelt being a candidate for office, this time for President, he again foregathers with the 1912 Whites and Weissmanns, the Brueres and the Haywoods of the so-called Socialist party,—sits in political conference with Bruere, whom he especially invited, and who responded to the invitation with the assent, approval and encouragement of Haywood—and thus jointly with them drafts his plan of campaign for 1912.

The 1912 facts, just made public, are of greater interest than as a historical parallel. They are even of greater interest than as illustrations of the virtues of “broadness” in an organization that names itself Socialist, and that roars Revolution. The 1912 facts, read by the light of the evolution of the Brueres and the Haywoods of 1898, point with unerring accuracy to the evolution that may be ex-

pected from the Whites and the Weissmanns of 1912.

As to Harry White, his reformatory broadness in the A.F. of L. reached a point of perfection when even his Union woke up enough to cast him off, and he is now an “enlightened man,” engaged in labor-exploiting manufacturing enterprises. As to Weissmann, he became a “lawyer,” was hired by the baker bosses to fight the constitutionality of the 10-hours and other factory acts concerning the bakeshops, and received a diamond pin from his clients in recognition of his successful efforts against the baker wage slaves.

The day will come, as certain as the morrow’s sun will rise, when the Brueres and Haywoods—ripened in the hotbed of “tolerant” and “broad” Socialism (sic)—will go the way, will blossom into the nettles, of the Whites and the Weissmanns.

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