

# *With De Leon Since '89*

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## PRINTING HISTORY

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# PRIOR TO 1889.

## Collapse of the Henry George Movement—Dissension in the Early Labor Movement—Ill-Starred Rosenberg-Busche Struggle for Sounder S.L.P. Political Policy

**I**N 1887 THE HENRY GEORGE MOVEMENT went to pieces. Only a year before, in 1886, Henry George, candidate for mayor of New York on the ticket of the United Labor Party, had loomed up a big figure in the political arena. Sixty-eight thousand (68,000) votes were cast for Henry George, not in modern Greater New York, but in old New York limited to a much smaller number of voters than are now eligible to vote in the Borough of Manhattan alone. The fact is also to be borne in mind that this happened in the days when ballot-box stuffing was quite freely indulged in, repeating being practiced by both Tammany Hall and the Republican Party. So general was this foul practice that men boasted openly of having voted early and often; and many, in fact, considered themselves good American citizens because they not only voted once on election day, but a number of times, each time in a different district. The oftener they voted, the better American citizens they considered themselves to be.

Of course, all the ballot-box stuffing and repeating was the work of the old parties, and when, in spite of all of it, Henry George polled sixty-eight thousand votes, there was good reason for the old party chiefs to fear the new movement. Accordingly, the press denounced Henry George as an Anarchist and Socialist. This might not have had the desired effect so far as the voters were concerned; they cared little for these denunciations of Henry George, as the vote indicated, for George had been denounced by the so-called public press as an Anarchist during the '86 campaign; but it did have the desired effect with Henry George himself. Reasoning like all men who become afflicted with inflammation of the head, which results in its swelling to a size out of all proportion to the size of the individual, Henry George thought that he was the movement, and that since he received sixty-eight thousand votes with the odium of being a Socialist upon him, how many more votes might he not receive with the odium of being a Socialist removed!

So, at the convention of the United Labor Party, held in the city of Syracuse in 1887, Henry George declared that “the tail must not wag the dog”; the Socialists were read out of the party, the “tail” was cut off.

The Socialists, and here begins my story, formed the Progressive Labor Party, and put up a state ticket in opposition to the Henry George party. Henry George, who in '86 received sixty-eight thousand votes in New York city alone, received in '87 for the office of Secretary of State in the whole Empire State thirty-three thousand, the candidate of the Progressive Labor Party for the same office receiving seven thousand votes. The Henry George party was dead. Daniel De Leon, who had been active in the United Labor Party up to the time when the “tail that wagged the dog” was amputated, declared that “the operation had been too successful, Henry George having cut off the tail right back of the ears.”

*Dissension Not Introduced Into the Labor Movement by De Leon*

De Leon joined the Nationalist movement, organized by Edward Bellamy, who became famous at that time through his book, *Looking Backward*.

Many times we have heard from the lips of professional slanderers the accusation that where De Leon was there was sure to be dissension. Well, the labor movement, both political and economic, was a witches' cauldron, seething with dissensions before De Leon joined it. There were three central bodies of unions in New York—the Central Labor Union, the Central Labor Federation, and District 49, Knights of Labor.

There was no love lost between these central bodies of “organized labor.” Billingsgate was indulged in on all sides and each accused the other of scabbing. Corruption, too, was rampant. One instance may be cited here. After the strike or lockout of brewery workers by the “pool brewers,” as the organization of the boss brewers was called, and a boycott against these brewers was launched that became really effective, because it was actually carried out by the Germans in their trade unions which were indeed an important factor in beer consumption, it was discovered that a bribe had been paid to certain “labor leaders” in the Central Labor Union to annul the boycott or work to that end. One delegate of the Brewery Workers' Union pretended to be willing to take the bribe. He received \$500, which was deposited; and later, in a sworn statement before a notary, the whole affair was exposed.

On the political field, as during the George campaign, the Socialists had thrown their activity and organization into the United Labor Party, and were unceremoniously thrown out again. The Progressive Labor Party was at best only a makeshift to deal the United Labor Party a solar plexus blow, which it did.

There was much more, however, of this kind of “peace” before Daniel De Leon

entered the movement. For even among those who were in the old Socialist Labor Party,—which at that time was only a “party of propaganda,” so styled by some who wanted it to remain forevermore a “party of propaganda” and endorse whatever radical movement might spring up—there was a good deal of hobnobbing with Anarchists and also with freak reform movements. In the proceedings of a convention of the old Socialistic Labor Party (as the party was called at first, this being a literal translation from the German) held as early as 1883 in the city of Allegheny, Pa., the national secretary of the party, Van Patten, was censured for having opposed the formation of military clubs. Albert Parsons, who later figured in the Haymarket affair in Chicago, was a delegate to that convention. J.P. McGuire, the notorious labor “leader,” was at that convention elected as the party’s delegate to the International Congress.

From '79 to '89 the organization remained very much the same. When light began to break and the few American Sections wanted a real Socialist political organization without fusion and without taking a vote at every meeting whether political action should be endorsed or rejected, they met with the opposition of the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* and the elements influenced by that paper.

For the most part agitation was conducted in the German language, but now and then a native agitator would make his appearance in New York and be immediately sent on an agitation trip through the eighteen towns where the party had organized Sections. There being no established party policy, everyone was free to agitate his particular kind of Socialism and express his own ideas as to party policy and tactics. Most all the native agitators had some scheme wherewith they were to transform conservative American workingmen into Socialists.

### *Early Fight Over Independent Action*

Many there were who came with the fixed idea that Socialist propaganda should be based upon the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States, at any rate brought into harmony with these documents, so as to remove prejudice against Socialism. It is in the make-up of the nativistic know-nothing individual to engender such notions. Artemus Ward, the humorist so much admired by our late Comrade De Leon, tells us something that fits these fellows who have a hankering for making everything subject to the Constitution. Artemus Ward in his talk to the members of the community of Shakers, in bidding them “adoo,” says: “Meanwhile the world resolves around its own axel-tree every twenty-four hours, subjeck to the Constitution of the United States.” The Constitutional cranks have not

altogether disappeared even in these latter days.

After the experience made by the Socialists of New York with the Henry George movement it began to dawn upon the younger element, or perhaps rather upon those who were in earnest, that the time for experimenting with all sorts of schemes had about passed, and that the Socialist Labor Party should become a real political party, not only a party of propaganda. Several Sections, under the leadership of W. Rosenberg and F. Busche, editor of the *Workmen's Advocate*, the official party organ—the American Section of New York among them—took the stand that the time had arrived for the Socialists to enter the political arena not here and there and at indefinite periods, but to unfurl the banner of International Socialism on American soil without compromise or fusion with any other political party. It was here that the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* did its nefarious work by using its influence to drive both Rosenberg and Busche out of the party, and all those who stood with them as well.

Rosenberg and Busche thought they had the whole party organization to back them up, and without doubt the majority of active Sections endorsed their stand. But what was a little thing like party organization to the *Volkszeitung* and its coterie of directors, most of them “has beens” in the Socialist movement, who were perhaps Socialists in their younger days over in Germany, but who in America, by becoming storekeepers and shopkeepers, made peace with capitalist institutions and were Socialists in name only.

In those days when Daniel De Leon was not yet in the party and sweet peace was accordingly supposed to have reigned, the *Volkszeitung* began a campaign of slander against the Rosenberg-Busche faction. Sections in New York, which were entrusted by the party with the election of the National Executive Committee, were easily captured by the *Volkszeitung* Publishing Association, with the exception of the American Section. This American Section was American to the extent that the English language was the language spoken at its meetings. The members of the *Volkszeitung* Publishing Association were “it” in the German Section in New York, and the German Section had the majority of party members in New York, so that practically the election of a National Executive Committee was in the hands of this association, and not of the party.

The Sections outside of New York stood with Rosenberg for a while, but then came the coup d'état of '89. The *Volkszeitung* elected a new National Executive Committee, and the party's offices and papers were taken possession of by a well-organized physical raid. Busche complained that even his personal property was

confiscated by the *Volkszeitung* followers down to his best pair of trousers, which he kept in the office. Rosenberg and his faction moved their headquarters from New York, and there arose then what became known as the Rochester faction (Rochester Richtung). This faction was compelled to change the seat of its headquarters to Cincinnati and then to other cities, and every time headquarters were established in a new city the faction was rechristened accordingly—Rochester faction, Cincinnati faction, Cleveland faction, etc. The *Volkszeitung*, because of the frequent change of headquarters, called it “Die Richtung auf Reisen” (the travelling faction).

Rosenberg wrote circulars to all the Sections, and when he saw he was losing ground he wrote more circulars and letters. But the *Volkszeitung's* influence won out. Moreover, the Rosenberg-Busche faction was maneuvered into taking a stand which brought it into conflict with the German trade unions, which circumstance soon reduced the Rosenberg faction to a “Richtung auf Reisen” indeed. The *Volkszeitung*, instead of answering Rosenberg's arguments, which he submitted to the party members in his circulars, dubbed him “der schreibselige [blissful scribbler] Rosenberg.” To make your opponent look ridiculous is a sharp weapon; the *Volkszeitung* made good use of it.

# FROM DE LEON'S ENTRANCE TO THE FOUNDING OF THE S.T. & L.A. (1895).

De Leon at the Time of His Joining the Party—His First Campaign—Lucien Sanial and De Leon—Character of THE PEOPLE—Experiences Within the Craft Unions Proof of the Correctness of De Leon's Policies

**A** YEAR AFTER THE SPLIT in '89 Daniel De Leon became a member of the Socialist Labor Party. He was received with open arms by those who were in the movement because they were Socialists, as well as by those who were Socialists to be in the movement, no matter what the movement was, so long as it moved without running counter to their immediate interests. The honest element welcomed De Leon because they recognized that his great intellect in the service of the proletarian movement would result in the building up of a great Socialist organization. The storekeepers and saloonkeepers of course figured that the larger the movement the larger their opportunities. The honest element had the right instinct, the business element had not—which to their sorrow they soon discovered.

Daniel De Leon was then in the prime of his manhood, his countenance beaming with intelligence; every line in his face bespoke his great intellect, his fearlessness, his profound convictions, unquestionable sincerity, and lofty morals.

His hair was even then very gray; his beard white at the tips, but jet black at the roots; his gray-blue eyes penetratingly clear. Those who met Daniel De Leon could easily make up their minds upon two points at least: that De Leon was a man who had drunk deep at the fountain of knowledge and that he was in dead earnest. What a contrast between De Leon and most of those who up to that time had been strutting the stage of the labor movement as leaders! What a contrast between Daniel De Leon and the fellows who only possessed the gift to talk, with nothing to back up what they said; the fellows with the glib tongue, or those with the freakish scheme to solve the social question; or the variety who were Socialists for a while as a matter of style or fad, all dressing up for the meetings where they were to appear, wearing loud neckties and a sweet-sour smile to please everybody, like the clerk behind the bargain counter who wants to please all customers for his own good.

*Confidence and Enthusiasm Inspired by De Leon's First Campaign*

In 1890 a dignified campaign was conducted in New York city by the Socialist Labor Party and brought good results. Five thousand votes were cast for the mayoralty candidate, August Delebar. De Leon was an active participant in that campaign. Hall as well as street meetings were held, at many of which he was the principal speaker. Those who wanted a "party of propaganda" only were no longer listened to. De Leon's presence in the party councils changed the situation considerably, and his personal activity and participation in the campaign inspired the membership and created not only confidence but courage and enthusiasm.

Those who were the writers and speakers in the party previous to 1890 were not averse to making their appearance at Cooper Union when a mass meeting was held, where they could shine in all their glory, or to writing "Was Nun?" editorials in the *Volkszeitung*. But to speak from the rear end of a truck on street corners, insist on agitation meetings being held frequently and attend them—that was a horse of a different color. Here was Daniel De Leon, coming as he did from Columbia University, a lecturer on international law, who did not think it was below his dignity to speak at street corners; who did not offer apologies for the existence of the Socialist Labor Party, but who, on the contrary, made it a point to attend meetings; who spoke not like a man who gropes in the dark, but in a manner that showed his profound convictions based upon sound information.

Every Sunday morning during the campaign Daniel De Leon lectured at Pohlman's Hall on Second avenue, near 74th street, and all the members of the party who lived in that vicinity were there to listen to him. This place was the headquarters of the old 22nd Assembly District, where De Leon resided and of which district he was a candidate for the Assembly in that year. At that time the writer of these reminiscences was a youth of twenty summers and content with the distinction of having been elected on the committee to attend street meetings and distribute leaflets among the audiences.

At times, difficulties of a more or less serious nature were experienced at street meetings, but as a general rule De Leon's dignified appearance commanded respect even from the rough element on the upper East Side, to whom Tammany Hall was a sacred institution. Policemen at that time were not yet "educated" and were apt to take sides with disturbers.

Only on one occasion did I see an attempt made to disturb the meeting when De Leon was addressing the people. That was when someone hit the horse hitched to the

truck, the rear end of which was the speaker's rostrum. The horse started on a gallop down toward the East River, only a couple of hundred yards away. De Leon was not at all disconcerted by the interruption; he jumped off the truck, the horse was caught, brought back, unhitched, and De Leon continued his speech as though nothing had happened. There were, however, frequent attempts by hoodlums when other speakers were holding forth.

I had a friend who lived on East 81st street, whom I was eager to convert to Socialism. I had not succeeded and was grieved over it. A meeting was scheduled to take place on the corner of 81st street and First avenue, and I insisted upon my friend coming to listen to De Leon. But it turned out a double disappointment. De Leon spoke elsewhere that evening, and the substitute speaker, who did his best, met with some resentment. A huckster with a wagon-load of cabbages passed by, and the next minute a head of cabbage whizzed through the air, aimed evidently at the speaker. But alas!—the friend I had invited was abnormally tall, and the cabbage hit him in the back of the head. I never could persuade him to attend another meeting to hear De Leon or any other Socialist, were he ever so great.

### *THE PEOPLE Started—De Leon Succeeds Sanial as Editor—The Two Compared*

After the 1890 campaign the publication of a paper was decided upon, and THE PEOPLE was started as a Sunday paper, containing a whole lot of pages made up mostly of plate matter, and printed on the *Volkszeitung* press. The paper was a yard square and did not look like other papers. It was called a "mammoth paper" by the publishers, and they must have known. Lucien Sanial was the editor.

It seems that the intention was to make of it a paper that would reach and be attractive to all the members of the family. The *Workmen's Advocate* was consolidated with the new venture. To be sure, it was some improvement upon the *Workmen's Advocate*.

In 1891 Daniel De Leon was appointed national lecturer of the party and toured all states where the party had organizations, including the Pacific Coast. The result of this tour was the cementing of the affiliated Sections into a homogeneous national organization, the real beginning of the Socialist Labor Party as a factor in the labor movement. In the fall of the same year De Leon was the standard bearer of the party in New York state and received over 13,000 votes for governor.

THE PEOPLE was now a year old. Sanial resigned as editor to make place for De

Leon, who up to that time had been associate editor.

Sanial pleaded old age and bad eyesight as the reason for his resignation, but the real reason, no doubt, was that he recognized in De Leon the superior man and above all the systematic, tireless and steady worker, who was equal to the big job of making THE PEOPLE not a “family paper” filled with plate matter (which is at all times of questionable quality), but a paper filled with original matter—an organ of a great movement, a movement whose task it is to accomplish the greatest revolution which has yet taken place in the history of mankind.

With De Leon in the editorial chair THE PEOPLE became indeed a journal worthy of the great cause of international Socialism. Be it said here, however, in justice to Lucien Sanial, that what he did write while a member of the Socialist Labor Party was good, and that as a speaker and agitator he was a man of marked ability; but the difference between him and De Leon was great and all in favor of De Leon. Sanial was like many an artist or poet, who paints or writes poetry whenever he is in the proper mood—when he gets an inspiration. Sanial wrote many a page of educational matter, and at other times delivered lectures and speeches both instructive and enthusiastic. But to work as De Leon did, to be the one who continually forges new weapons and finds the strategic paths that lead to victory, one who gives his whole self to the movement—only a great man is capable of that. Sanial was not a great man.

Sanial was a number of times delegate of the Socialist Labor Party to the International Congress. Upon his return he made verbal reports to Section New York or perhaps wrote a letter to the party members, but to write a report as did De Leon in *Flashlights of the Amsterdam Congress*, wherein he takes the measure of the leaders in the Socialist movement in Europe and furnishes his constituents with a picture such as that pamphlet contains,—that again only a great man can accomplish.

Sanial liked to be regarded as the teacher, and told me (and I presume everybody else) that he was De Leon’s tutor while the latter was his associate editor. A few years later, at a mass meeting held in the Opera House at Syracuse following a convention of the Socialist Labor Party, De Leon and Sanial were the speakers. De Leon spoke first and delivered a rousing campaign speech. Sanial followed him. “I am not a man of eloquence,” Sanial said. “I am a man of facts and figures.”

The next time De Leon and Sanial spoke together at a meeting, Sanial spoke first and repeated the same declaration. This time De Leon spoke last, and had a chance to reply. He certainly did reply, explaining that a man who was not “a man of facts and figures” had no place in the Socialist movement. Sanial never repeated that phrase

again, at least not at a meeting where De Leon was present.

*National Campaign of 1892 Followed by Growth of Party and Its Organ*

In 1892, only two years after De Leon joined the party, a national campaign was entered upon. Delegates from the State Committees of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Connecticut met in the Labor Lyceum on East Fourth street in New York city, and nominated Simon Wing of Massachusetts and Charles H. Matchett of New York for President and Vice-President respectively. This was at a time when the People's Party had made its appearance and had made some mighty sweeps in a few Western states.

There were the old fusionists who wanted the party to join this new movement, as some of them did individually. Rappaport of Indianapolis, who was publishing a German weekly in that city, was one of that brand of Socialist; he went, paper and all, over to the People's Party.

Twenty-one thousand (21,000) votes were cast for the candidates of the Socialist Labor Party in its first national campaign. My first vote was cast for Wing and Matchett in 1892, and in the same year I was a candidate for alderman in the third ward of the city of Troy, N.Y., where after considerable roaming about I had settled down. It was there that I got more closely acquainted with Comrade De Leon. He spoke in Troy that campaign and gave me privately a lecture upon how agitation meetings should be conducted, and the many things which were neglected in connection with agitation meetings, including the meeting addressed by him in Troy. We had called a meeting, but not a piece of English literature was provided for it; in the advertising we had omitted the name of the party; the meeting room was adjoining a bar-room. De Leon criticized all this severely, and we mended our ways in Troy, as will be shown later.

After the campaign in 1892, Sections began to sprout up everywhere, and Daniel De Leon was hailed by all as the man to raise high the banner of Socialism in America. The German comrades admired him and were delighted to hear him talk German. De Leon on some occasions spoke German even at public meetings, although he complained that after a lengthy talk in German he had to rub his jaws with vaseline!

The English-speaking comrades saw in De Leon the man who understood American conditions; the Jewish workers of New York packed the halls whenever De Leon was announced as a speaker in their districts. But there were some even as early as '92 who did not like De Leon. Fellows who had unclean motives, who had schemes

to hatch out, saw in De Leon a man who would be a hindrance in their path. As De Leon used to say: “I have not always a good nose for crooks, but the crooks have a good nose for me.”

Following the first national campaign of the Socialist Labor Party, in which such satisfactory results were achieved, THE PEOPLE gained in circulation and prestige, and began to reach and be appreciated by workmen even in other English-speaking countries. The virile, clear-cut, logical and inimitable style of its editor differed as much from previous writings in Socialist papers in the English language (and for that matter in other languages) as a piano differs from the tom-tom of the savage.

There were a good many German papers published then, claiming to be Socialist—private ventures, or in some cases owned nominally by co-operative associations. Besides the *Volkszeitung* in New York there were *Das Tageblatt* in St. Louis and a paper with the same title in Philadelphia; there were alleged Socialist papers in German published in Cleveland, O., Buffalo, N.Y., Chicago, Ill., and even a little town like Belleville, Ill. (16,000 population at that time), sported an *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, edited by Hans Schwartz. In New York city there was also a Bohemian daily which flourishes to this very day, and plies the same trade as all pseudo-Socialist papers did then and do now, of exploiting the Socialist sentiment among the workers for their own private interest—always ready to bow to any old or new superstition so as not to offend some readers; or hiding some criminal act of the capitalists so as not to lose the good will of advertisers and the cash along with it.

To insert for hard cash gold-brick advertisements, and around election times to publish advertisements of candidates of the “boodle parties” (a term frequently used then), was the least among the wrong-doings of the publishers and editors of these papers. They invariably proclaimed themselves to be the official representatives of the working class; they invariably announced in heavy type: “Dedicated to the Interests of the Working Class” (“Den interessen des arbeitenden Volkes gewidmet”). They invariably were everything but the official representatives of the working class; they invariably contained matter that was dedicated to the interests of the work-shirking people; and when taken to task the editors and publishers invariably offered the excuse that the paper could not exist if it told all the truth.

Again the contrast between these publications and THE PEOPLE edited by Daniel De Leon. De Leon many times said that a Socialist paper that could not afford to tell the truth had no right to live. THE PEOPLE was only a small four-page paper, but every article it contained from De Leon’s pen was based upon facts, breathing that

enthusiasm that only a sound, scientific posture can bring forth. The everyday struggles of the working class were reported truthfully, the errors made by the workers fearlessly criticized, and the misleaders and betrayers of the proletariat so mercilessly lashed that it made them foam at the mouth with rage. The capitalist system was dissected with the knife of Marxian economics, and the capitalists and their hangers-on had a searchlight turned upon them that revealed them in their hideous nastiness. Last but not least, the road to victory, the road of uncompromising revolutionary tactics was clearly pointed out. “Truthful Recorder of Labor’s Struggles,” “Unflinching Advocate of Labor’s Rights,” “Intrepid Foe of Labor’s Oppressors”—these were the mottoes of THE PEOPLE.

Those for whom the pace set was too swift were asked to stay in the rear; a few did slink away. Still, there were those who thought that if the name Socialist were dropped, progress would be more rapid. To them De Leon replied that no historic movement can sail under false colors.

There were not many who openly opposed De Leon in the party. In New York, now and then, a fusionist to whom the S.L.P. seemed to follow a path too narrow would stand up for more “tolerance,” “broadness,” and fusion. Such was Charles Sotheran, who, being somewhat of a spellbinder, made a little fuss for a while. Sotheran, however ridiculous this may sound today, charged De Leon with wanting to establish tactics a la Berlin in the American Socialist movement.

This was by no means a ridiculous charge then, for in those days Wilhelm Liebknecht was at the helm of the Social Democracy in Germany. Up to the year 1892 there were only eleven Social Democrats in the Reichstag. In that year thirty-six were elected. The Socialist Labor Party of America collected \$5,000 within six weeks for the 1892 election campaign of the German Social Democracy. The party in Germany had not then voted for war budgets and the Haases\* and Scheidemanns were not yet heard of.

Sotheran had very few to stand for his Populistic fusion schemes, and he and his and the Socialist Labor Party parted company.

The Homestead strike took place in 1892. There were many other large strikes at that period, but the Homestead strike attracted more attention. The strikers were mainly the skilled English-speaking workmen in the Homestead steel mills. Hired Pinkerton thugs drove the Homestead strikers to desperate acts of violence. When

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\* Since this was written (in 1915) Haase has, with a score or so of other German Socialist leaders, broken with the conservative wing of the party and come out in opposition to the war.

additional thugs and strikebreakers were being brought to Homestead by boat, some of the strikers got possession of a cannon and trained it upon the boat. The captain lost his head, not metaphorically, but actually; his head was shot clean from his shoulders.

This gave the capitalists a chance to get in the militia, and six strikers were killed by the “boys in blue,” and many others wounded. It was at this time that the Anarchist, Alexander Berkman, went into the office of H.C. Frick, the steel magnate, with the design of performing an autopsy upon that gentleman first and letting him die afterwards. The autopsy did not turn out quite successful, however. Outside of a scare and a penknife scratch on the abdomen, Frick succeeded in postponing the autopsy to a time when it could be performed without any inconvenience to himself. Berkman, however, got twenty-two years in state prison, fourteen of which he served.

A private in the militia, whose name was Yates, thought that Berkman was right, and he gave vent to his thoughts and feelings. As a punishment for being so indiscreet he was hung up for several hours by the thumbs.

In 1893 the Socialist Labor Party made substantial gains at the polls, and by 1894 the vote had risen to 33,000. The party was becoming a factor on the political field; the correctness of the uncompromising “De Leon tactics” was demonstrated.

### *Boring from Within—The “Victory” at the 1894 A.F. of L. Convention*

On the economic field the Socialists were “boring from within,” De Leon in District 49, Knights of Labor, others, I among them, in the American Federation of Labor.

The joy among the borers from within the American Federation of Labor was great when in 1894 the independent political platform was adopted by a referendum vote of the federation. This platform contained ten planks; the tenth plank called for collective ownership of all means of production and distribution. The fact that the resolution containing the platform of ten planks was carried did by no means denote great progress of Socialist thought or class consciousness, for besides those who agitated for this political action resolution from the standpoint of Socialists, there were “labor leaders” who wanted to scare the old party politicians into granting them some recognition, mainly at the time when officers in the various departments of the Government were appointed and contracts for Government work given out. “Organized labor” needed more recognition, and the scare of an Independent Labor Party was to do the trick.

The rank and file of the trade unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor, including the cigar makers' and printers' unions voted for this independent political action platform containing the ten planks, but when the convention of the A.F. of L. took place at Denver, Colo., the ten planks were buried ten feet deep. At this convention Gompers was defeated by the Mine Workers' delegate, McBride, who was, if anything, more reactionary than Gompers.

I must admit that the ten planks had carried me off my feet somewhat. I really thought that after all Gompers and the rest of the labor leaders, so-called, were too harshly dealt with in *THE PEOPLE*, until the convention of '94 took place, when the scales dropped from my eyes, and I saw through the whole farce.

At that time a paper called *Labor* was published by a number of S.L.P. members in St. Louis. The Sections of the Socialist Labor Party were appealed to from St. Louis to subscribe for *Labor*, and as an inducement any Section that would get 120 subscribers could have a local edition of the paper with whatever name the Section pleased to give it. Many Sections thought this a good chance to reach the workers, as it was promised also by the management of *Labor* that the last page of the paper could be used for local matters at the rate of six cents an inch.

Over night there sprang up everywhere papers called *Labor*; there was Buffalo *Labor* and Troy *Labor*, Chicago *Labor* and Kalamazoo *Labor*, etc. Poor labor! As soon as a Section secured 120 twenty-five cent pieces it could sport its own local paper and local manager and editor. The paper, however, was mailed from St. Louis, though this was not generally known by the subscribers.

The party administration had no grounds on which to oppose the scheme at that time. De Leon and the National Executive Committee in New York knew that sooner or later the scheme, like all schemes, would spring a leak. And it did. The post office authorities, when they discovered the deception, compelled the publishers to mail the paper from the town where it was dated, so the paper had to be sent by express to the city where it was to appear as a local paper.

We in Troy, too, had our *Labor* experience. An old German comrade was elected editor and I was elected manager. I "managed" to get the 120 subscribers, and the local editor "edited" the inches on the last page, at six cents an inch. Sometimes we had ten inches of local editorial matter, sometimes more, depending upon the funds. As local manager, I had frequent consultations with the local editor relative to the number of inches we were to have that week. When I later related to De Leon all the tribulations of a local manager and local editor, and how on one occasion the local

editorial had to be omitted, because that week the local editor was too busy cutting sauerkraut, De Leon laughed heartily and chuckled as only those can picture who have seen and heard De Leon laugh and chuckle,—not a loud, boisterous, or hysterical laugh, but like the gurgling sound of a brooklet flowing swiftly down hill among the rocks.

Those who fathered the publication of *Labor* in St. Louis were the representatives of the pro-American Federation of Labor and reform element in the party—the Socialist Party of today in embryo.

There was at first no open hostility by *Labor* toward the course taken by the official party organ, THE PEOPLE; not because there was much sympathy with the uncompromising tactics which THE PEOPLE stood for, but rather because A. Hoehn and his associates in St. Louis did not dare openly to oppose the stand taken by Daniel De Leon, which the party had endorsed. Moreover, in 1894 Matthew Maguire was elected on the Socialist Labor Party ticket to the board of aldermen in Paterson, N.J. Maguire's election demonstrated that the lashing of labor fakers and the revolutionary attitude did not keep the Socialist Labor Party from growing.

The claim made by the publishers of *Labor* was that it was more suited for new recruits to the movement, that its contents were mental food easy to digest—admittedly some sort of mush-and-milk Socialist teaching that would offend nobody.

*Experiences with Samuel Gompers and the Craft Union Borers  
Prove De Leon Right*

Following the defeat of Gompers at the Denver (1894) convention of the A.F. of L., at which John Burns was a fraternal delegate from the British trade unions, there was a convention held in Albany, N.Y., of all A.F. of L. trade unions in New York state. At this convention I was a delegate, representing the Trades and Labor Council of Troy, N.Y. Samuel Gompers was there too, having come as a delegate from Local 144, International Cigar Makers' Union. There were seven or eight members of the Socialist Labor Party at that convention. Naturally the "political action" resolution was trotted out in the usual manner and defeated in the same way. There were, however, some things that I observed that should be related here.

Gompers, of course with much ado, posing, and attempts at eloquence, warned the delegates not to leave the path of "trade unionism pure and simple"; he told the delegates that in some of the European countries where the Socialist political

movement was stronger than the economic organization, the workers toiled longer hours and received starvation wages, etc., etc.

The noteworthy things were these: when the vote on this political action resolution was taken I noticed that a delegate from the Brewery Workers' local of Albany had voted against it. Not only did this brewers' local claim to be a Socialist union just as the unions in Germany were (Freie Deutsche Gewerkschaften), but the fellow was a member of Section Albany, Socialist Labor Party, and had only an hour before commended me for speaking in favor of that resolution. "Hascht gut gemacht" ("Well done"), he had said to me in pure Wuerttemberg German. He was one of the kind of "borers from within" whom Daniel De Leon held more in contempt, and rightly so, than those that were to be "bored." When I took him to task about his inconsistency he replied that the Brewery Workers would fare badly with the union label pasted on each barrel of beer to be patronized by organized labor if they should go straight forward to antagonize organized labor by voting for a Socialist political action resolution.

Gompers at the opening of the convention had been asked to deliver a speech, and he did. Among other things he said: "John Burns—there was a real good man." Now, John Burns in an interview published in the *New York World*, expressed his disapproval regarding the rejection of the independent political action platform by the delegates to the Denver convention, in a very emphatic manner—he characterized the delegates who defeated the ten-plank platform as jackasses. I had a copy of *The World* containing that interview in my pocket, having learned from Daniel De Leon as early as that how important documents are. When the political action resolution was debated I said that Mr. Gompers was right about John Burns, he was a good man without doubt; the best reason for believing him a good man I thought was his statement that the delegates who voted against independent political action were jackasses, and Mr. Gompers was one of the delegates.

Gompers did not like to have any one poke fun at him, and made much fuss about it. He asked the privilege of the floor, and consumed a good deal of time throwing fine bouquets at no one else but himself.

The convention adjourned sine die. As some delegates lingered in the hall, Gompers came over to me, and laying his hand on my shoulder he patronizingly spoke to me thus: "Katz, I was in the labor movement before you were born. You are on the wrong track. I was at one time a bit of a Socialist, not a member of the Socialist Labor Party, but worked with the Socialists in the shop. I associated with them. I

drank with them, in short, I was one of them. I studied the German language for six months so as to be able to read Marx's *Das Kapital*. [*Das Kapital* was not translated into English at the time Gompers had in mind.] I read it, but found there was nothing in it." He advised me to read some book called *Politische Zeitwinke*, but before parting he saw in one of my coat pockets a copy of THE PEOPLE and in the other a copy of *Labor*. "This paper," said Gompers, pointing to *Labor*, "is all right; we have no fault to find with *Labor*, but that other paper you have there is no good. Beware of the man who writes up that sheet."

That was enough for me. If I had ever had any doubt as to the correctness of De Leon's attitude toward labor leaders of the Gompers kind, Gompers removed it. Here was the generalissimo of "labor leaders" telling me that he read *Das Kapital* but "found nothing in it"; praising one Socialist paper and denouncing the other. To be sure, I dropped the paper praised by Gompers like a hot potato.

At this convention Gompers boastfully declared that he was willing to debate the question with any Socialist, but that it was time wasted to discuss Socialist theories while the delegates had far more important work to do. "Such debates," he said, "should take place outside of the convention hall." Soon thereafter Gompers was challenged to debate with Daniel De Leon. Gompers declined. He might have been too shallow mentally when, as he claimed, after reading *Das Kapital* he "found there was nothing in it," but he certainly had his wits all there when he preferred not to debate with the editor of "that sheet" he had so paternally warned me against.

### *Capitalist Lieutenants and Politicians in the Labor Unions—An Instance in Troy*

In 1895 the Socialist Labor Party made further gains at the polls, the vote rising to 45,000. The party organization gained in membership and gathered in its folds new recruits on all sides, in the face of the phenomenal growth of the Populist movement. The greatest event in the life of the American Socialist movement took place that year, namely the founding of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance.

But before telling all the important happenings concerning the S.T. and L.A. it is necessary to relate some of the doings in District 49, Knights of Labor, and also the inner workings of the A.F. of L. craft unions, their relationship with the employing class, and their inherent tendencies to fasten tighter the chains of wage slavery upon the workers, because of that relationship. It is necessary to show the futility of the "boring from within" policy in an organization started in many cases by the bosses

themselves, as was the case with many a local of the Brewery Workers; or the identity of fancied as well as real immediate material interest with the small manufacturer against the large companies, as in the case of the Cigar Makers. Besides these factors, the material interest of labor leaders whose numbers were legion must be understood.

Only by having a clear insight into all this, is it to be made plain that to bore from within under such conditions was like playing against loaded dice. Only by knowing how many soft jobs were made insecure, and the immediate material interest of numerous and varied groups affected can it be understood why the S.T. and L.A. met such fierce resistance and brought about within the Socialist Labor Party itself such a furious storm of opposition against De Leon and "De Leonism."

The following episode of those days throws a strong light upon these conditions. In the Trades and Labor Council at Troy, N.Y. (and the conditions elsewhere were the same as there), the presiding officer, one Michael Keough, a member of the Iron Moulders' Union, was as true a watch dog of capitalist interests as could be found anywhere. He was then working at his trade and weighed no more than 115 lbs.; today he is vice-president of the International Union of Moulders and Coremakers and weighs 230 lbs., a net gain in weight of 100 per cent., but that is a different story. Michael Keough in the chair, who would dare to introduce politics on the floor of the Council? How many times would his gavel come down with a crash when a Socialist had the floor!

Anno Domini 1895, Thomas F. Kennedy, a member of the Masons' and Bricklayers' Union of Troy, was nominated for sheriff of Rensselaer County on the Democratic ticket. Kennedy and Michael Keough were friends, and the election of Kennedy meant much to Keough, quite naturally. So up rose Mr. Keough, as president of the Trades and Labor Council, and thus addressed the meeting: "Fellow delegates, you know I am opposed to politics in the union. I shall never, never-r-r-r deviate from that principle, but—a union man, who has carried a union card ever since he served his apprenticeship, has been honored by the nomination for sheriff in this county." (Here Mr. Muldoon from the Cigar Makers', my co-delegate, Connolly from the Plumbers', Ryan from the Horseshoers', and others, applauded vociferously.) "Are you going to support a union man? His politics or the party that nominated him do not concern us," etc., etc.

The upshot of it all was that Kennedy's nomination was endorsed. But this is only part of the story; the worst was yet to come. This was then the result of several years of boring from within. The Cigar Makers' local of Troy, which body Mr. Muldoon and

I represented in the Trades Council, would protest, I threatened, and when the Cigar Makers met, the honest element won out. A resolution was adopted protesting against the endorsement of the Democratic nominee.

This resolution was published in the daily newspapers in Troy. But lo and behold! our victory was short-lived. The saloonkeepers who dispensed the “blue label” cigars over their bars were all in politics, and ninety-nine per cent. of them were of the same political faith as Mr. Kennedy. They bought and sold union cigars exclusively, because it was good policy to patronize “home industry” and incidentally use the union label cigar-box as proof positive that they stood for labor, for organized labor. Who, then, could blame these saloonkeepers and keepers of worse places than saloons when they came to the Cigar Makers’ headquarters, indignant over the ingratitude of these fellows? The word was passed around that unless the Cigar Makers publicly withdrew the resolution of protest not another union label cigar would they sell. A special meeting of the Cigar Makers’ local was called, and not only was the former action repudiated, but a notice was inserted in the daily papers stating that “the alleged resolution of protest against the endorsement of Kennedy by the Trades and Labor Council was never passed by the Cigar Makers’ union.”

The union label was used by the meanest of capitalist politicians within and without the International Cigar Makers’ Union to knock out all tendencies that threatened capitalist interests. Let it be borne in mind that this so-called International Cigar Makers’ Union was heralded by every labor “skate,” from Gompers down, as a model organization of a trade union pure and simple. (Some of the German comrades used to pronounce it “poor and simple.”) Let it also be borne in mind that in no other trade union were the borers from within so numerous as in this Cigar Makers’ Union.

Even in the early days of the Socialist and labor movement in Germany the cigar makers were more numerous in the movement than any other trade. When the Bismarck Exemption Law was passed against the Socialists in 1878, thousands of German Social Democrats were banished from the German empire and came to the United States. Cigar makers from Hamburg and Bremen were the largest proportion among the banished. Anyone who was caught giving out Socialist literature by the German police had to leave the country. The Social Democratic Party in Germany helped those who were without means to pay their way to America. Some who wanted to go to the United States and have a free passage distributed Socialist circulars in order to be arrested and shipped there at the expense of the party, pose as martyrs ever after, and finally become rabid anti-De Leonites.

At the time that Gompers with his lieutenants organized the various existing national trade unions into the American Federation of Labor (this was in 1881) the cigar makers referred to formed the Progressive Cigar Makers' union, which had locals in several large cities. Some of these locals were affiliated also with the Knights of Labor. In 1884 this Progressive Cigar Makers' Union was whipped into line by Adolph Strasser, the chief mogul of the International Cigar Makers' Union and Gompers's side-partner. The Progressives claimed a membership of ten thousand, hence the preponderance of borers from within in the Cigar Makers' Union.

Whether or not the membership of the old Progressive Cigar Makers' Union had the correct instinct of what an organization of workingmen should be is a question I cannot answer. It is quite certain, however, that whatever virtues they might have possessed were lost in that "model" of trade unions of which Gompers and Strasser were the founders, the only thing that remained of the revolutionary spirit being phrases, but no deeds excepting a donation to the Socialist political campaign fund and the display of red badges and the red flag at parades, picnics and funeral processions.

### *The "Label Agitation" Farce and De Leon's Attitude Toward It*

That De Leon knew the make-up of this element in Local Number 90, goes without saying. Number 90, of Cigar Makers', had been allowed at the time of the merging of the Progressives with the International to retain the name "Progressive" and was called "Progressive Cigar Makers' Union No. 90." But before the launching of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, De Leon was on friendly terms with many of the members of No. 90, some of whom were party members. Not a few called on De Leon in his office and paid him homage by bringing along some good "smokes,"—for De Leon loved a good smoke. In the measure that the developments in the movement assumed a clearer character and jarred the pure and simple notions of the borers from within, the number of cigars given to De Leon diminished. I remember how one of No. 90's label committee members was once telling De Leon the trouble that the cigar makers had in safeguarding their blue union label. De Leon, with seeming seriousness, told the fellow that it would be a great advantage to have a blue label not only on each box of cigars, but to paste a label or several of them on each cigar, so that it could be seen until the cigar was smoked up that it was a blue label, and leave an advertisement on the cigar butt for the union label in the bargain. At first the fellow, looking into De Leon's face which was as grave as if he was in

earnest, was baffled, until it dawned upon him that De Leon was having some fun at his expense. To be sure, that fellow brought no more Havanas to De Leon.

In this connection the activities of the “bored” and the “borers” in New York should be related. While in reality they took place a couple of years later it will help to make the picture complete to present them here. The several locals of cigar makers in New York were represented by delegates on what was known as a label committee. This committee had the agitation for the blue label in charge, and incidentally the spending of a large sum of money for this agitation. What this agitation consisted of we shall soon know. There were Locals No. 10 (also Progressive), No. 90, No. 141 (Bohemian), No. 144 and No. 213. The agitation conducted by this committee consisted in having its members appoint themselves to a day committee and a night committee, the day committee to agitate all day, the night committee in the evening after the working hours. The day committee’s agitational work consisted in visiting places where cigars were sold and urging the proprietors to sell cigars with the blue union label only. For this work the members of the day committee received \$3 a day and incidentals. The places where cigars were sold were saloons, and the argument that carries most weight and conviction in a saloon is the number of rounds of drinks bought or “set up” for “the boys.” In this work the day committee was not in the least deficient, as they could hold up their end against all comers.

The night committee performed this same kind of agitation for \$1 a night, or in other words spent a dollar for twenty schooners of beer. The day committee would make the following report:

On the first of April we visited Murphy’s saloon; we bought seven rounds of drinks, fifty cents a round. Then we asked Mr. Murphy to patronize manufacturers of union label cigars; we had three more rounds of drinks, and Mr. Murphy promised to comply with our request.

Six months thereafter the committee made the identical report about the identical saloon, the only thing that varied being the number of rounds of drinks ordered. The night committee’s reports were more brief, as the amount of label agitation was limited to \$1 a night for each member.

Besides these committees there was the job of secretary with \$18 a week, so that the blue label agitation could be conducted systematically. “Systematically” it was conducted, and no mistake.

In this label committee the borers were boring with might and main, so much so

that they got nearly a majority in the committee. When I came to New York and deposited my union card with Local 141 and was elected a delegate to the label committee there was much joy among the borers and gloom among the bored. Being one of those, however, who still furnished a smoke or two to De Leon, I had a consultation with him and asked his advice as to how we Socialists should proceed when we had a majority in the label committee. De Leon's advice was to abolish the day committee and the night committee, and instead of visiting saloons to have committees to visit all unions and other workingmen's organizations and agitate for the union label, and by appealing to the workingmen's solidarity, arouse them to class consciousness; in short, make speeches for Socialist principles.

I thought this a splendid idea and went straight ahead with the proposal to the principal borer. This was one Negendank; no small figure was he among No. 90's notables. True, Negendank no longer gave cigars to De Leon, which was a very bad sign; but he did occasionally play a game of chess with De Leon at the Workmen's Educational Association rooms. Negendank was a good player at chess, but not quite as good as De Leon. Because of the long time it took him to make a move while playing chess De Leon turned his name about and called him Gedankenman. Negendank was also in the "prehistoric" days of the Socialist Labor Party editor of its German organ, *Der Sozialist*.

Negendank, when he heard the proposal to abolish these label committee trips to saloons and instead to have committees visit the unions, threw up his hands in horror. "It could not be done," he protested. "It never was done." And then he added—I am quoting him verbally: "Unsinn, verpulvert muss das Geld ja doch werden." ("Nonsense; the money has to be blown in anyway.") Negendank and I could not agree, and I withdrew from the label committee.

# FROM THE FOUNDING OF S.T. & L.A. TO S.L.P. SPLIT, 1899

De Leon's Fight for the Alliance—Steady Advance of the Party—Nefarious Work of the Disrupters—Debs Movement in the West—*Volkszeitung's* Fruitless “Coup D'état”; S.L.P. Wins in Court

THE KNIGHTS OF LABOR, which at the height of its strength had sent cold chills down the spine of the class of exploiters, was on the wane. Henchmen of the capitalist class were running the once promising organization, and they were running it into the ground at a rapid pace. Daniel De Leon undertook the task of redeeming the organization. As a delegate of Mixed Assembly 1563 he entered the central body of the Knights of Labor, District Assembly 49, in July, 1891.

## *Attempt to Cleanse Knights of Labor*

De Leon, too, bored from within. His boring made the labor fakers in District Assembly 49 dance a dance they had never danced before. Tammany heelers, Republican political crooks, and Populist wind jammers who were formerly at one another's throat were driven into one camp. The lines were drawn between Socialists and reactionists of all shades. Many of the delegates were won over by De Leon, some of them joined the Socialist Labor Party. So effective was this boring by De Leon and those who stood with him that at the general assembly of the order, General Master Workman Terrence V. Powderly was defeated for that office and James R. Sovereign elected in his stead.

Sovereign was flesh of the flesh and bone of the bone of Powderly. The downfall of Powderly brought about chiefly by the Socialists under De Leon's generalship was meant to be a lesson to Sovereign. Sovereign did not heed the lesson. The same corrupt practices of Powderly and his satellites were repeated by Sovereign and his gang. In 1894 the convention of the Knights of Labor, or the general assembly, as it was called, was held in New Orleans. Sovereign was taken to task by De Leon and his Socialist co-delegates, and another chance was given him upon his promise to mend his ways. Sovereign and the general officers of the order gave a pledge to the Socialist delegates to let them name the editor of the official journal of the Knights of Labor. Sovereign broke his pledge. He knew, no doubt, that with the journal in the hands of

the Socialists there would be little chance for crooked acts.

In District Assembly 49 the reactionists were whipped completely. William L. Brower was elected district master workman by a large majority, but not without a lively combat. It was mainly the tireless work of De Leon whose activity and most strenuous efforts brought in newly organized locals. In those days there was hardly a night that De Leon was not delivering a lecture, attending meetings of the party organization, local assembly, district assembly, committee meetings, campaign work,—all this in addition to his writing as the editor of THE PEOPLE.

### *Boring Stopped; S.T. & L.A. Started*

By this time another general assembly was to be held at Washington, D.C. This was in 1895. Sovereign and his clique knew that their heads would fall into the basket. De Leon, heading the delegation of District Assembly 49, together with the honest elements in the order, could easily have got the majority. Accordingly, the general assembly at Washington had to be packed, an easy task for those having the mileage fund, the books, and the whole machinery of the organization in their hands. The general assembly was packed, to be sure. With the assistance of men like one E. Kurzenknabe, an infamous, characterless labor faker, the Sovereign clique remained in power. This ended De Leon's boring from within.

On December 6, 1895, a delegation from District 49, Knights of Labor, met in conjunction with the general executive board of the Central Labor Federation of New York and constituted the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance.

This bold step on the part of the Socialists headed by Daniel De Leon, created consternation in the ranks of the dishonest trade union leaders. "Opposition union," they cried in chorus. That the A.F. of L. was an opposition union against the Knights of Labor the shouters of "opposition union" evidently had forgotten. Be it said here to the glory of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance that its most vehement adversaries at the time of its birth were the most despicable among labor's misleaders. Men like Kurzenknabe of the Brewers', H. Weissmann of the Bakers', and Harry White of the Garment Workers' were the loudest in their denunciations. All three were eventually found out by their own constituents.

Weissmann got to be a lawyer and became the attorney for the association of boss bakers. In that capacity he fought the unions of bakery workers whose head officer he had formerly been. To mention H. Weissmann's name after that among the bakery workers was like mentioning the name of Benedict Arnold among school children

who had just received their lesson about the American Revolution. Harry White was found out somewhat later, but found out just the same. He was caught red-handed carrying on a traffic in the Garment Workers' union label and kicked out of that union. He cared little, as he had made his "pile" before his practices were discovered.

### *Great Significance of the Alliance*

The Alliance started life with a membership of about 15,000, mostly of local unions in New York and vicinity. Soon, however, the organization spread out over the country. The textile workers of Rhode Island joined the S.T. & L.A. in large numbers; the shoe workers of Brooklyn had locals numbering 800 to 900 members. Locals were organized in many of the industrial centers. The leaders of the "pure and simple" trade unions had indeed good cause to fear the S.T. & L.A.

The founding of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance was the first recognition and application of the principle of strategy in the Socialist and labor movement in the world. It was declared that without the organization of the workers into a class conscious revolutionary body on the industrial field, Socialism would remain but an aspiration. It was "charged" that the idea of organizing the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance originated in De Leon's head. It did. That "charge," at least, was true. So much the better for De Leon. Recent developments across the Atlantic have demonstrated beyond doubt the impotence of the pure and simple political movement.

### *Credit Due Daniel De Leon's Work*

To Marx belongs the discovery of the economic interpretation of history and the scientific application of the theory of value. To De Leon belongs the discovery of the necessity of forming the industrial battalions that can "take and hold" the wealth power now in possession of the capitalist class.

True, at the time of founding the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance not all the functions of the revolutionary Socialist economic organization were recognized. That the industrial union was to be the Republic of Labor in embryo was seen only after the S.T. & L.A. ship had approached closer to the shores of the Socialist goal.

Columbus, who set out to discover a new and shorter route to India, discovered a new continent. Columbus sailed west, his conviction being that, the world being round, by sailing west he must strike land. The distance and all else was of much less moment. Columbus erred in regard to distance and other matters, but his central and

principal claim was correctly based upon scientific ground.

So it was with De Leon. The central and principal point in organizing the S.T. & L.A. was the absolute necessity of arraying the economic forces of labor alongside the revolutionary political party, for the realization of Socialism. Whether De Leon then regarded the economic task greater, or not as great as the political, is a matter of secondary importance. As Columbus overcame all obstacles, from the procuring of ships to the mutiny of his own men, so did De Leon overcome seemingly insurmountable obstacles to bring the working class upon the road that leads to victory.

At the time of the birth of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance the Socialist Labor Party had grown to be a factor to be reckoned with. Over two hundred Sections were then in existence. *THE PEOPLE* made more gains in circulation, and there was not a labor leader "pure and simple" or impure and simple who did not know and fear that little paper published at 184 William street, New York. Within the five years that De Leon had been a member of the Socialist Labor Party a transformation had taken place in the movement. It was no mushroom growth, but a succession of steady gains made in all directions and in many ways. There was growth not only in numbers, but the warm breath of social revolution could be felt in the atmosphere wherever *THE PEOPLE* was circulated, wherever the Socialist Labor Party gained a foothold.

The first real national convention (though nominally called the ninth annual convention) of the Socialist Labor Party was held in 1896, at Grand Central Palace, New York city. It was the first real convention of the party not only because all industrial centers were represented, but mainly because it was a convention representing the membership. At former conventions, including the one held in the city of Chicago in 1893, many of the Sections of the party had been represented by proxy delegates, who in all cases represented their own views or the views of the membership in their respective localities, and not the views of the membership for which they bore credentials. At the Chicago (1893) convention, for instance, Section Troy, N.Y., was represented by one Suesskind, a member of Section Chicago. Why we in Troy selected Suesskind I do not know. No member in Troy knew him or any other member whose name was sent to us as being willing to serve as a proxy delegate. Perhaps we in Troy selected Suesskind (literally "sweet child") because his name sounded so sweet, though we found later that he was not quite as sweet as his name.

The system of proxy delegates had been abolished when the 1896 convention gathered. Twelve states were represented by about ninety delegates.

*1896 Convention Takes Up Union Question*

The question of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance was the most important question the convention had to deal with. On the third day of the convention a delegation of the S.T. & L.A. was given the floor. Hugo Vogt was its spokesman. Vogt read a well-prepared speech, setting forth the reasons for the organization of the Alliance. Whatever Vogt became afterward, at that time he was De Leon's co-worker and no one stood higher in De Leon's esteem and confidence than Hugo Vogt, editor of the S.L.P. German organ. After Vogt's speech De Leon introduced the following resolution:

Whereas, Both the A.F. of L. and the K. of L., or what is left of them, have fallen hopelessly into the hands of dishonest and ignorant leaders;

Whereas, These bodies have taken shape as the buffers for capitalism, against whom every intelligent effort of the working class for emancipation has hitherto gone to pieces;

Whereas, The policy of 'propitiating' the leaders of these organizations has been tried long enough by the progressive movement, and is to a great extent responsible for the power which these leaders have wielded in the protection of capitalism and the selling out of the workers;

Whereas, No organization of labor can accomplish anything for the workers that does not proceed from the principle that an irrepressible conflict rages between the capitalist and the working class, a conflict that can be settled only by the total overthrow of the former and the establishment of the Socialist Commonwealth; and

Whereas, This conflict is essentially a political one, needing the combined political and economic efforts of the working class; therefore be it

Resolved, That we hail with unqualified joy the formation of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance as a giant stride toward throwing off the yoke of wage slavery and of the robber class of capitalists. We call upon the Socialists of the land to carry the revolutionary spirit of the S.T. & L.A. into all the organizations of the workers, and thus consolidate and concentrate the proletariat of America in one irresistible class-conscious army, equipped both with the shield of the economic organization and the sword of the Socialist Labor Party ballot.

The moving of this resolution for adoption brought the matter before the house. Many delegates took part in the debate. Sometimes the enemies of De Leon went about with the slander that De Leon was a party boss, insinuating that he was some kind of Richard Croker, who whipped everybody into line. If they had accused De

Leon of everything under the sun, nothing could have been further from the truth than this slanderous statement. Bosses of parties hold sway because of the jobs they have to distribute. De Leon had none to bestow upon those who stood with him—quite the opposite, it was he whose election to the editorship of THE PEOPLE was in the hands of the assembled delegates.

*De Leon's Logic Wins for S.T. & L.A.*

Nothing would have disgusted De Leon more than to have had a lot of manikins about him who would jump at his bidding. Whatever De Leon proposed in the party he gave his reasons for. It was his sword of logic that won out—a mightier weapon, no doubt, than a mere whip, and steel that could be crossed only with steel—a broomstick would not do.

It was De Leon's sword of logic that brought about the adoption of the above resolution by an overwhelming majority. The reformists were at this convention. The A.F. of L. boosters were there: G.A. Hoehn, of St. Louis; Erasmus Pellenz, of Syracuse, whom in those days they called "silver-tongued orator"; Frank Sieverman, the bosom friend of John Tobin of the Shoeworkers', and others. They came prepared to cross swords with De Leon, with their speeches rehearsed and committed to memory. When the time came they found that theirs were not swords but broomsticks.

And how De Leon did wield his sword of logic at that convention! Never before or since have I seen him look more determined, or heard him speak with greater fervor than at the 1896 convention. De Leon's style of speaking was not a finely spun chain of epigrammatical phrases, nor the bubbling enthusiasm of impulsiveness, and least of all an appeal to sentiment brought to a climax by dramatic posing. I can close my eyes and see De Leon as he appeared then, pleading the cause of the S.T. & L.A. I can recollect but not describe his gestures, his tone of voice, and the effect it had upon the delegates.

De Leon spoke at length, but his was not the talk of a long-winded speaker who speaks against time, who when his memory fails him will fall back upon "As I said before," and begin his story all over again. De Leon's words were like hammer blows from the arm of a giant. Facts and logical deductions from facts, clothed in language which was incisive and comprehensive, were uttered in a manner so convincing that De Leon's opponents were completely routed. De Leon's resolution was adopted by a vote of 71 in favor and six against.

By adopting De Leon's S.T. & L.A. resolution the Socialist Labor Party took a long step forward. The 1896 convention was the beginning of a new epoch in the Socialist movement. At that convention Charles H. Matchett was nominated for President, and Matthew Maguire for Vice-President. In the spring of 1896 Maguire had been reelected to the board of aldermen in Paterson, N.J., with an increased majority.

*De Leon for Congress in the Ninth*

In the same year Daniel De Leon ran for Congress in the ninth Congressional district of New York. The campaign in that district was the first of its kind in the history of the Socialist movement in America. De Leon received 4,300 votes, or rather, that many votes were counted by the Tammany and Republican election officers. This vote was not a complimentary vote for De Leon, it was a vote cast to send a revolutionist to Congress. The workingmen in the district were aroused as workingmen were never aroused before or since in a political campaign.

New York city, that great proletarian center, had seen many lively skirmishes between the forces of capital and labor, but the revolutionary atmosphere had never been warmer than during the campaign of 1896 in the ninth Congressional district. Thousands gathered at the street corners where De Leon spoke, and his words were listened to with the closest attention. The message that De Leon brought to the men and women in that district, who were among the lowest paid, most exploited workers in the city, was the message of the Socialist union that was to deliver them from wage slavery, the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance.

That was the issue in the De Leon campaign—the revolutionary spark imbedded in the breast of every wage slave in that district was fanned into flame. If there was any conspiracy on the part of capitalists and their politicians to break up this movement of which De Leon was the champion (and many are the reasons to believe that there was such a conspiracy), it must have started in that year. That the capitalist politicians were much afraid of what might come from such a movement is certain. As a matter of fact, opposition of any consequence within the Socialist Labor Party to its revolutionary position dates back to that very year and to that very district. Whether there was actual collusion between certain prominent Socialists and the capitalist politicians, who can say? Perhaps it was only the true instinct of some “intellectuals” in the Socialist movement, who could feel that in a movement such as the Socialist Labor Party stood for there would be no possibilities for big salaries, ten-story

buildings, and a good time in general, that made them rise against De Leon's "dictatorship," as they pleased to call De Leon's insistence that a man should not be a labor faker at one corner of his mouth and claim to be a Socialist at the other corner.

*Disrupters Not Satisfied by Clean Vote*

The campaign in the ninth Congressional district with De Leon as the candidate showed the power that was latent in the Alliance. Four thousand, three hundred votes should have satisfied even those who were after votes only. But that was not the point. What good are such votes that bring only more struggles and no revenue? Besides, a revolutionary movement makes one so insecure in one's possessions! So those who were "leading Socialists" in the party, officials of the pure and simple unions, and speculators in real estate or other schemes, and petty lawyers whose activities included the drafting of agreements between sweatshop owners of New York's East Side and their slaves, at so many dollars an agreement, could not be expected to sit idly by and let a "dictator" like De Leon, a "tyrant," a "pope," etc., etc., start a movement that would deprive such gentry of their jobs and "contract" fees which amounted to great sums. Every cockroach contractor in a tailoring shop had an agreement with his employes, which was not worth the paper it was written on to the employes, but which protected the bosses against strikes, at least for the period of a season.

These are not unsubstantiated assertions. We may look today at the men who were the loudest protestors against De Leon's "dictatorship": Abraham Cahan of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, whose income out of the labor movement exceeds that of Gompers and some of his lieutenants besides. Louis Miller, formerly of the Jewish paper, *Wahrheit*, who recently started another daily paper on the East Side, is another example. Miller's real estate speculations were very successful—no wonder De Leon's attitude was not cherished by him! Last, but not least, there is Morris Hillquit, a lawyer and now also, a "Boersianer," or speculator in Wall Street. Hillquit's "original accumulation" was derived from fees in writing the agreements mentioned above. Original accumulations and the revolutionary Socialist movement do not go hand in hand, hence the starting of the opposition on the East Side at the time when De Leon as a candidate of the Socialist Labor Party for Congress polled such a large vote.

*Bryan Populist Storm Let Loose*

While De Leon was battling in the ninth Congressional district, into which campaign he had thrown his great energy and personality, there was a political

upheaval taking place throughout the land that was unprecedented in the history of American political life. William Jennings Bryan, “the peerless orator” from Nebraska, had risen to leadership in the Democratic Party. Grover Cleveland, who was elected President of the United States at the 1892 election, lost his Democratic majority in the House in the election of 1894. The industrial panic which began in 1893 was blamed on the Democratic administration. Factories were shut down, and great numbers of workers were unemployed and destitute. Soup houses were opened in all large cities instead of the “good times” promised by the Democratic politicians. Farm products were lower in price than for years previous; a bushel of wheat sold for fifty cents and less. (This latter fact, by the way, was the material basis of the existence of the People’s Party.) The small farmers had to mortgage their farms, their farm products did not yield the price to assure their existence and make small farming possible.

When the Democratic Party met in convention at Chicago, Bryan unsaddled the old leaders, and proposed a platform that was to solve the economic problem. Free coinage of silver, at the ratio of sixteen ounces of silver for every ounce of gold coined, was to do the trick. This was the sum and substance of the Chicago Democratic platform proposed by Bryan. The free coinage of silver was to increase the circulation; an increased money circulation would bring a boom in business. That was the lure to get the workers’ votes. The farmers, with cheaper money, would get a dollar for a bushel of wheat instead of fifty cents, and, besides, could pay off the mortgages contracted when money was dear with money cheapened.

### *Many Workingmen Sadly Humbugged*

Millions of people were made to believe that silver could by law be given a fixed and determined value as compared with gold, regardless of the amount of crystallized social labor power it contained. Bryan’s speech at the Chicago convention had the effect upon “suffering humanity” desired by that wily politician. It seemed to the masses of starving workers like actual relief; to the farmers it looked like the rising of clouds heavy with rain after a long period of exceedingly dry weather. Bryan was hailed by the small farmers, who were the backbone of the People’s Party, as the Israelite, Joseph, was hailed by the Egyptians of old.

“You shall not crucify mankind upon a cross of gold,” was one of Bryan’s catch-phrases. And it did work like a charm with the species of which it is said that there is one born every minute. There were many poor people who believed that the proposed

increased money circulation, or larger percentage of silver dollars, would automatically put so many silver dollars into their pockets. “Sixteen to one” was the topic everywhere, for Bryan had declared and kept on declaring in every speech he made, that the “16 to 1” silver question was “the paramount issue of the campaign.”

When the Socialist speakers were delivering their orations on street corners, as we did in Troy and Albany, it was best when criticizing Bryan and his party, to pronounce Bryan’s name very short. Whoever might try to say “William Jennings Bryan” and be long in doing it was sure to provoke a cheer for the Nebraskan.

The Populist movement caved in like an empty shell, and fell into the lap of Dame Democracy. It did not disappear—it vanished. Some of the People’s Party leaders had made pretensions of being Socialistically inclined. Their Socialistic inclinations were reflected in the People’s Party demands that the railroads should be owned by the Government, so as to have cheaper shipping facilities for the small farmers; was this not Socialism?

Bryan, though defeated on election day, was the most popular candidate. His defeat was brought about by the pressure of the superior economic power of the industrial capitalists as against the power of the middle class backed up by the silver mine barons. Workingmen in the industrial centers were intimidated into voting against Bryan by threats of shutting down mills and factories. Troy was the only city in New York state that gave Bryan a majority over McKinley. When Bryan spoke at Albany on the large square near the state capitol, 20,000 came to hear him. I was there too, but little could I see or hear of Bryan, so dense was the mass assembled there. While I did not bear Bryan I did hear the utterances of those standing near me, venturing their opinion of Bryan and his greatness. Now and then a turn of the breeze would bring a portion of a sentence spoken by Bryan to where I stood: “. . . to labor”; “paramount issue. . .”; “increased per capita.” Every time such a fragment of Bryan’s stereotyped phrases reached the place where I stood, those about me would start a murderous din of applause. Though they could not hear a single coherent sentence the comment was just as sure to follow every such fragment of one of Bryan’s phrases as the applause: “Isn’t he the greatest speaker!!”—“Isn’t that wonderful!!” etc., etc.

### *Way Cleared for Socialist Labor Party*

The silver lining in this cloud of the “Bryan storm” was that when it passed it had cleared the atmosphere somewhat, since the Populist movement disintegrated, and thus at least one obstacle was cleared out of the way of the onward march of the

Socialist Labor Party.

De Leon's activity in the campaign of 1896 was not limited to the precincts of the ninth Congressional district of New York. He toured the country, delivering speeches and lectures in many cities, East and West.

On a previous page it was related how De Leon severely criticized our shortcomings in arranging agitation meetings on the occasion of his visit to Troy when he ran for governor in 1891, and how we in Troy mended our ways. On his way back to New York in 1896 De Leon was booked to speak in Troy again. This time a meeting was arranged that gave no room for criticism; in fact, De Leon was pleasantly surprised to find that Troy had made such progress. Instead of holding the meeting at Apollo Hall, the headquarters of the German Turn-Verein, as was previously done, with a keg of beer on tap adjoining the meeting hall, the auditorium of the City Hall, having a seating capacity of about one thousand persons, was hired. Keir Hardie, M.P., the leader of the Independent Labor Party of Great Britain, had also spoken in this hall the year before.

Keir Hardie, shortly after his election to Parliament, was engaged by Chicago labor unions to deliver a series of lectures. The Socialist Labor Party invited Hardie to speak under its auspices on his way back from Chicago. Keir Hardie was accompanied by Frank Smith, an ex-Salvation Army colonel, a very clever speaker, but wholly sentimental, who soon afterward again became a Salvationist. Hardie's meeting in Troy had been attended by about five hundred people; we were determined to have even a larger audience for De Leon.

### *An Example of Self-Discipline*

A parade was proposed. The old timers objected to this because we could not get, they said, more than a corporal's guard to turn out. Still the parade was decided upon, conditionally however,—it was to take place provided one hundred comrades and sympathizers of the movement would give their written promise to join the march. We got the hundred sure enough to sign, and they turned out, too, to a man. They were not all from Troy, of course, but from all the vicinity, which took in the city of Albany to the south, and Watervliet, Green Island, Cohoes, and Lansingburg to the south and west; even the village of Sand Lake was represented,—but the hundred were there; every man who signed kept his promise and answered the roll call on the night when De Leon was in town.

This is not funny, or a matter of little importance, for it demonstrated the feeling

of comradeship that prevailed, and the conscientious carrying into effect of a self-imposed obligation. One hundred men in line under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party in a city like Troy at the time when people were half crazed with the Bryan "16 to 1" mania, was indeed a sign that the Socialist Labor Party was an organization that brought conviction to its members and sympathizers. De Leon himself made the number a hundred and one. Jacob Alexander of Albany brought with him the members of a band to which he belonged, and though they were only four in number, our parade headed by them created a healthy sensation in Troy and vicinity. The following account of the meeting and parade appeared in THE PEOPLE in October, 1896:

*"Stupefying Fakers and Politicians"*

Troy, October 16.—The Socialist Labor Party threw this evening a strong breath of fresh and purifying air into this city, that reeks with the corruption of politicians and fakers. It held a parade and a mass meeting. The parade was the first ever held here by the Socialists. It was headed by a good brass band and a banner bearing a large arm and hammer. Besides that there was one bearing the names of the Presidential nominees, Matchett and Maguire, and several others, one of which read, "Neither gold bugs nor silver bugs; down with all humbugs." The paraders illuminated their own path with Greek candles and marched through the most populous sections of the city, calling considerable attention and stupefying both fakers and politicians. It took a large crowd with it to the City Hall, where another large crowd had already gathered. Daniel De Leon was the speaker. The meeting was twice as large as Keir Hardie's; it was the largest Socialist gathering Troy has ever seen. The great crowd listened attentively and broke forth into frequent applause. The meeting adjourned with three cheers for Matchett and Maguire, and three rousing ones in addition for the Social Revolution.

*Opposition's Poisonous Work*

The vote of the Socialist Labor Party in 1896 was 36,564, a gain over the Presidential election of 1892, but a loss in comparison with the vote of 1895. As already stated, the People's Party was annihilated. Bryan's endorsement by that party showed the flimsiness of its structure. When the Socialist Labor Party emerged from that political cyclone with 36,000 votes it denoted the quality of the material that the party was made of, and could not be construed as retrogression.

The "opposition" found in this reduced vote an opportunity sought, namely to

claim that the party's tactics were all wrong, that the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance would ruin the party. The only spot where the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance was the issue was the ninth Congressional district, and in that district the Socialist Labor Party made phenomenal gains; elsewhere the question of the Alliance did not penetrate to the surface, so thick was the crust of the Bryan "free silver" demagogism. For those who sought a pretext to combat the revolutionary tactics of the Socialist Labor Party the pretext was furnished anyhow.

In 1897 I left Troy, to live in New York. Here the "opposition" was at work outside and inside of the Socialist Labor Party, aye, outside and inside of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. The struggle between progress and reaction was on. As long as the attitude of the party was only expressed in revolutionary sentences, however terse, De Leon was spoken of as Professor De Leon (though De Leon requested everyone not to use that title). When the time came, as it did after the organization of the Alliance, when it was no longer a question of revolutionary talk but one of action—the concrete thing, not abstract theory—many of those who had spoken of De Leon as the learned professor began to parrot the slanders of the venal Weissmanns and Kurzenknabes.

The *Volkszeitung* supported the party's adopted stand, but in a half-hearted manner, and on the quiet its editors and reporters, of whom there was more than a bushel, were siding in with the opposition. Some pure and simple union advertising had already been lost, not to speak of the donations to the *Volkszeitung*, for there were many of these so-called progressive unions that donated a sum either to the party or to the *Volkszeitung* Conference, an organization of delegates from various unions and benefit societies gotten up for the special purpose of keeping the *Volkszeitung* alive. Such a donation gave the donating "progressive union" absolution for sins committed and sins to be committed against the Socialist movement.

### *"Trooble" vs. the Spring Sunshine*

Some of the officials of the unions that joined the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance were bribed with promises of good jobs if they would turn against the Alliance. Ernest Bohm, the first general secretary of the S.T. & L.A., turned against the organization, and as a reward was provided with a little income in the Central Labor Union—was put on the pension list, as it were, and is the recording secretary of that body to this day.

Many of the old German comrades were visited in their homes by self-constituted

committees and told that the party was in “danger”; that after all it was the German Socialists who had built the party and now the party must be “saved” by them; that in Germany the Social Democratic Party did not meddle in the affairs of unions; that De Leon, not being a German, did not understand scientific Socialism anyhow; that the party was being run high-handedly; the vote was getting smaller—in short, the poison of dissension was being injected by unseen hands. Many of the honest “alte Genossen” (old German comrades) resented the slanders—did they not see and hear De Leon speak and sometimes in German, too? No, they could not believe that De Leon was not all right. But then came the last card of the fellows who worked in the dark: “Don’t you see that the Alliance means opposition unions? You are a carpenter; tomorrow they may start a carpenters’ alliance; what will you do then—lose your job, fight with your walking delegate?” “No, no, not that; I don’t want no ‘trooble’ with the union or the walking delegate.” Then the members thus worked upon would come to the meetings of the assembly district organizations and register a kick against the party policy and against De Leon who is continually looking for “trooble.”

This “trooble” became quite a joke. In one of the uptown assembly districts there was an old German comrade whose name was Von Ellinger. He had a long, red beard which he kept nicely brushed and shined. Von Ellinger, at one of the meetings where De Leon was present, took part in the discussion upon party tactics, and made the statement that De Leon was all wrong, always taking a stand that meant “trooble.” “Why,” said he, “Socialism will not come if you make nothing but trooble; der Sozialismus muss kommen wie die Fruehlingsonne.” (Socialism must come like the spring sunshine.) De Leon ever after called Von Ellinger, “Genosse Fruehlingsonne.”

This nicknaming of some of the oppositionists was made much of by them, and sometimes furnished them with ammunition which they otherwise would have been lacking. To call Morris Hillquit by his real name, Moses Hilkwitz, was also taken ill by some. A little light thrown upon this subject may be in place.

De Leon did not partake of any stimulants; only on very rare occasions would he join some friends in drinking a glass of Wuerzburger. But to stand the tremendous strain which he stood for a quarter of a century, in a movement the vanguard of the forces of the social revolution, bound as a matter of course to be not a bed of roses but a path every inch full of struggle, or in the words of the “alte Genossen,” full of “trooble,” there had to be something in De Leon’s life which kept him young in spirit at sixty. That something was humor. De Leon had to have his dose of mirth every day, a good hearty laugh, or else he would have succumbed much earlier than he did. De

Leon generally found a humorous side to serious matters and had his health-giving laugh.

*Turbulence Centered in New York*

The period between the 1896 convention and the raid of the oppositionists upon the party's national headquarters in July, 1899, was a most turbulent one. There was "trouble" galore. New York city was the place where the friction between the opposing forces made the sparks fly. The National Executive Committee was still being elected by Section New York, as was the case in 1899. The Socialist Labor Party had its main strength in New York, and so did the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance.

There were not more members of the party or the Alliance in New York than in the other cities and towns combined, but Section New York was the largest unit in the party organization, and the Alliance had a larger membership in New York than in any other district. The forces opposing the revolutionary attitude of the Socialist Labor Party both within and without the party were also centered in New York. The assembly district organizations of which the Section was composed became the battlefield where the question of party tactics was fought out. Some of these assembly district organizations fell under the influence of the oppositionists; there were certain assembly district organizations which were known to be loyal and others that were known to be the opposite, and still others that were doubtful.

Some of the assembly district organizations that fell into the hands of the opposition had to be suspended and reorganized. The first sub-division of Section New York which had to be cleansed by reorganization was in the district where those swayed a majority to their side who afterward clustered around the *Jewish Daily Forward*. Some of them still cluster there today. This fact of itself speaks volumes. Later the opposition spread to some of the German assembly districts uptown and across the East River to Brooklyn, but at no time from the beginning of the struggle to the final rupture of 1899 did the opposition control one single English-speaking subdivision of the party.

This fact also speaks volumes. Not that the district organizations that were known as English-speaking were composed of men whose ancestors came over on the Mayflower; some of them were American born and others were of that "foreign" element that followed the advice of Frederick Engels who, when he visited New York in 1891, said that the first thing the Socialists from abroad should do was to acquire a knowledge of the language of the land. Of course the immigrants from Great Britain

and Ireland did not come under the category of “foreigners.” At one of the meetings an Irishman was heard saying, when he saw the names of Matchett and Maguire upon one of the banners: “Maguire for Vice-President, is it? And sure, Oi thought all thim Socialists was foreigners.”

### *Conflicts in the General Committee*

In 1897 there were assembly district organizations of Section New York, Socialist Labor Party, where “Americans” with a Tipperary brogue predominated, such as the 18th Assembly District, and these were among the loyal subdivisions of the party. Some of the assembly district organizations were subdivided into language branches, all subdivisions being represented by delegates in a general committee. In this general committee many lively discussions between delegates who represented the loyal subdivisions and those who leaned the other way took place.

De Leon attended practically all the meetings of the general committee as a delegate from his assembly district and did not tire of meeting every oppositionist who showed his head in the general committee. He would go over the ground again and again with his sound reasoning, and many a fellow was re-converted to the uncompromising revolutionary position of De Leon. An instance in point was Charles Vander Porten, who was elected by the 30th Assembly District to go to the general committee and “crush” De Leon. Vander Porten came. After a discussion on the subject, in which De Leon took part, Vander Porten said to De Leon: “Comrade De Leon, I came to this meeting of the general committee to lick the ‘Boss,’ but I admit that I am the one who got licked.” As to Vander Porten, I shall have a little more to tell about him later.

The opposition had started some sort of club that was to teach the S.L.P. things about tactics and principles. This club they called “Der Mohren Club,” in imitation of a club of the same name which was said to have played an important part in the German Socialist movement. History was to repeat itself, and it did. According to Marx, history presents itself first as a tragedy and again as a farce. This Mohren Club was made up of some of the suspended oppositionists and kindred spirits. The thing would not be mentioned here, except for certain reasons, for it had no effect or influence upon anyone. At one of the meetings called by this Mohren Club, which I attended, several matters were clearly revealed. The first was that no other but Alexander Jonas of the *Volkszeitung* was the speaker, showing the connection between the *Volkszeitung* and the opposition.

*“Sound, But Too Slow,” the Argument*

Jonas’s speech on this occasion showed where the sowing of the seed of dissension came from. The subject was the tactics of the S.L.P. Jonas’s contention was that the S.L.P. position was wrong, that there were in New York city 100,000 workingmen Socialistically inclined, and that the party must adopt a policy whereby these 100,000 Socialistically inclined workingmen would be reached and drawn into the movement; that the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance had the opposite effect, since it would lead to the organization of dual unions; that the leaders of the American Federation of Labor were insulted instead of being converted; that the Socialist Labor Party insisted upon a sound position. “Yes,” said he, “the Socialist Labor Party is as sound and solid as the Rock of Gibraltar, nor has it any more motion; it makes no progress.”

This was in 1897. At the polls in that year the Socialist Labor Party received 55,000 votes, and only a year after, in 1898, the party’s vote rose to 82,000, in spite of all the opposition.

We see today, eighteen years after (those who sided with Jonas having a party of their own), that the 100,000 “Socialistically inclined” workingmen in Greater New York have not yet been reached, the leaving of the revolutionary path notwithstanding. Moreover, if there were 100,000 “Socialistically inclined” workingmen in Greater New York in 1897, there surely must be 200,000 of them in 1915, since a very large number of workers came from all European countries within the past eighteen years, from countries, too, where we were told every third person was a Socialist.

*The Opposition’s “Tolerance”*

Jonas’s speech is only one reason why I mention the Mohren Club. Another reason is that, notwithstanding the fact that Jonas spoke harshly of the Socialist Labor Party at a meeting arranged by outspoken enemies of the party, he was not disciplined, which disproves the charge so often made by anti-De Leonites of all shades that no criticism was permitted in the Socialist Labor Party and that any one who made bold to oppose the party administration was thrown out. There is a vast difference between criticism and sandbagging. Though Jonas’s talk belonged to the latter class, yet it was tolerated, and those who were actually suspended or expelled from the Socialist Labor Party in those days were men whose conduct was such that they had to be dealt with severely if the party was to retain its self-respect.

Still another reason prompts me to refer to this Mohren Club. The loyal delegates

to the general committee of Section New York were accused by the oppositionists of entirely suppressing the minority; it was charged that there was no tolerance of other opinions. Of course this was a false charge. But how did these fellows in the Mohren Club act? When Jonas had finished his speech, I asked for the floor. A *Volkszeitung* reporter was the chairman. The floor was given me, mainly because the chairman did not know me. I proceeded very cautiously in answering Jonas, but did not get very far with my explanation. As soon as the chairman saw that I was not an oppositionist, he simply declared me out of order and my protests were howled down by the mob. Robert Glaser, another loyal member of the party, who was also present, was assaulted by a blue-label committeeman of Cigar Makers' Union No. 90, R. Modest.

The substantial gains at the polls in 1897 and 1898 had a tendency to strengthen the revolutionary wing of the party. Some promising elements formerly affiliated with the People's Party joined the movement. The future looked bright in spite of all the opposition from within and without. True, the Socialist Labor Party movement had the capitalist class to combat in front, the labor lieutenants of the capitalists on both of its flanks, the enemy within its own camp in the rear; still, it forged ahead. The many enemies, the assaults of the capitalist forces, the howling of labor fakers, the hissing sound of the traitors, all this only stimulated the fighting S.L.P.

The opposition was in despair. Referendum votes to change the party tactics were proposed, voted upon, and defeated. How hard did the oppositionists work at times to deal the party a blow! "Intellectuals" like Dr. Ingerman were at work to spread more of the poison of dissension, proceeding no doubt from the theory, "Throw mud, and keep on throwing it; some of it is bound to stick."

### *Die Liedertafel; De Leon's Joke*

A center for the Genossen who were going to have all "trooble" in the movement abolished and have the Socialist Republic ushered in with songs was "Die Socialistische Liedertafel." This singing society was also a subdivision of Section New York, paid dues the same as an assembly district organization, and had also the same rights. It developed that the members of this singing society branch who would permit no one to participate in their singing and drinking exercises without paying his quarter of a dollar, did permit fellows to vote upon a referendum vote on party matters, and the question whether the individual who voted had paid his dues to the party was not taken so seriously as was his participation in song and drink—especially the latter.

A number of times I was elected chairman at the session of the general committee,

a job which was not an easy one. There were always from ten to twenty hands raised asking for the floor and not all could be permitted to speak at the same time, and there was not enough time to have all speak in succession. Some had to be disappointed. The delegate who raised his hand first and asked for the floor in the proper manner was recognized. The minority delegates were never suppressed. On one occasion the Liedertafel elected a new delegate, who came to the general committee with his mind made up to tell De Leon and the rest what he thought of them. He did not ask for the floor in the usual manner, that is by rising from his seat and addressing the chair; instead he made wild gestures, snapped his fingers, etc., and as he could not arrest my attention he finally whistled at me. He had to wait, however, until those had spoken who asked for the floor in a decent manner. When his turn finally came he was so overwrought with anger that he started his speech by cursing. He did not proceed further than the curse; down came the gavel with a crash; the delegate of the Liedertafel was out of order and had to sit down.

De Leon was not at this meeting, but he had heard all about it, for when I happened to call at the office of THE PEOPLE a few days later, De Leon wanted to know whether I had heard what the Liedertafel had done because I declared their delegate out of order at the general committee meeting. "The Liedertafel has decided not to sing at your funeral when you die," said De Leon, with his characteristic chuckle; "but when one of the members asked what would be their action if De Leon should die they decided they would sing at his funeral with pleasure."

### *Debs and the Pullman Strike*

While the struggle within the Socialist Labor Party between the revolutionists and the reformists was proceeding merrily, events were taking place in the world of labor outside of the party that were bound to have a great influence on the developments within the Socialist Labor Party movement.

The great strike of railroad workers affiliated with the American Railway Union took place in 1894. Eugene V. Debs was the man at the head of this new organization. Seventeen railroad lines of the West and Middle West running into Chicago were tied up. It was a strike more general than many a strike that is called a general strike. It started by a lockout of the employés of the Pullman Company at Pullman, Ill., where this company had with pretensions of philanthropy instituted some sort of capitalist paternalism, where the workers had the opportunity not only to work and be exploited by the Pullman Company in the workshop, but where they were given also

the opportunity to live in the company's houses, deal in company stores, be treated by the company doctor, etc. The lockout of the Pullman employés followed their refusal to accept another of the company's gifts, namely, a twenty-five per cent. reduction in wages. The directors of the Pullman Company are the originators of the phrase, "We have nothing to arbitrate." They would not even negotiate with their locked-out employés.

### *Debs Misled by the Disrupters*

The American Railway Union rose to the occasion. Trains with Pullman cars attached were not handled by the members of the American Railway Union, and thus the great strike was precipitated. This strike paralyzed transportation and alarmed the capitalists greatly. The demonstration of solidarity by the American Railway Union, which during the strike claimed a membership of over 100,000, struck the chords of class feeling among the workers of the land, and the spectacular nature of the strike, as of all such strikes, especially railroad strikes, increased the feeling of sympathy on the part of the members of the working class and the opposition on the part of the capitalists. Governor Altgeld of Illinois was reluctant to order out the state militia and thus comply with the wishes of the capitalists. Grover Cleveland, however, for whom so many poor wage slaves had shouted when he was running for President: "Four more years of Grover and then we'll be in clover," ordered out the Federal troops. Injunctions against the strikers and the officials of the American Railway Union were issued wholesale. Debs was finally sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the Woodstock jail for "contempt of court."

This act of class justice had the tendency to make Eugene V. Debs quite popular. Debs's name thereafter had the sound which re-echoed the blow dealt by the railroad workers in the Pullman strike to the capitalist class—a sound pleasant to the workers' ears. This fact, together with Debs's talent as speaker and organizer, gave him great opportunities and power for good or evil in the labor movement, whichever influence he might choose to exert. Debs was not a Socialist at the time of his incarceration. He voted for Bryan in 1896, but did declare his conversion to Socialism in 1897. Why did not Debs join the Socialist Labor Party, then the only party flying the flag of Socialism? Was the Socialist Labor Party so fundamentally in the wrong that a new party had to be started? Or was there something fundamentally wrong with Debs that he started one, or rather that he allowed his so well sounding name to be used to start a new party? We shall see.

Debs, while serving his sentence in Woodstock jail and after that, up to the time that he declared himself to be a Socialist, was being sought by the elements for whom the Socialist Labor Party was too narrow, dogmatic, sectarian, etc., etc., and also by those who were forced out of the party in 1889 by the *New Yorker Volkszeitung*.

### *Freak "Social Democracy" Started*

While there is no documentary evidence in my possession, I doubt that Eugene V. Debs would deny that he was besieged by men who pictured to him the Socialist Labor Party as an organization of fanatics who were devoid of tolerance in regard to the opinions of others, and men who had no understanding of American conditions. Oh, irony of fate! The very elements in the Socialist Labor Party who were actually guilty of such accusations were those which after the split of 1899 within the Socialist Labor Party Debs took to his bosom; or, to be more correct, he was grabbed to their bosom, where he has been held ever since, mainly for advertising purposes—for the sound that re-echoes that outburst of wage slave solidarity, the Pullman strike, still clings to the name of Eugene V. Debs.

It was said that Rosenberg, the national secretary of the Socialist Labor Party in 1889, and deposed by the *Volkszeitung* in that year, was one of the correspondents of Debs while Debs was imprisoned in Woodstock jail. That Rosenberg depicted the *Volkszeitung* cabal in its true colors there can be no doubt; they were the very gang of would-be intellectuals whom De Leon and those who sided with De Leon had to combat within the Socialist Labor Party. As to the rest who sought to kidnap Debs, there was Berger, of "buy out the capitalists" fame. Berger at all times respected De Leon, though he did not agree with him, but time and again he showed his contempt for the *Volkszeitung* and its adherents.

When, in 1897, the American Railway Union had lost the bulk of its membership Debs gathered the wreckage together, and with Wayland of the *Appeal to Reason*, and others, organized a new political party, the Social Democracy of America. There was little attention paid in the East to this new venture, for this new political party was to establish Socialism by colonizing the state of Washington, and John D. Rockefeller was to be appealed to to furnish the means. Naturally, all those who wanted to establish Socialism in that fashion flocked to the standard of the Social Democracy of America. Most likely Debs was allowed to proceed with his colonization idea to a certain point, just to demonstrate to him and his followers the folly of such schemes. Unquestionably, there were men in the Social Democracy of America, including

Berger, who knew better. Children must be allowed at times to have their own way, especially when ill or weak; the time comes when by their own developing reason they mend their ways; the rod is the last resort with sensible parents and teachers. Victor Berger was a wise parent and also principal of a German school in Milwaukee.

In 1898 the Social Democracy of America became the Social Democratic Party of America, and in a few isolated places entered the political field with candidates set up in opposition to the Socialist Labor Party. It is a most significant fact that the first man elected on the ticket of the Social Democratic Party of America was James F. Carey of Haverhill, Mass., who voted in favor of an appropriation of \$15,000 toward the building of an armory at Haverhill, and who had the brass to offer as an excuse for his action that it was a sanitary armory he had voted the appropriation for.

*Winner of the "First Victory"*

James F. Carey was at first a member of the Socialist Labor Party, and as such was elected to the board of aldermen in Haverhill, but the Socialist Labor Party being too narrow for him, he refused to submit to its discipline and turned toward the broad Social Democratic Party even before the Socialist Labor Party had a chance to turn him out of its organization. Carey, otherwise known about Haverhill as "weeping Jim," claimed to be consumptive; this helped Jim to a good many sympathetic votes. The last time I saw him he looked very sleek and fat, with nary a sign of consumptiveness. This armory builder was the first candidate elected on the ticket of the "Social Democratic Party of America," the present Socialist Party. The Socialist movement in the state of Massachusetts, formerly the Star of Bethlehem of the Opposition to the Socialist Labor Party, is weaker today than it was before the party that was to bring "Socialism in our time" started on its career of destruction eighteen years ago.

With this short description of the events outside of the Socialist Labor Party we can return to the activities within the organization, especially the doings in New York city. We must needs return later to tell more of the Social Democratic Party, Debs, and some others.

The 16th Assembly District organization was one of the most active and loyal subdivisions of Section New York, Socialist Labor Party. The membership in that district was composed mainly of men who were not influenced by "Mohren clubs" or by any other set of oppositionists. While the poison of dissension spread like gangrene in the assembly districts which were the component parts of the ninth Congressional

district, and where De Leon made such a great fight in the campaign of 1896, the 16th Assembly District, although bordering on the ninth Congressional, remained unaffected. The evil influence of Cahan, Wichnewetzsky, Zametkin, Barondess, and others, who were much comforted by the organization in the West of the Social Democratic Party, did not reach to the 16th A.D.; their evil influence had not in those days got beyond Houston street.

The revolutionary spark that had glowed so warmly and so brightly among the mass of proletarians jammed together within the borders of the ninth Congressional district the year before, was being extinguished with bucketfuls of nastiness, thrown about and squirted around by the “literateurs” of the lower East Side. At the business of emptying buckets of dirt over the heads of their adversaries, these gentry, in the language of Artemus Ward, were “ekeled by few, exeled by none.” Any one who would have tried any slanderous work in the 16th Assembly District organization would have fared badly.

### *De Leon's Big Vote in 16th A.D.*

When the time came to make party nominations in 1897, a delegation from the 16th Assembly District recommended that De Leon be offered the nomination as a candidate in that district. This was agreed to by the general committee, and De Leon accepted the nomination for member of the Assembly from the 16th. The campaigns conducted in that district from 1897 to 1900 were lively affairs, and the 16th Assembly District became known throughout the land.

The election returns from the district in 1897 made Tammany Hall sit up and take notice. For Daniel De Leon 1,854 votes were cast. The column on the official ballot with the uplifted arm and hammer began to look threatening. The vote cast for De Leon was 400 higher than the vote cast for the Republican candidate. Tammany received over 3,000, but the very fact that De Leon's vote was second highest in the district had a depressing effect upon the Fourteenth street “wigwam.” How this vote did cheer the ranks of the Socialist Labor Party! It was not a vote gotten by promises of palliative measures, not a vote secured in the manner and by the method of political reform parties. The issues were “the unconditional surrender of the capitalist class” and the Socialist economic organization, the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance versus “pure and simple” unionism of the American Federation of Labor.

The membership in the 16th Assembly District worked with the zeal and enthusiasm of new converts to the cause of Socialism. A large proportion of the

members were young men; many of them developed to be speakers—quite a number of soap-boxers got their first training in the 16th. Those who could not speak on the corners distributed literature, and canvassed every tenement house in the district.

De Leon himself was there every night, speaking sometimes at three open-air meetings in one evening after a day's hard work in THE PEOPLE office. As the party grew so did the share of work in De Leon's office. Visiting comrades from out of town called on De Leon. Some had important happenings from their localities to relate, others just came to have a look at the man the very mention of whose name made the labor fakers squirm; still others called just because they could not help it.

### *A Caller at "Dee Leawn's" Office*

De Leon received all those cordially whose calling had a purpose. Overburdened with work and responsibilities of such a magnitude as De Leon was, he had no time to waste with people who came to see him and bother him with trivial matters or freakish schemes of all sorts. Unlike the ordinary political leader who pretends to be delighted to meet every Tom, Dick and Harry who comes along, De Leon did no such pretending; he was at times painfully frank in telling some who called out of curiosity or similar motives to go. Many a sentimental chap who thought that De Leon should turn himself into a reception committee to receive him, felt offended and went forth to denounce De Leon as an aristocrat or an autocrat. Many a freakish individual who looked up De Leon in his office to have De Leon's opinion on some freakish scheme or other became quite indignant when De Leon had no time for such business.

On one occasion when De Leon was steeped in serious work, a fellow called with a good-sized bundle of manuscript under his arm. He looked like an incarnation of Mark Twain's "Connecticut Yankee at the Court of King Arthur." He was not a bit backward, but went straight to De Leon's desk. "Is this Mr. Dee Leawn?" he asked, in long-drawn nasal tones.

"What is it you wish, sir?" asked De Leon in turn, in a rather brisk manner, seeing at a glance what kind of a hairpin he had before him.

"Mr. Dee Leawn," began the stranger, looking around for a chair to sit down on, but, seeing none offered, preferring to stand—"I have written a book on—"

"I have no time now, sir," De Leon interrupted.

"But, Mr. Dee Leawn, this book which I have written shows the way to solve the social question, and I want you to read it, and—"

*But De Leon Had Read It*

"I've read it, sir, I've read it," De Leon broke in.

"You're mistaken, Mr. Dee Leawn, you—"

"I am telling you, sir, I have read it."

"But," the "author" still persisted, "you certainly are mistaken; how could you have read my book when it has not yet been printed? Here is the manuscript, and—"

"I've read that book, don't bother me," insisted De Leon. The fellow went, with the manuscript of the book that was to solve the social question under his arm, much dejected and swearing vengeance against the tyrant "Dee Leawn." The social question remained unsolved!

The man or woman who called on De Leon with a real purpose concerning the great cause, for which alone De Leon labored, always received merited attention, it mattered not who the individual happened to be. No matter how great was the volume of work that De Leon had to attend to in those days, eight o'clock in the evening found him at the open-air meetings, where large crowds were waiting to hear the "Old Man," as De Leon came to be known in the 16th Assembly District.

In the same year (1897) Lucien Sanial was the mayoralty candidate of the Socialist Labor Party in Greater New York. The vote of the party in the first election under the charter of the Greater City was 16,000. There was quite a scramble among the old party politicians for the spoils that lay in waiting for the victors. Besides the regular nominations by Tammany Hall and the Republican Party, there was Seth Low, president of Columbia University, in the field, nominated for mayor by the Citizens' Union. Old Henry George was dug up by the "Jeffersonian Democracy," but died a few days before election day. George's son, Henry George, Jr., was nominated to fill the vacancy; the ballots, in fact, were already printed, so no change in the list of candidates was possible, and it made little difference anyway, for the popularity of George had faded away ten years before.

While the 16th A.D. was the storm center in the Socialist Labor Party campaign, the rest of the city was by no means neglected. Every other assembly district had its organization, and carried on a vigorous campaign. There was no lack of speakers; literature was distributed throughout the city in large quantities. There was a fife and drum corps composed mainly of sons of Socialist Labor Party members. De Leon's son, Solon, was a member of this corps.

*Sanial's Mistake in the Band*

This fife and drum corps was of course an innovation. Many there were among the party's speakers who would regularly denounce the old parties, by force of habit, for having music, parades, etc., at their meetings. It so happened one night during that campaign that Sanial, the candidate for mayor, spoke at the corner of 70th street and First avenue. The crowd of listeners that had assembled was large and appreciative. Sanial's speeches were always full of vim and enthusiasm. While Sanial was telling the audience that "before the century closes the bottom will fall out of the barrel of capitalism in Europe," and that "the crimson banner will soon wave from every capitol across the Atlantic," a Tammany band wagon halted across the street, decorated with the flags of all nations, the flag of the Emerald Isle predominating, for it was an Irish district. (In Italian districts this was changed a bit.)

Tammany had evidently arranged for a meeting, too. Sanial turned on them. "Yes, fellow workingmen, the capitalist politicians come to you before election with music and other tomfoolery to get your votes, and after election they give you different music—music from the rifles of the militia and the gatling guns of their military. We do not come to you with music," Sanial continued. Just then I heard from the distance the sound of other music—it sounded like the *Marseillaise*, the favorite march of the Socialist Labor Party fife and drum corps. I looked up First avenue and was sure it was our band. Sanial was still hammering the capitalist politicians and their music. I pulled Sanial's coat tail to give him warning, but he was too wrapt up in his subject to pay any attention to me.

The crowd grasped the situation sooner than Sanial, and was quite merry. Finally the fife and drum corps had reached our corner and swung around into 70th street, still playing the *Marseillaise*. Sanial was still denouncing the music and red fire of the old parties. The audience laughed. Sanial saw the joke, too. He took out his red bandana handkerchief, wiped the perspiration from his high forehead, and said: "Friends, I made a mistake, these are our boys." Then he added; "They will play the death march of capitalism."

*De Leon Shamelessly Slandered*

The following year, 1898, De Leon's vote in the 16th Assembly District rose to 2,207. Tammany Hall was alarmed. The labor leaders in the Central Labor Union, who as a general rule were boosting Tammany, were stricken with fear. The oppositionists in and outside of the Socialist Labor Party were stricken with something

like yellow jaundice. Not only in the 16th A.D., but everywhere, the party made gains; 82,000 votes were cast for the Socialist Labor Party. Something had to be done. The cry that "the party makes no progress," that was raised a couple of years before could not be raised this time. The oppositionists redoubled their efforts in the spreading of slanders. De Leon was denounced by them as an anti-Semite in Jewish districts; as a Jew among Gentiles; as a man who hated the Germans, among the Germans, etc. The basest falsehoods were told in the East Side cafes about De Leon. Gompers in his paper made the allegation that De Leon's name was Loeb, not De Leon. The name of Henry Kuhn, who was then national secretary of the Socialist Labor Party, was woven into a tale to the effect that there was a connection between Kuhn, Loeb and Co., the noted banking firm, and Daniel De Leon and Henry Kuhn. Be a slander ever so ridiculous, there are always people who, having a mentality resembling a savage's, can be easily stuffed, and others willing to be stuffed. The fact, however, important for all who seek to find the truth, is that the oppositionists against the Socialist Labor Party and its revolutionary principles and tactics were blowing the same horn with the crew of political office seekers bedecked with the mantles of labor leaders and Tammany Hall itself.

De Leon pointed out on numerous occasions that it is not the dishonest men who are dangerous to the movement, but the honest, well-meaning people who, deceived by the crooks, become the source of danger. This was the case at that time. Many well-meaning Socialists were deceived by the schemers with ulterior motives. Especially was this the case among the Germans over whom the *Volkszeitung* exerted its pernicious influence. Not that the *Volkszeitung* came out openly with slander and calumny just then; no, the time for open hostilities between the Socialist Labor Party and the *Volkszeitung* had not yet arrived. Long before the split of 1899, when the *Volkszeitung* still claimed to be loyal to the Socialist Labor Party, the members of the *Volkszeitung* Publishing Association were as busy as bees in poisoning the minds of their compatriots, in the German trade unions, sick and death benefit associations, singing societies, and pinochle clubs.

### *Disrupters' Narrow Selfishness*

The *Volkszeitung* had its agents well distributed. In Cigarmakers' Union No. 90 it had, besides others, two brothers who were both employés of the *Volkszeitung*, and both ex-cigarmakers, and who still retained their membership in that organization, although neither of them had made a cigar at the bench for years. These were Adolph

and Ludwig Jablinovsky; one was in the business department, the other in the editorial department of the *Volkszeitung*, and both were top-notchers in the slander department. There was nothing that Adolph and Ludwig disliked more than to be compelled to work in the cigar shop where work is hard and wages small—nothing like the job on the *Volkszeitung*. A revolutionary attitude on the part of the *Volkszeitung* might have endangered the existence of that paper and incidentally the jobs of these two ex-cigarmakers, hence their opposition to De Leon and the Socialist Labor Party.

In other organizations there were similar agents preparing the ground everywhere for things that were to come. The stories that were told about De Leon by these agents, his alleged hatred of Germans, his desire to wreck unions, and stories about the vulgar language in THE PEOPLE, made some people actually believe that De Leon was a monster. Whatever happened upon this planet that was bad they blamed on De Leon.

While on the road for the party in New York state some years ago I encountered an individual in a remote part of Schoharie County, who told me with candor that when the Democrats were in power we did not have half enough rain. Similarly there were mental cripples who blamed De Leon for everything.

In the 28th Assembly District, the district where De Leon lived, the party organization was about evenly divided between the loyal S.L.P. men and those who were leaning toward the opposition. At the business meetings of this district there were always warm debates. At times De Leon was even threatened with physical harm by the very fellows who were afraid to fight the labor fakers in the unions. At every meeting of that district some new slander was hurled at De Leon by the oppositionists. When De Leon demanded facts, the slanderers were stuck. They could only make allegations in a general way; when a specific statement was demanded they could not give any.

### *De Leon's "Vulgar" Language*

The spokesman of the opposition in that district was one Loewenthal, a brother-in-law of Jablinovsky. He came to every meeting with a new accusation, and was in every instance shown up to be unreliable; yet was sure to come with another story the following meeting. At one meeting the allegation would be made that De Leon had used unduly harsh language against some official of the A.F. of L., when in fact the "unduly harsh" language was not half harsh enough, as De Leon would show. At the

next meeting again Loewenthal would come with a claim that the general committee was dictatorial in its dealings with subdivisions. When facts disproved this some other accusation was made at the next meeting.

Once a lady member of the 28th Assembly District, who belonged to the category of well-intentioned people, told me in great excitement that Comrade De Leon was using terribly bad language in dealing with his opponents in the discussions at the meetings of his district.

Why, it's a shame for an educated man, a professor, who should be polite and refined, to use such language. Ach! Such language! Was ist denn los mit Comrade De Leon?

When I asked her what the horrible language was she would not tell me. From Harlem to the Battery it spread, this tale of De Leon's using bad language at the meeting of the 28th A.D. This bad language, as upon inquiry I found out, amounted to this: De Leon when referring to Loewenthal, which means when translated into English, lion's dale, referred to him as "Comrade Lion's Tail," or in German, the language spoken at the meetings of the 28th Assembly District, as "Genosse Loewenschwanz." This was the horrible language used by De Leon, and it was quite excusable at that, for there were a number of men about with similar names, like Loewenfuss, etc.

### *Opposition Organized*

With the advent of the year 1899 it became apparent that the opposition had effected some sort of organization on a national scale. Connections had evidently been established by the New York oppositionists with those of other cities. At any rate the disgruntled elements were getting bolder and more and more boisterous and bothersome generally. Instead of devoting the time to agitation work, party meetings were dragged out for hours with wrangling; the energies even of the loyal members were exhausted with endless discussions upon party tactics. It was felt that a storm was gathering that had to break, soon or late.

From within the party came the cry that the progress made was too slow, in spite of the fact that really substantial gains were made. The party had now nearly four hundred Sections throughout the states, the destructive work of the obstructionists notwithstanding. From outside of the party organization rose the slogan of the newly formed Social Democratic Party, "Socialism in our time." A short cut to Socialism was

discovered by Wayland and his little *Appeal*. The reformists have somewhat altered their position since then. They say now: “We can safely leave the evolutionary process of transformation from capitalism to Socialism to future generations.”

Finally, the *Volkszeitung* made bold to come out in the open and take issue with the official organ of the party, THE PEOPLE. But it was not upon the attitude of the party toward the trade unions that the *Volkszeitung* fired the first shot. Upon that question the *Volkszeitung* was not so sure of its ground. The first shot fired was against the position of THE PEOPLE relative to taxation. De Leon sought to guide the Socialist Labor Party organization out of the quagmire of reform upon the revolutionary path, but the party platform had still its quota of “immediate demands.” The tax question gave the *Volkszeitung* an opening. That was an issue that made it easier for the *Volkszeitung* to beguile its followers.

### *Taxation Question First Assault*

De Leon maintained in THE PEOPLE, as the Socialist Labor Party does today, and as at least some of the Socialist Party members have since learned, that workingmen do not pay taxes; that all wealth is produced by labor, including the wealth out of which taxes are paid, but that taxes are paid out of that part of the workers’ product of which under the wage system they have been filched anyway. This Marxian position the *Volkszeitung* readers did not understand and would not learn to understand. That the workers are robbed as producers and that to receive the full value of their product must be the aim of a party of Socialism, all other questions and issues being misleading, including the question of taxation—that they did not grasp. Although most of them had the pictures of Marx and Engels nicely framed to decorate the walls of their best room, Marxian economics were not for them to read and study.

The *Volkszeitung* knew its “Pappenheimers.” Nothing appealed to its readers more than this tax question. They regarded De Leon’s position as absurd. “The idea, workingmen don’t pay taxes!” they would exclaim with disgust; “Bah!” It was useless to argue the question with them. The *Volkszeitung* in support of its stand on the tax question quoted every Social Democratic paper of Germany, Austria, Italy, and other countries. The same Socialist papers may be quoted today as endorsing the bloody butchery now going on in Europe, each in its own way, either as a struggle for German “Kultur”; or for the “national ideals” of Italy. But the quoting of the European papers settled the question with the readers of the *Volkszeitung*. Even many who up to that time had stood by the party now swung around; the taxation question

and De Leon's position regarding the same was "too many" for them.

Now that the ice was broken, the whole position of the Socialist Labor Party was wrong; the party had to be remodeled, and De Leon and De Leonism abolished forevermore.

How was this noble aim to be consummated? Oh, that was easy. Simply get the majority of delegates to the general committee, then elect all officers of the Section, suspend the National Executive Committee, and the *Volkszeitung's* new executive committee would do the rest. In other words, repeat the coup d'état of 1889. This time, however, things went differently.

### *De Leon the Storm-Center*

The lines were now drawn between the loyal party members, who were in favor of the revolutionary stand the Socialist Labor Party had taken, and the oppositionists of all shades. There were indeed many shades to the opposition faction. Some of them claimed that the attitude of the Socialist Labor Party toward trade unions was correct, but that it was premature to sever connections with the old trade unions and to set up a Socialist union. Others, again, claimed that Socialism was sure to come in a decade and to bother with labor unions was superfluous,—all economic organizations of the workers were out of date. Another shade maintained that the American Federation of Labor was all that could be expected, and that it would eventually become a class conscious body. All, however, were a unit upon changing the Socialist Labor Party, making it repudiate its principles and tactics, and incidentally getting rid of De Leon.

The most despicable methods were employed to attain this end. Fellows who had not "bothered" with the Socialist movement for years were proposed and taken in as members; those of the opposition who had been in arrears for months paid up their dues to be able to vote for delegates to the general committee. De Leon had to be decapitated. It was all nicely mapped out by the *Volkszeitung* board of directors, board of editors, managers, assistant managers, etc., also by the members of blue label leagues as well as by members of label leagues of other colors. "Raus mit De Leon!" they cried in chorus.

One J. Obrist, who claimed to be on the side of the loyal members, but who turned only a few weeks before the split, told me that De Leon had to be removed because he had "failed to capture Debs." Obrist was regarded as an important personage by the opposition. He at first fought against the slanderbund of the *Volkszeitung*, but when the question of "Who pays the taxes?" was raised, he toppled

over like many others. Obrist's statement in regard to De Leon's failure to capture Debs would not, of itself, merit a mention. Obrist repeated what he heard at the confabs presided over by the opposition's high moguls, like Alexander Jonas and Herman Schlueter, editors of the *Volkszeitung*. His statement only showed what sort of "arguments" were used by these gentlemen to rope in fellows like Obrist. De Leon was not out to "capture" any one. He was not in the capturing business. De Leon contended that men may be captured for false movements, but for the building up of a movement that is to reduce the citadel of capitalism men cannot be captured or kidnapped. Moreover, he who can be kidnapped is not worth having.

*"The Best Laid Plans, Etc."*

So sure of success were the ones who were to carry out a revolution in the Socialist Labor Party that they went about boasting how it would be done, and who would be allowed to stay in the party and who would be expelled. Of course, De Leon was on the list of those that were to be put out; so was Vogt, Sanial, Kuhn, Forker, Keep; the organizer of Section New York, Lazarus Abelson, was also on the list of those who were not to be taken into the party. They were especially bitter against Abelson, for in his capacity as organizer he had on several occasions to execute orders of the general committee in reorganizing some unruly subdivisions. Sometimes they called Abelson re-organizer.

Things did not turn out to be quite as easy as the disrupters imagined. Henry Kuhn, in a neat parody on a song known by all who speak German, summed up this "revolution" in the S.L.P. To this day I remember every line:

("Wir saszen so froehlich beisammen.")

"We sat all so snugly together,  
And held one another so dear;  
We gave each a lift in his business,  
Had that lasted the coast had been clear;  
But it could not forever remain thus,  
A malevolent fate cut it short,  
That Cuckoo, De Leon, the old cuss,  
Kicked us out and himself holds the fort."

*First Attempt at Physical Force*

On July 8, 1899, the general committee of Section New York was to hold its regular meeting and elect officers for the ensuing six months. The meetings of the general committee were then held at the Labor Lyceum, so-called, a sort of party headquarters for the city. At a previous time officers of the national organizations had also been in this building. On the ground floor was a saloon, above the portals of which was written in large gilt letters the legend, "Labor Lyceum," and in still larger letters, "Beer Tunnel." On the floor above the "beer tunnel" was the meeting hall for the delegates to the general committee. On the Saturday night of July 8, 1899, this hall was filled to its utmost capacity. Not all those present were delegates. There were always some visitors, but on this night the number of visitors was much larger than at any other time.

Abelson called the meeting to order and asked for nominations for chairman. Henry Kuhn was nominated by the loyal delegates, Bock by the other side. It became evident that it would be difficult to hold a meeting right then, for those who had come to make the "revolution" would not wait until their credentials were presented, but wanted to vote on the chairmanship before they were seated.

Men who were not at all delegates also wanted to vote. Hillquit was there to give advice to his side,—lawyers always give advice. The organizer insisted that those who were not as yet seated as delegates could not vote for the chairman. Hillquit began to give advice and started a harangue. He was called to order but refused to obey. The organizer, not being able to preserve order with his gavel, called for a committee to assist the sergeant-at-arms. Several members, among them Arthur Keep, volunteered. Hillquit, who insisted upon speaking, was approached by Keep and requested to sit down. Then the fighting began. Several fellows fell over Keep; the oppositionists had come prepared for a physical encounter. Many blows were struck, but nothing very serious happened. The object of the *Volkszeitung* to put the loyal party members out was not accomplished.

After an hour's fighting the janitor put out the lights, and the meeting of the general committee did not take place. Next morning, however, the *Volkszeitung* published a notice calling a meeting of the general committee for Monday, July 10, in a hall on the Bowery. This, of course, meant bolting from the Socialist Labor Party.

*Rump Meeting on the Bowery*

The office of the National Secretary of the Socialist Labor Party and the editorial

rooms of THE PEOPLE were on the third floor at 184 William street, the building where the *Volkszeitung* was published. This office of the National Secretary was rented from the Volkszeitung Publishing Association. There another battle royal took place between the opposing forces. This was the memorable night of July 10, when the oppositionists tried to capture the offices of the National Secretary and THE PEOPLE.

When it became known that the rump body would meet on the Bowery, some party members came to THE PEOPLE office, suspecting that their presence would be needed. It was needed, and no mistake. At first it was doubted that any attempt would be made to take by physical force the national party headquarters. Reports soon came, however, that this question was being discussed at the meeting on the Bowery and finally that a raid had been decided upon. When that report reached the party members who had assembled at 184 William street, they organized themselves to defend the S.L.P., its offices, and documents, if need be with their lives.

On the ground floor of the building at 184 William street were the business office and the editorial room of the *Volkszeitung*. On the third floor was the editorial room of THE PEOPLE. This room De Leon shared with Vogt, the editor of the party's German paper. On the same floor was the office of the National Secretary of the party. Dividing Kuhn's office from that of De Leon there was a sort of ante-room where committee meetings were often held.

It was there that the loyal party members, about thirty in number, were assembled awaiting the onslaught of the *Volkszeitung* reactionists. Ben Hanford and Herman Simpson were there, at that time full-fledged S.L.P. men.

### ***Brutal Attack Repulsed by S.L.P. Men***

It was long after midnight when the attacking party arrived. Henry Slobodin, an East Side lawyer, whom the rump general committee made the national secretary of what developed to be the kangaroo party, accompanied by the illustrious Loewenthal, came up as a parliamentary committee and demanded the surrender of the party property and insignia of office. They were told that there would be no such surrender. They departed, and soon after came the charge, not of "The Light Brigade," but the heavy-booted, light-headed brigade. How many there were would be hard to tell, but the stairs were packed with them; there must have been about two hundred.

The first onslaught was met by the boys from the 18th Assembly District, who were especially handy in delivering uppercuts, hooks to the jaw, etc.; who, in short, were quite proficient in the gentle art of self-defense. The crowd of raiders, among

whom were many non-party members, came armed with bludgeons, mallets, and clubs. The only man who was armed with a club on the side of the party was Ben Hanford.

There was an attack by physical force, as brutal as it was disgraceful, and for which the *Volkszeitung* alone was responsible. A dozen of comrades who fought for the S.L.P. were more or less seriously wounded, but others took their places, and the fight for the possession of the party's property continued until the police, attracted by the noise and the crowd in the street, came into the place with drawn revolvers. Many of the raiders were hurled down the two flights of stairs, and for a while it looked as though some one would get killed. The midnight robbers never got into the ante-room, in spite of their large numbers.

The police were compelled to recognize those in possession, and the coup miscarried completely. As we all left the building that night, the police alone remaining, we saw when down the street that all the *Volkszeitung* crowd had disappeared; only Jablinowsky, the reporter, stood at the entrance of the *Volkszeitung* business office. Being protected by a reporter's badge he had picked up courage to stay when all his friends had gone. He made a wry face and mumbled something as De Leon passed him. "This is not '89!" De Leon called to him as a parting shot.

That night few of those who were at the place of this physical conflict went to bed. The Labor News Company, the party's literature agency, had then a store on 23rd street. I went to that place and stood on guard until the manager arrived in the morning.

### *Bogus "People" Issued by Bolters*

Next day all party property was removed to 61 Beekman street, where the party headquarters were established. There was nothing left in the rooms that THE PEOPLE and the party's National Office had occupied except the whitewash on the wall—and that was not very white.

THE PEOPLE was printed in the *Volkszeitung's* printing plant and its finances were handled by the *Volkszeitung* management. The agreement made between this publishing association and the Socialist Labor Party gave that association certain rights in electing the editor, but it was clearly stated in the stipulation made that if any disagreement between the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labor Party and the Publishing Association should arise the members of the party were to decide by a referendum vote. The power to elect an editor was thus vested in the party. The

*Volkszeitung* was, however, in possession of the subscription money, mailing lists and of everything except the editorial office. This circumstance was to have finished the job of killing the S.L.P. A bogus *People* was now issued by the *Volkszeitung*; being in possession of the mailing lists the *Volkszeitung* was in a position to use these. But the bogus *People*, not only printed but also edited by these gentlemen, was a sight to behold. It was the incarnation of Aesop's fable about the ass in a lion's skin; its braying deceived only children, or adults with a child's mental faculties.

There were thus two papers printed, each claiming to be the organ of the Socialist Labor Party. The bolters claimed to be the S.L.P. The bogus *People* in the first week reached the readers first, and the management of the *Volkszeitung*, having been entrusted by the party with its publication, was recognized at first by the postal authorities. Many of the new readers of THE PEOPLE were positively puzzled when instead of receiving one copy of the paper they received two, each claiming to be the genuine, each claiming to be the official organ of the Socialist Labor Party.

### *“Kangaroos” Beaten in Court*

The *Volkszeitung* crowd nominated candidates and made attempts to parade as the Socialist Labor Party. It was on that account that they were christened kangaroos by De Leon, recalling the kangaroo courts of Civil War times that established themselves in localities where they were not known, called a sitting of the court, chose jurymen, held trials, imposed fines, collected the same, and then jumped, kangaroo-like, to another place just before they were discovered—so much like the *Volkszeitung* fellows who were usurping the name and functions of the Socialist Labor Party. The name “kangaroo” stuck to them for some time even after the abandonment of their claim that they were the Socialist Labor Party.

The courts had finally to decide who was who and why. The party secured the services of the talented attorney at law, Benjamin Patterson, whom De Leon knew from the days at Columbia University. The kangaroos, knowing they had a hard case, hired lawyers who stood high up in politics: Abe Gruber, the Republican politician, and ex-Governor Black were hired by them. Hillquit, their own Hillquit, did not dare alone to take up the case and cause of the usurpers of whom he was a leader; the political pull of an ex-governor was needed to pull them through the courts. But it was of no avail. The kangaroos lost all the suits brought against the party; their case was too flagrant a violation of all parliamentary law, common law, as well as the unwritten law of decency. That a rump body composed of delegates from a few assembly district

organizations could assume the functions of claimant, judge, jury, and executioner all at once, and at a single session prefer charges against, hold court, find guilty, suspend or expel the majority of members, suspend or expel all the officers of the organization in New York, depose all the national officers of the party, including editors of party organs,—that was too much even for a capitalist judge sitting in a capitalist court to endorse; such a precedent could not be established.

The kangaroos were in desperate straits. Everything they undertook turned out as their midnight attack upon the party headquarters had turned out—a failure. In the cities outside of New York where attempts were also made to capture the party organizations and their belongings, they fared no better. In Cleveland, Chicago, Milwaukee, Indianapolis, everywhere their kangaroo attempts were frustrated.

### *Party Weathered the Storm*

At that time I was sent by the New York State Executive Committee on a trip to visit all Sections in the state. Rochester was the only large city where the kangaroos predominated. They had their most precious Frank Sieverman in Rochester, who had opposed the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance at the national convention of 1896. Sieverman boasted at that time of his successful “boring from within” in the Boot and Shoe Workers’ Union—how successful can be judged today by the number of labor fakers turned out by that organization. The only other Sections of the party that “kangarooed” in New York state were Section Portchester, a small town in Westchester County, and a Section in Oneida composed of cigar makers.

# FROM 1899 TO THE LAUNCHING OF THE I.W.W. IN 1905

**Hard Fight of Party and S.T. & L.A.—DAILY PEOPLE a Rallying Point—“Little Kangaroo” Affair—Conflict in International—Rise of Socialist Unionism**

**I**N SPITE OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED within the party in 1899, which was surely enough to disrupt any organization, the party more than held its own on election day and even made gains where a ticket was put in the field. In the 16th Assembly District in New York city the straight party vote was increased, and De Leon's sympathetic vote of 2,000 was held.

Throughout the whole country the vast majority of the four hundred Sections stood with the party and its duly elected National Executive Committee. Only in comparatively few places did the usurpers with their secretary, Henry Slobodin, get recognition, endorsement, or support. In Cleveland, Ohio, Robert Bandlow and Max Hayes, publishers of the pure and simple paper, *The Citizen*, were such exceptions. At San Francisco the notorious politician, Job Harriman, swayed some to the Slobodin side. While in New York city, with a few exceptions, all the crowd reading the *Volkszeitung* “kangarooed,” the bulk of the German comrades throughout the country remained true to the Socialist Labor Party. F. Kalbitz held the fort in Chicago, Richard Koeppel and Albert Schnabel, Sr., in Milwaukee, Christiansen in Cleveland, Luedecke in Rochester, and many other German comrades of prominence elsewhere repelled the attacks of the *Volkszeitung* which claimed now to be the mouthpiece of all German Socialists in America.

Unfortunately, the *Volkszeitung* Publishing Association had been entrusted by the party with the publication of its German official organ, *Vorwaerts*. This paper, previously published by the party itself in magazine form, had been a few years before converted into one publication with the weekly edition of the *Volkszeitung*, and was now in the clutches of the *Volkszeitung* crowd. The party was left without an organ in the German language. Through the most strenuous efforts of Boris Reinstein the Buffalo *Arbeiter Zeitung* was taken over by the Buffalo Section and made a party organ, and later the Cleveland *Volksfreund* became the official party paper in German and has remained such to this day.

*Kangaroos and Tammany Hall*

The 16th Assembly District occupied in the 1899 campaign the center of the stage, even more so than in the previous two campaigns, due to the fact that De Leon was again the party's standard bearer in that district. That all the forces the kangaroos, combined with Tammany labor fakers could muster, were deployed in the 16th, goes without saying. Tammany politicians, labor misleaders, walking delegates, label committee beneficiaries, shyster lawyers and East Side "cadets," these were the allies of the infamous gang of the *Volkszeitung*.

Again I must reiterate that these are not unsubstantiated assertions. The proof of the statement is revealed by the fact that the man whom Tammany Hall put on its ticket to run against De Leon was Samuel Prince, a member of Cigar Makers' Union No. 144, the same local in which another Samuel was a member, namely Samuel Gompers; the same Cigar Makers' Union whose delegates to the label committee, together with the delegates from the other locals of that organization, notably the so-called Progressive No. 90, were conducting a "systematic label agitation" described at length in a previous chapter.

The selection of Sam Prince by Tammany for the candidacy on its ticket in the 16th showed the underground connections among De Leon's opponents. Tammany was not in the habit of throwing its nominations for office to fellows who could not pay spot cash for such "honors," and Tammany heelers were never known to work for love of cause or principle. The nomination of Prince, who could not buy a round of drinks unless he was doing label agitation, and thus paying with the union's money, was a sacrifice by Tammany to save itself from defeat by the Socialist Labor Party at the suggestion of the *Volkszeitung* element.

Prince stood as low morally and intellectually as a man can be imagined to stand in the labor movement,—a vulgar ignoramus, he was a disgrace even to the A.F. of L., which requires no great standard. While Tammany was whooping it up for this fellow as candidate for the Assembly in the 16th, the *Volkszeitung* came to his aid by the distribution of leaflets telling Socialists not to vote, that there was no Socialist ticket in the field, that De Leon had been expelled from the party, and that he was a union wrecker. Tammany held the same language.

*Feverish Work to Beat De Leon*

The scum of the great metropolis was let loose in the 16th; so great was the fear that De Leon would carry the district that open-air meetings of the Socialist Labor

Party were broken up by the police. "Big Chief" Devery, then head of the whole police department of New York city, sardonically answered the Section's protest with the reply that the meetings of the Socialist Labor Party were interfered with because the Democratic Party had applied to hold meetings on the very same corners a long time ahead of the Socialist Labor Party.

On the day of election I saw a Socialist Labor Party challenger at the polls slugged by plug-uglies, such as are not seen by daylight at any other time of the year, but who make their appearance on election day and who appeared in profusion in that particular election in the 16th A.D.

If there be any comrade in the Socialist Labor Party, or one in sympathy with the party, who is blessed or damned with earthly possessions and who may not be contributing much thereof to the movement because he considers a donation from one who is not a proletarian to a proletarian revolutionary movement to be conducive to unhealthy growth, let him abandon such scruples. For even though a contribution from one who is not a member of the working class to the Socialist Labor Party may be regarded as promoting artificial growth let it be remembered that it would require a good deal of such artificial support to counterbalance the artificially created opposition to the Socialist Labor Party. Let all such open their pocketbooks wide and dig in deep in support of the Socialist Labor Party.

Following the year of the kangaroo rebellion came the Presidential election of 1900, the starting of the DAILY PEOPLE, the conflict of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance with the Cigar Makers' International Union, and other important happenings. All these will be touched upon in their order.

### *What the S.T. & L.A. Faced*

The developments in the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance must be considered as of prime importance, since its success as a factor on the economic field signified the strengthening of the Socialist Labor Party, its failure a corresponding loss. The Alliance started out vigorously enough, but could not overcome the many enemies it had to face. From the day of its birth at the close of the year 1895, the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance had to withstand the enmity of all its opponents, all of whom fought underhandedly and with unclean weapons.

All the old trade union officials recognized in the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance a most dangerous foe; to fight the Alliance was to fight for their own existence. It was the endeavor of Gompers and the rest of the A.F. of L.-ites to put the

Alliance on the defensive. In this endeavor Gompers was well supported by those who claimed to be Socialists, many of whom were members of the party. They contended that boring from within was the correct policy.

Under normal conditions it would hardly be possible for a reactionary body to put a revolutionary organization on the defensive. The conditions under which the Alliance was started lacked the necessary compactness and harmony within its own ranks to maintain a successful offensive position. There were two central labor bodies in New York city. It will be remembered that with a few other unions outside of New York, District Assembly 49, formerly of the Knights of Labor, and the Central Labor Federation, constituted the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. District Assembly 49 was practically free from the craft union form of organization—at least, no craft union spirit pervaded it, while in the Central Labor Federation the craft union form and spirit were the dominant factors. From the very start there was not the homogeneous organization which was necessary to carry the day against the fierce opposition the Alliance had to meet.

### *Corruption and Its “Denouncers”*

Though the industrial form of organization was not then in vogue in District Assembly 49, there was a tendency toward such a form of organization and against the narrow, pure and simple craft union. De Leon used to speak jokingly of the “Amalgamated Association of Pretzel Varnishers” and the “United Brotherhood of Journeymen Horse-tail Scrubbers,” thus ridiculing the craft unionism of those days.

The leading spirits in the Central Labor Federation were August Waldinger and Ernest Bohm, both of whom had some executive ability. Bohm was a good secretary, and Waldinger an excellent sergeant-at-arms. De Leon was reproached by the anti-Alliance members of the party, because such fellows as Waldinger and Bohm, the latter being the first national secretary of the Alliance, were the officials of a Socialist economic organization for which the Socialist Labor Party stood sponsor. It was not only hinted but openly claimed by some of the oppositionists that both Bohm and Waldinger were so crooked that they had to sleep in a washtub! De Leon defended them while there were no specific charges made, but fought them when at the 1898 convention of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance corrupt practices were proved against the two.

The exposure of Bohm and Waldinger resulted in the withdrawal of the Central Labor Federation from the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. Most of the locals of

the Central Labor Federation were with the efficient secretary, Bohm, and the no less efficient sergeant-at-arms, Waldinger. The Central Labor Federation shortly after merged with the Central Labor Union into what was christened the Federated Labor Union. Bohm was given the job of recording secretary, and Waldinger retained his important post which he occupied in the Central Labor Federation.

The act of corruption proved against both these gentlemen at the 1898 convention of the S.T. & L.A. was that they sought and accepted advertisements of candidates of the capitalist political parties in a souvenir program published by the Central Labor Federation. The interesting part of this episode was the circumstance that after Bohm and Waldinger had been proved guilty of these unsavory practices, the oppositionists in the party who had denounced them as crooks before, now took their part, again blamed De Leon, and once more raised the cry that wherever De Leon was there was sure to be dissension. When Bohm thereafter became the secretary of the Federated Labor Union he was spoken of by those who had denounced him as a villain while he was national secretary of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, as a very good and honest fellow—so honest and good that one could have come to the conclusion that Bohm had really to hold on to something solid on this earth to prevent sailing straight heavenward, the law of gravity notwithstanding.

### *Strikes Under the Alliance*

Wm. L. Brower, of District Assembly 49, was elected in Bohm's stead as national secretary of the S.T. & L.A. During his incumbency in office most of the struggles of the Alliance took place. The most important struggle of the Alliance was the strike of textile workers at Slatersville, R.I. Though the strike was lost the firm was unable to reopen the mills in that town,—the members of the S.T. & L.A. preferred rather to leave the place than to return to work under the bosses' terms. A large strike in the Shoen Steel works at Pittsburgh, Pa., was also conducted by the Alliance and attracted great attention at the time. Many minor struggles were fought under the banner of the Alliance. Most numerous among the trades that organized in the S.T. & L.A. were the textile workers, shoe workers, and metal and machinery workers. Charters were issued to locals in many other trades in a large number of industrial centers.

There is no doubt that the time was as ripe for a class conscious economic organization of the workers twenty years ago when the S.T. & L.A. was born as it is now. There was, however, a lack of men equipped with the knowledge and determination and self-reliance to carry out the plans of the organization, which, in its

cradle, was called by would-be friends of the revolutionary movement a “still-born child.” How “still-born” it was we may gather from the efforts that were made by all the enemies of Socialism to strangle the child, especially during the fighting days of the Pioneer Cigar Makers’ Alliance, to have been a member of which I cherish as a badge of honor.

### *The Lie About the Cigar Strike*

The main facts of the Seidenberg and the Davis cigar shop affairs have been published several times. The lie that the members of the Pioneer Cigar Makers’ Alliance scabbed in Davis’s cigar shop has been repeated by every A.F. of L. journal, by every pseudo-Socialist privately owned sheet; the lie has been repeated by every S.P. soap-boxer, by every A.F. of L. organizer. Some even claimed that De Leon was a cigar maker and had worked in the Davis shop. Let the facts be restated with a few sidelights thrown upon the matter that have perhaps not been mentioned before.

When in 1900 the cry was raised that the Alliance had scabbed in the Davis shop many who were friendly disposed toward the Alliance were taken off their feet. To hear that an A.F. of L. body has scabbed on another A.F. of L. organization or upon unorganized workers does not as a general rule come as a surprise; that is an everyday occurrence. The charge sounds different, and rightly so, when made against a Socialist organization—just as everyone is jarred when a Socialist is sent to prison for wife-beating or a similar offence, while no one is at all astonished that Democrats, Republicans, and “Independents” fill the prisons and jails. A heinous crime committed by a member of the Socialist Labor Party would create a sensation, while the same crime committed by an adherent of any other political party would be taken without special notice of the criminal’s political affiliation. This is a tribute paid unconsciously to the ethics of Socialism in general, and the ethics of the Socialist Labor Party membership in particular. So it was at the time with the Alliance and the charge of scabbery.

### *A.F. of L. Dark Practice in Davis Shop*

Out of 259 employés in the Davis cigar shop only 22 were members of the International Cigar Makers’ Union; some belonged to the Alliance; the rest were unorganized. The strike was decided upon by the advisory board of the A.F. of L. cigar makers’ locals in New York and sanctioned by the executive board of their union, without the knowledge or consent of the cigar makers who did not belong to

the union. When Albert Maroushek, of the A.F. of L. cigar makers, called a shop meeting of the Davis cigar shop he found a few members of the Alliance who were ready to strike, but not under the auspices of the Cigar Makers' International Union, after the experience they had made in Seidenberg's, where a strike had taken place shortly before, and where Alliance men had struck with the International only to strike themselves out of their jobs. The workers had been gotten out on strike with the promise of higher wages; the strike was settled under old prices or even lower, but all had to join the A.F. of L. union and enjoy the privilege of paying their dues to the same.

The men who had made this experience knew the dark ways of the officials of the A.F. of L. Cigar Makers' union, and protested that a vote be taken, which showed only those who were members of the A.F. of L. union to be in favor of a strike, the overwhelming majority being against. Maroushek, the union delegate, declared that it did not matter how the vote stood, that "the union," his union, "declared the shop on strike, and any one who would remain would be branded as a scab."

The workers wanted higher wages, to be sure, but they knew that Maroushek's union would not get them that. They refused to be bulldozed and called upon the Alliance to make a demand for higher wages to the firm. This was done. Davis agreed to pay the wages demanded, which were the same contained in the A.F. of L. union's price list. The shop was organized and held by the Alliance. Those who were afraid of Maroushek's threat stayed away. It was a question which organization should control the shop, and not in the remotest way could the action of the Alliance be construed as scabbing.

### *Chorus of Calumny Raised*

The A.F. of L. saw its opportunity. The word was passed to the 400 locals of the Cigar Makers', to all the rest of the A.F. of L. unions throughout the country that "Alliance men are scabbing!" Without the activity and zeal of those who had seceded from the party this would have had little or no effect. The kangaroo press, the *Volkszeitung* leading, in sore straits as they were, beaten by the S.L.P. at every turn, not only joined the chorus, but were loudest in their denunciation of the Alliance. Abraham Cahan, against whose methods of bossism and exploitation in these latter days the writers on the Yiddish *Vorwaerts* went on strike, was as a matter of course also one of the loudest in calling the S.T. & L.A. men scabs. Cahan told the Jewish workers down town that the Alliance "scabs" were only "dumme Gojim" ("ignorant

gentiles”). The Bohemian daily papers uptown, the *New Yorske Listy*, a Tammany sheet, and *Hlas Lidu*, subsidized by Tammany one year and by the Republican Party the next, wrote that the Alliance “scabs” were “only Jews.”

As a proof of the statement as to the foul methods that were resorted to by the many and varied enemies of the S.T. & L.A. the below sample from the Bohemian daily paper, *New Yorske Listy*, referring to the Pioneer Cigar Makers’ Alliance, is here exhibited. The article in question was an attack upon the Bohemian Socialist Labor Party organ, *Pravda*, which was then published in New York. A few lines will suffice. From *New Yorske Listy*, Feb. 20, 1899:

The gentlemen of *Pravda*, those Knights without fear or fault, reformers who are boasting about their laborism, are so much in favor of labor that they work with much enthusiasm for a certain union which is composed of about two dozen Polish Jews.

In answering the *New Yorske Listy*, the organ of Tammany and the misnamed International Cigar Makers’ Union, the *Pravda* wrote:

We hold that there should be in existence a fighting union, not a sick benefit society. Furthermore, we wish to tell the *New Yorske Listy*, in answer to its allegation that the new union is composed of Polish Jews, that we are truly international; that a worker who is true to the working class and its interests we esteem much more highly, be he a Polish Jew or anything else, than a scoundrel who under the mask of patriotism commits treason against the working class, even though it be an editor of a Bohemian daily paper. . . . How about the International Cigar Makers’ Union—what is Samuel Gompers or Adolph Strasser? And here in New York the local leaders, David Heimerdinger, Abraham Levy, Solomon Rosenstein, Benjamin Ash, Isaac Bennett, and Moses De Costa? Are these any different than the Jewish members of the Alliance because they emigrated from Poland to America a few years earlier?

### *Race Prejudice Appealed To*

The opponents of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, by appeals to racial feeling and to the superstition of the masses, succeeded in creating the impression that the Alliance had actually committed a wrong act. Those who utter a lie over and over again are apt to believe finally that they speak the truth. After a short period Davis tried the capitalist trick of cheating the workers out of their gained wage increase. The

Alliance men and women went on strike and their places were immediately filled with A.F. of L. cigar makers. These indeed were the scabs.

Throughout the country, nevertheless, the lie was hurled at the Socialist Labor Party that the Alliance had scabbed in the Davis cigar shop. Each slanderer had a different version of the affair. The most absurd tales were told and believed by many.

Thus did men who claimed to be Socialists, united with the open foes of Socialism, stab in the back the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, and stain their hands with the blood of the organization that sought to emancipate the working class. The A.F. of L., which seeks to perpetuate the system of wage slavery, has benefited thereby as well as capitalism itself.

The bolters from the Socialist Labor Party held a convention at Rochester, N.Y., and decided to unite with the Social Democratic Party—in fact, that was the only thing left for them to do.

### *Seceders Forced Themselves on S.D.P.*

At the Indianapolis convention of the Social Democratic Party some sort of union between that organization and the Kangaroo party was decided upon, but the rank and file of the S.D.P. rejected the union by a referendum vote. The Kangaroos stuck to the S.D.P. just the same; hatred of the Socialist Labor Party was with them the most important factor. They pocketed the kick administered to them by the referendum of the Social Democratic Party and supported the Debs ticket in the 1900 Presidential election with might and main.

All adversaries of the Socialist Labor Party now saw what they thought was a chance to deal it a death blow. The year 1900 found many outspoken anti-Socialists giving their support to the S.D.P., hoping thereby to bring about a speedy end of its feared enemy, the fighting S.L.P.

The Socialist Labor Party had to fight for its life. Had the party been merely a vote-seeking organization the wish of its enemies would have been gratified. But the life of the Socialist Labor Party never depended upon the vote it could poll for its candidates and least of all in the 1900 Presidential election, when the elements who regarded the vote as all important had left the party. The life of the party did depend at that time upon its ability to maintain its press, for in that year (July 1, 1900) the DAILY PEOPLE was started and had to be maintained.

The name of Debs, with its sound of popularity combined with tolerance toward all sorts of reform ideas, from municipal ownership a la Glasgow, New Zealand

“Socialism,” to A.F. of L. unionism, and every other ism that leads away from the revolutionary path that alone means victory for the working class, gave the S.D.P. 97,000 votes. The Socialist Labor Party received 36,000 votes for its Presidential ticket—Joseph F. Malloney, a machinist of Boston, Mass., and Valentine Rimmel, a glass blower of Pittsburgh, Pa.

The enemies of the Socialist Labor Party thought that now the solemn ceremonies at the funeral of the hated S.L.P. would be held, but they found to their sorrow a “corpse” very much alive and kicking.

### *S.L.P. Immediate Demands Dropped*

The convention of 1900 cut off from the party platform the tapeworm of immediate demands and thus took a step forward. De Leon, like all great men, rose to his full height in the hours of danger and his teaching of the uncompromising attitude the proletarian movement is to follow and the necessity of economic organization without which the social revolution cannot be carried out were studied now more closely than before.

The financial aid given to maintain the DAILY PEOPLE by party members and sympathizers indicated clearly enough that the Socialist Labor Party would stay in the field until it had fulfilled its mission. Whatever weak spot there was in the S.L.P. membership was of course now discovered. There were those who could not remain with an organization that had a world of enemies to fight against; these soon left the party. De Leon worked with greater zeal than ever. His editorials in the DAILY PEOPLE were like cannon shots aimed at the armor of capitalism. With De Leon's none of the writings in the best of the Social Democratic sheets could be compared.

There still remain to be told many happenings of the days of the so-called split and the campaign of 1900, a year thereafter—happenings that deeply wounded the young movement which had been guided by the master-hand of Daniel De Leon to make straight for the proletarian revolution. Well may the deeds that inflicted the wounds upon the Socialist Labor Party be called the Crime of 1899. What slander failed to accomplish the false prophets of reform sought to bring about with promises of immediate relief for the workers.

Fifteen years have passed since this Crime of 1899, and twenty-five years since the forces of reform and revolution locked horns in the Socialist Labor movement of America. Well may we ask in this year of our Lord, 1915, where are the immediate relief measures promised? Where are the beautiful things that were to be showered

upon workingmen and women, upon the aged and upon the babes? Is there one among the adherents of reform who is not a self-seeker, and who would deny that the sweet promises made have not materialized, or in De Leon's words, that the promised loaf of bread that was to fall into the worker's lap is not a loaf of bread but a stone? Is there an honest man who can deny that the lot of the wage worker today has not been improved, that immediate relief has not been secured? Yet, that was the tune hummed into the ears of the workers then, and the same tune is hummed into their ears today: Socialism a step at a time, with something now, while the step is not toward Socialism, and the something now turns out to be added misery for the working class.

### *Party Members Stand True*

Once more the 16th Assembly District must be mentioned. In the campaign of 1900 De Leon was again the Socialist Labor Party candidate for member of assembly, with the "Honorable" Samuel Prince running against him on the Tammany ticket, and a dishonorable Kangaroo on the Social Democratic ticket. The statement made in an East Side café the year before the split by a fellow called "Humpy" Hanover, a Tammany heeler, that there would be a split in the Socialist Labor Party and that there would be two Socialist parties in the field in the 16th A.D. came true. De Leon received fifteen hundred votes, or five hundred less than the year before. The Social Democratic candidate running against De Leon received two hundred votes. Prince was re-elected,—Tammany was saved.

The joy in the Tammany camp and in the *Volkszeitung* camp was unbounded. The Socialistische Liedertafel made ready to sing at the funeral of the Socialist Labor Party; how many kegs of beer were consumed in addition to the regular supply only God and the brewing company know. They were a sadly disappointed Liedertafel, for the Socialist Labor Party did not show any signs of dying, in spite of the loss of votes.

Those who remained in the Socialist Labor Party were convinced that the party had taken the correct stand, and that sooner or later the working class would realize this fact and turn to the Socialist Labor Party; that the logic of events, together with the educational work of the DAILY PEOPLE would raise the S.L.P. to be recognized as the only party of Socialism.

The devotion, the sacrifices, the work in behalf of the maintenance of the DAILY PEOPLE will forever remain the brightest day in the life of the party. On the day of its birth, after a march through the streets several hundred comrades waited until four o'clock in the morning to receive the first copy of the paper, the first, and in fact the

only, Socialist daily ever published in the English language. The building situated at 2–6 New Reade street, the birthplace of the DAILY PEOPLE, was torn down several years ago. The party members named it the Daily People Flatiron Building, and it saw many of the struggles that followed the ones of 1899.

All party institutions were housed in this building. The basement was used by the mechanical department; the ground floor by the Labor News Company, the party's literature agency; while the third floor was occupied by the editorial rooms. On the top floor were the offices of the national secretary, also of Section New York, and the national office of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance.

### *De Leon's Sharp Discernment*

De Leon's room on the third floor was the point of the triangle facing due east; a very small room it was, but with plenty of air and morning sunshine. Here De Leon labored day after day pondering over the difficult problems confronting the Labor movement, and here he forged many a weapon with which the arsenal of the Socialist Labor Party bristles and which the workers will use some day to the undoing of capitalist class rule.

An interesting incident at the 1900 national convention may serve to show the prevailing enthusiasm and also how not the smallest of doings escaped the eyes of De Leon. At that convention I was one of the delegates of Section New York. The convention decided to hold an executive session, when important matters dealing with the publication of the DAILY PEOPLE were to be acted upon. This decision meant that only the delegates could be present at that particular session, barring all visitors, even party members. This course had to be taken to prevent the financial weakness of the undertaking being revealed to the many enemies of the party. Among the daily visitors to the convention was Comrade A. Klein, who realized the urgent need of keeping away the spies, but who, being a most loyal S.L.P. member, could not see why he should be kept out of the executive session. Klein and I being members in the same assembly district, and personal friends besides, he came to me, greatly excited, and declared that he must be admitted to the executive session. I informed him that I had only one vote in the convention and could not make special rules for anyone.

Klein was not one of those who could be put off so easily. He had a very deep and strong voice that trembled with emotion when he was speaking about the movement. So brimful of enthusiasm and devotion to the S.L.P. was he that he imagined the destiny of the movement in the 22nd Assembly District and the rest of the universe

rested upon his shoulders. Klein turned on me, his large eyes growing larger, and in his deepest basso voice he pleaded with so much sincerity that I promised to find a means to have him admitted to the executive session. I did not know how this could be done, until a fortunate thought struck me. The convention had appointed a non-delegate, a member of Section New York, as sergeant-at-arms, as is usually done at conventions. That an executive session needed more than one doorkeeper was a good enough theory to advance to have Klein appointed as the assistant sergeant-at-arms. My motion to that effect went through like greased lightning; no one objected—except De Leon, who called to me after the motion was carried, not angrily but nevertheless reprovingly: “Katz, that’s a scheme to get Klein into the executive session.”

Shortly after the 1900 national convention of the Socialist Labor Party the International Socialist Congress was held in the city of Paris. It was at this Congress that the “Kautsky Resolution” was adopted. This resolution, proposed by Karl Kautsky, who posed as the sage of the movement in Germany, aye, in all Europe, was voted for by all the parties represented at that congress, with the exception of a few scattered votes from Italy and Bulgaria, the Irish Workers’ Republican Party, and the Socialist Labor Party of America.

M. Millerand, the present [July, 1915] Minister of War in France, was then an active member in the French Socialist movement. “To save the Republic” he accepted a portfolio in the French ministry, in the same cabinet with General Gallifet, the butcher of the Commune. Jules Guesde and his faction demanded that the International Congress should repudiate Millerandism. Jean Jaures, who at that time had faith in the “co-operation of classes,” asked for an endorsement of Millerand’s action. Kautsky’s resolution was to solve the question,—was he not the best informed Marxist on earth?

### *The “Kautsky Resolution”*

Kautsky’s resolution, which has since become famous—or infamous, according to the viewpoint of ordinary mortals—did not solve anything, and everyone was free to construe the same to his own liking. The Russian Socialist paper *Iskra* called it for that reason the “caoutchouc resolution.” The resolution read:

In a modern democratic State the conquest of the public power by the proletariat cannot be the result of a coup de main; it must be the result of a long and painful work of proletarian organization on the economic and

political fields, of the physical and moral regeneracy of the laboring class, and of the gradual conquest of municipalities and legislative assemblies.

But in countries where the governmental power is centralized, it cannot be conquered fragmentarily.

The accession of an isolated Socialist to a capitalist government cannot be considered as the normal beginning of the conquest of political power, but only as an expedient, imposed, transitory, and exceptional.

Whether, in a particular case, the political situation necessitates this dangerous experiment, is a question of tactics and not of principle; the International Congress has not to declare itself upon this point, but in any case the participation of a Socialist in a capitalist government does not hold out the hope of good results for the militant proletariat, unless a great majority of the Socialist Party approves of such an act and the Socialist minister remains the agent of his party. In the contrary case of this minister becoming independent of his party, or representing only a fraction of it his intervention in capitalist government threatens the militant proletariat with disorganization and confusion, with a weakening instead of a fortifying of it; it threatens to hamper the proletarian conquest of the public powers instead of promoting it.

At any rate, the Congress is of the opinion that even in such extreme cases, a Socialist must leave the ministry when the organized party recognizes that the government gives evidences of partiality in the struggle between capital and labor.

The “kangaroos” loved to tell the tale of how Kautsky disliked De Leon. Perhaps Kautsky did; it does not do much honor to Kautsky if true. Most likely it is true. The authors of such resolutions and Daniel De Leon have not much in common.

### *Sanial and the “Ninnies”*

Lucien Sanial headed the delegation of the Socialist Labor Party to Paris. I used to take pride in being able to imitate Sanial’s French accent, which was so pronounced that once after a mass meeting held at Cooper Union, where Sanial was, as usual then, one of the principal speakers, a comrade who had not attended our meetings before, wanted to know who the man was that had spoken in French! Sanial’s report was interesting, and my desire to reproduce all Sanial said and the way he said it to the members of my dear old 22nd Assembly District, has left an impression still in my memory. Sanial said:

I was on the commission that had to deal with the Kautsky resolution; so

was Jaures, whom I severely criticized. In answer to my criticism Jaures retorted sharply that he could stand all my sarcasm; that he had pretty broad shoulders. Whereupon I replied, “Comrade Jaures, you may have broad shoulders, but they are not broad enough to carry the Kautsky resolution to the members of the Socialist Labor Party in America.”

Sanial in concluding his report denounced the Social Democratic Party whose delegates had of course voted in favor of the Kautsky resolution. These were his closing remarks: “I would rather have 36,000 men who are revolutionists and who know what they want, than a million ninnies who don’t know what Socialism is.” Two years later Sanial joined the “ninnies”—not only Sanial but quite a number of others who were functionaries of the party, agitators, organizers, members of the editorial staff of the DAILY PEOPLE, secretaries of state committees, writers in prose and writers in rhyme—all went helter-skelter down the incline from the heights occupied by the Socialist Labor Party. So many went down and with such swiftness that De Leon remarked that he had to look at himself in the mirror at least once a day to find out whether he had not gone with the others!

### *The “Little Kangaroo” Exodus*

How did it all happen? What caused the “kanglet” or “little kangaroo” outbreak of 1901–1902? Did the Socialist Labor Party change from its revolutionary position; did the party renounce its attitude toward pure and simple unions; did De Leon violate any of the party’s principles? No, nothing of the sort happened, but those who left the Socialist Labor Party, or others who were made to leave, had changed their minds, even as did the ones who according to the books of Moses returned to the flesh pots of Egypt.

Some got tired when they realized that the onward march of the revolutionary Socialist Labor Party would not be a succession of brilliant dashes carrying with it all the glory in a day. Others saw a very meager opportunity for an easy life; some were made to believe that the Socialist Labor Party was doomed, and still others of the rank and file were misled, the majority of whom, however, realizing their mistake, came back again into the folds of the party.

Here we come across Charles Vanderporten again. In 1901, at a May Day meeting, he thus explained the difference between the Socialist Labor Party and the Social Democratic Party: “The difference,” said Vanderporten, taking a silver dollar out of his pocket and showing it to the audience, “is this: this is a genuine silver dollar.

There are imitations of everything that is genuine; there are counterfeit silver dollars, but," continued Vanderporten, to the delight of his auditors, "the counterfeit dollar hasn't got the ring. So with the S.D.P., it's a counterfeit of the Socialist Labor Party, and does not ring true." Vanderporten a few months after this speech joined the party he himself had characterized as counterfeit.

Vanderporten no doubt sounded afterward the coin of the counterfeit party and it must have sounded good enough to him.

### *S.P. Corruption a Brake*

Altogether, the shock which the party received when the "little kang" affair followed so closely the Crime of 1899 was the supreme test of its strength. The Socialist Labor Party survived it all. The intrigues failed. The danger was great, the life of the Socialist Labor Party was certainly threatened. When the membership saw Vogt, Sanial, Fiebiger, Forker, Curran, and a score of others who were speakers and writers, turn against the S.L.P. it required moral fibre, strong convictions, and unbending determination to hold aloft the S.L.P. banner. At least in a negative way at this time, in a manner to be described here, the Socialist Party, as it now styled itself, rendered valuable assistance to the Socialist Labor Party.

While intrigue against the party by former Socialist Labor Party officials was the order of the day, and resignations of individuals and even state organizations came thick and fast, and all looked dark as night, so that members and sympathizers of the Socialist Labor Party were overcome by a feeling of uncertainty, the Socialist Party conducted itself in a manner that was bound to turn one imbued with revolutionary principles to the Socialist Labor Party. The corrupt practices, the log-rolling with capitalist political parties, the grovelling before the American Federation of Labor leaders, and the hunt for votes without considering Socialist principles, did much to keep steady the hand of Socialist Labor Party men and women, and had a tendency to make the latter realize that no matter who left the Socialist Labor Party, no matter how many lampoons were sent out by soreheads, the principles of the party were correct, that the Socialist Labor Party had to be upheld. So the resignations of prominent members finally had the effect that greater efforts were made to maintain the party and its press.

The 1902 eruption started with the notorious Hickey case. T.A. Hickey had been employed by the Socialist Labor Party as agitator and organizer, and at the time here mentioned he was a member of the editorial staff of the DAILY PEOPLE. Hickey as a

speaker was applauded to a degree that completely wiped out his modesty, of which he never possessed any great amount. Because he was regarded as a good speaker, aided by his Irish witticisms, which generally took well, Hickey became possessed of the belief that he was the most important asset of the organization. He failed to appear as a speaker where Sections had arranged meetings, and sought to excuse his conduct with most flimsy statements.

### *Conduct of T.A. Hickey*

For literature sold en route Hickey had no inclination to account, and when asked to appear before the grievance committee of Section New York he claimed the Section had no jurisdiction over him. He, the great Hickey, would not allow such a conglomeration as the membership of the Section of the party in New York to judge him. His work on the DAILY PEOPLE was altogether unsatisfactory—in fact, he left the work to others, and was finally dismissed.

Party members who heard Hickey going around denouncing the membership of Section New York were indignant against him. Among these were Julian Pierce, the manager of the Labor News Company, the very one who preferred charges against Hickey, but who later joined the queer set that denounced the Socialist Labor Party, and which included Hickey. Politics makes strange bed-fellows, and so does intrigue. Hickey's protestations and denunciations alone would have been without any effect, for in spite of his abilities as a soapbox orator no one ever suspected Hickey of possessing force of character or faculties for deep thought.

Hickey's cause was to the surprise of all taken up by a man whose name has been mentioned in these reminiscences a number of times, Hugo Vogt, the former editor of the party's German organ, the able writer and lecturer, who was regarded as a tower of strength in the movement. Little did the party members know that Vogt, who was now the manager of the DAILY PEOPLE, was breaking down under the weight of the responsibilities heaped upon him, work and responsibilities to which Vogt was unaccustomed. Vogt was a clever theoretician, a forceful speaker, but he was not at all fitted for the office he held as DAILY PEOPLE business manager, and should certainly not have accepted the job. Vogt barely measured five feet and had a frail physique.

### *The "Brotherhood of Booze"*

It was the fact that Vogt was rapidly breaking down, physically, mentally, and morally that made him associate with and take the part of Hickey. Hickey having

Vogt to defend him, went around like a desperado, shouting defiance at the party, especially when under the influence of liquor, which was very frequently and for long periods.

Max Forker, another one among the agitators and organizers, the best German speaker in the Socialist Labor Party and Vogt's "college chum," was in a great degree the cause of Vogt's conduct. Forker was one of those who have the fixed idea that the elixir of life and action is to be found in the glass filled to the brim with the juice of the grape, hops and malt, or barley, or corn, or rye (he was not particular which, so long as the juice was well fermented or distilled). Forker had the physique to stand a good quantity of any beverage or liquor without any visible signs of bad effect, and since Vogt was overworked Forker recommended the stimulative cup to him, which, however, had a disastrous effect upon the physically weaker man, Vogt. This partaking of stimulants became a regular habit among a few other members, until several of them formed "the brotherhood of booze" that was bound to have serious consequences and deplorable results.

Again, in other quarters at this same period members who had at first no connections with this "brotherhood" began to find fault with the party administration. The principal ones were a few members of the party in Pittsburgh, Pa., at that time a bright spot on the map of the Socialist Labor Party. Among the latter was the secretary of the Pennsylvania State Committee, Eberle, and his associates Goff, Adams, Schulberg, and others. They contended that Pittsburgh should be the seat of the national headquarters of the party, that the organization of the Socialist Labor Party and the Alliance was more formidable there than in New York; that there was a greater tonnage of wealth produced in the Pittsburgh district than elsewhere (which was quite true, as pig iron is heavy of weight); that Pittsburgh was the "logical center"; that headquarters should be moved to Pittsburgh forthwith, with Eberle incidentally in the position of National Secretary, for while I did not hear Eberle sing that song, "I want a situation. I want it very badly, etc.," that was the real object of the chief of the "logical centrists," as they were called afterward.

### *Disruptive Elements Combined*

A member from New York who had moved to Pittsburgh, one Wegeman, who was extremely bald-headed and who wore spectacles, posed as a sort of intellectual celebrity. Wegeman had in addition to his baldness of head a diminutively flat nose, and wore a Van Dyke beard, so that at first glance he looked all head and whiskers.

This individual denounced the party administration in New York to the members in Pittsburgh, who evidently mistook Wegeman's baldness for a high forehead—a dome of intellect chockful of knowledge and wisdom. Many of the members discovered this optical illusion soon, but not before a whole lot of harm had been done. The “brotherhood of booze” in New York was pleased, and welcomed the new allies, the “logical centrists.”

The “logical centrists” and the “brotherhood of booze” received aid and comfort from unexpected quarters. H. Keiser, James. P. Reid, and Thomas Curran, of Rhode Island, all very influential members of the party in “Little Rhody,” also turned against the Socialist Labor Party, and thus a sort of “triple alliance” was formed to smash the party.

This combination was joined by an additional or fourth element in New York, which trained with Julian Pierce, then manager of the Labor News Company. Pierce had nothing in common with Hickey or Vogt; he was a sober man, in fact the very one, as already stated, who preferred charges against Hickey at the outset of the whole affair. The fellows who stood with Pierce were the two Ephraims: Ephraim Siff and Ephraim Harris, and a few others with saintly names but Luciferic motives. They wanted to discontinue the DAILY PEOPLE and turn the DAILY PEOPLE plant into a money-making enterprise. The Pierce-Siff aggregation became known, accordingly, as the “Daily People Killers’ League.”

### *United by Jealousy of De Leon*

The “triple alliance” became a quadruple concern, but none of its component parts dared openly to assail the Socialist Labor Party principles or tactics; they all claimed to be in accord with the basic principles of the Socialist Labor Party. In attacking the party they all hid their real object behind generalities and personal attacks upon De Leon, Kuhn, and what they termed in their lampoons the “managing powers.”

Vogt had only contempt for Siff and Pierce; the “logical centrists” were not in love with their Rhode Island allies, and Pierce disliked all the rest, for he considered himself a “logical center” all by himself. The only thing they all had in common, like their predecessors of 1899, was hatred for the man whose inferiors they all well enough knew themselves to be intellectually and morally—Daniel De Leon.

Those were indeed critical days. Lampoon followed lampoon—sent broadcast by the four groups that were bent upon killing the Socialist Labor Party. Some good

fellows were drawn into the vortex that for a spell gained quite some force. Peter Fiebiger, who because of his good nature and his liberal contributions to the party funds we called "Saint Peter," and Peter Damm, who because of his name was frequently called "Damn Peter," were two men of the latter kind.

It was at this time that old Lucien Sanial was persuaded by Vogt and Eberle to join the "logical centrists." Sanial sent a letter of resignation from the S.L.P. to the National Executive Committee. The sending of a resignation from the party to any other body than the Section of which Sanial was a member betrayed the man's knowledge of facts relating to party organization and its laws and regulations. The National Executive Committee notified Sanial of his mistake, but wishing to save Sanial for his own sake, offered to send a committee to Northport, L.I., where he lived, to have the whole situation in the party gone over thoroughly.

### *Sanial's Avoidance of an Understanding*

De Leon, who at that time was with his family at Milford, Conn., wrote that he too would like to meet Sanial; in fact, De Leon suggested that Sanial should be the judge in the case. De Leon closed his letter by saying, "If Sanial finds that I am in the way of harmony in the party, I am willing to migrate to Kokomo." Sanial replied that the committee need not call, that for the time being he would withdraw his resignation, and that he would come to New York to meet the committee which had been elected by the National Executive Committee to meet him. (This committee consisted of John J. Kinneally and Henry Kuhn.)

Sanial did not keep his word. He did not come to meet the committee, nor did he make his appearance in party headquarters. Instead a lampoon written against the S.L.P. by Sanial was added to the number already issued by the disrupters.

All the four groups of the latter were heard by Sanial; they looked him up and filled his ears with tales of a horrible reign of terror in the Socialist Labor Party. Sanial knew better, but evidently a bit of jealousy against De Leon played a part.

That Sanial knew better was shown by his escape from facing the committee of the N.E.C. which he promised to meet but did not dare to meet. He refused to act as a judge in open court where all sides would have been heard, but did assume all the functions of a judge in a court where accusations were whispered, where the defendant could not appear, and the light of day could not break through. After presiding in such a court Sanial issued his "opinion," closing with the following words:

*A "Boomerang" Prophecy*

Every bad tendency will run its course, and Socialism will survive; then woe to the men whose petty interests, mean ambitions, and vile intrigues may have for an instant arrested its progress and smirched its name.

De Leon had a column in the DAILY PEOPLE reserved for the "little kang," under the headline: "Light Is Breaking." In this column the above prophetic warning written by Sanial was kept standing. It was like the feather cast by the eagle that feathered the arrow which pierced the eagle's breast.

The bad tendency did run its course, and Socialism and the Socialist Labor Party did survive. The four-cornered conspiracy disintegrated and most of its leaders, including Sanial, Pierce, Eberle, and others found their way into the Socialist Party, the same party so vehemently denounced by all of them.

In the 1902 election the Socialist Labor Party received over 50,000 votes. The DAILY PEOPLE blazed uninterruptedly its shot of fire against capitalism and its outposts,—the Socialist Labor Party square remained unbroken.

In the 1902 Congressional election the Socialist Party received nearly a quarter of a million votes, votes caught in the manner that fish are caught, and by no means cast for revolutionary Socialism. The opportunistic immediate demands, palliatives, reform of and within the frame of the capitalist political State were the main issues, besides the catering to the American Federation of Labor,—which organization De Leon characterized as being neither American, nor a federation, nor of labor—brought votes to the Socialist Party. If votes alone had been the only factor in decreeing the fate of the Socialist Labor Party, again the wishes and prophecies of its enemies would have been fulfilled, and the Socialist Labor Party would have died once more.

The Socialist Party, intoxicated with its big vote, enlarged and spread out wider its vote-catching nets, heralding every reformer who was suspected of being in favor of government ownership of railroads or municipal ownership of water-works or garbage-burning plants, as "coming our way." And with the possibilities of landing somebody in office the Socialist Party attracted to itself large quantities of would-be intellectuals, physicians without a practice, lawyers without clients, ministers of the gospel without congregations, all with hearts bleeding for the suffering working class, all possessed with the itch for office and the gift of smooth talk. Thus the Socialist Party grew rapidly. Once having gained the numbers, that in turn gave that movement the momentum to gain still larger numbers and still smaller proportions of the kind of numbers that are needed to carry out the social revolution.

*S.L.P.'s Tenacity a Surprise*

The innocents among the rank and file of the Socialist Party could not understand why the Socialist Labor Party refused to abide by the majority and how it continued its existence. That the Socialist Labor Party could publish a daily paper in the English language was a puzzle to a good many of these innocents, who were bled by the bigger party to maintain its many papers, all privately owned. The leaders of the Socialist Party tried to explain how it was “all on account of that fiend De Leon,” “who was being supplied with funds by capitalists,” and “whose influence alone kept the Socialist Labor Party together.” Other similar tales were told, such as before the period of enlightenment were told to children to keep them well-behaved and afraid of the bad bogey-man.

While mere numbers were thus gathered the DAILY PEOPLE and its editor were held in awe by these story-tellers, because their many schemes to turn a dollar out of the movement by all sorts of fake advertisements, “get rich quick” methods, selling of gold mine stock by “millionaire Socialists,” and other gold brick swindles, all under the cloak of Socialism, were promptly exposed in the columns of the Socialist Labor Party organ. So also were exposed the crooked political deals of Socialist Party candidates in accepting endorsements from both the Republican and Democratic camps of the capitalist political parties.

The Socialist Party editors of the privately-owned papers simply denounced every exposure of their ill-doing as a “Daily People lie,” notwithstanding the fact that De Leon offered for inspection in every case documents proving the charges.

Two “answers” the S.P.ites had always ready (and it is so even unto this day) when the incriminating documents were held under their noses: First, that the party was not responsible for the acts of individuals, locals, or state committees; second, that they had the vote anyway. “What was the good of taking the correct position, preventing corruption, and not have votes?”

*De Leon's Educational Work*

Thus, while the Socialist Party leaders were employing every method to get votes, more votes, with an office captured here and there and everywhere, and Socialism was used by them as a means to feather their own nests, De Leon bent down to the task of supplying the English-speaking proletariat with most useful knowledge, by translating from the German Marx's *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, Bebel's *Woman under Socialism* (“Die Frau und der Sozialismus”), and from the French the monumental

masterpiece of Eugene Sue, *The Mysteries of The People, or History of a Proletarian Family Across the Ages*.

Again, what a contrast between De Leon and the writers of books, the “authors,” in the other camp. There, writers of pamphlets and books mostly without an original thought, a rehash of what others had taught and written, in some instances even plagiarizing De Leon’s great lectures, *What Means This Strike?* and *Reform or Revolution*, and invariably paid for by a publisher; here, a man who, having all the qualifications of a man of letters, preferred to translate what he thought useful for the training of the class conscious workers, and equipping them with the knowledge requisite for their emancipation, rather than appear as the author on the title page, with his autograph at so much per volume. For all the literary work outside of the editorship of the *Daily* and WEEKLY PEOPLE, including the voluminous Sue book translations (21 volumes), De Leon did not accept a cent, and when a magazine such as *The Independent* paid De Leon for an article of his, De Leon turned the amount over to the party. De Leon was denounced by some people as a fanatic. The Socialist Party certainly cannot be charged with having in its midst any such “fanatic”; quite the contrary.

### *James Connolly’s Trip to America*

At this time (1902) James Connolly, editor of the Irish *Workers’ Republic*, a paper published in Dublin, came to America on a lecturing tour, by invitation and under the auspices of the Socialist Labor Party. Connolly played a very sorry role in after years, so it may be well to tell here how Connolly happened to receive the invitation of the party to cross the big pond and make speeches in America.

The party administration was not very much in favor of inviting men from abroad to deliver speeches in a country in which they were strangers and the conditions of which they did not understand and did not care to study and understand. This attitude was based on the experiences of the Socialist Labor Party with practically all the orators who had been invited before Connolly. Some had turned out to be Anarcho-reformists or reformo-Anarchists, like Serati, who came from Italy, or like Palm of Sweden who, after touring the United States, told his countrymen that America was an Eldorado for workingmen!

The plea that was made in behalf of Connolly by his friends in New York, the reason advanced why he should be invited to lecture for the Socialist Labor Party, was that he would not be coming to teach but to learn; that all the British pure and simple

labor leaders who had visited “the States” were misinforming the workers in Great Britain and Ireland about the Socialist Labor Party, and that when Connolly wanted to expose them he was told, “What do you know about the labor movement in America? You were never there; we were.” Connolly wanted to visit America to be able upon his return home to grind to dust all the misleaders of labor in Dublin and Cork.

A young, enthusiastic Irishman, a member of Section New York, Barney O’Toole, appeared a number of times before the National Executive Committee urging that Connolly be invited. Connolly came, and an extensive tour was arranged for him. He received a weekly salary while lecturing for the Socialist Labor Party, and was also granted the privilege of selling subscriptions to the Irish *Workers’ Republic*. Connolly made some pretty good speeches, sold quite a number of his subscriptions, and returned home. But soon afterward (as some comrades had predicted) he returned to this country. Evidently he liked things here better than the “annihilating” of labor fakers abroad.

### *Connolly’s Sorry Role*

Because a situation was not given him by the party when he arrived, Connolly began finding fault with the editor of THE PEOPLE. He insisted upon certain articles of his on wages, marriage, and the church being published in the DAILY PEOPLE. Connolly’s contention, embodied in these articles, was that Bebel’s *Woman Under Socialism* was a lewd book. The appearance was that Connolly’s letters were inspired by Ultramontanism, and De Leon refused to publish some of them. The 1904 national convention of the party to which De Leon reported the “Connolly matter,” endorsed De Leon’s action.

Still Connolly’s expression of his opinion, contrary though it was to the opinions of the whole membership of the Socialist Labor Party, did not lead to any ill feeling on the part of De Leon toward him nor did the party Sections show any ill will toward Connolly. On the contrary, many of the Sections invited him to deliver speeches at their meetings, and a friend of the Socialist Labor Party secured a job for Connolly in a machine shop.

When a man has the ambition to wield the pen and deliver orations from the public rostrum it is mighty hard to be compelled by cruel fate to use a monkey wrench instead of a pen, and the workshop bench instead of the speaker’s stand. Connolly thought himself outraged because he was not employed on the editorial staff of the DAILY PEOPLE, and awaited his time to strike a blow at De Leon, who he thought was

in his way in reaching his object.

That time came a few years later, the description of which will form another chapter in these reminiscences, but Connolly's subsequent acts will be more easily understood by remembering these happenings relating to his first coming to America.

### *Western Federation of Miners*

The year 1904 was an eventful one in the history of the American Socialist and labor movement. In the Western mining states it seemed that an awakening had taken place. The object lessons given the workers by Governor Peabody of Colorado and Governor Steunenburg of Idaho, two representatives of raw-boned capitalism, were indeed sufficient to warrant such an awakening.

The members of the Western Federation of Miners struck to enforce the eight-hour law, a law the passage of which it had secured through a constitutional amendment in the state of Colorado after a long-drawn struggle. De Leon's statement that "the tiger will fight for the tips of his mustache with the same ferocity with which he would defend his very life," was illustrated in the bitter class war in Colorado in 1903–1904.

The deportations of members of the Western Federation of Miners, the violation of every law of decency by the ruling powers, the erection of so-called bull-pens, where workers were imprisoned without due process of law; the turning of the mining districts of the state into military camps, with all that such a condition implies,—all this was surely enough to create an awakening in the ranks of organized labor.

The Western Federation of Miners had withdrawn from the American Federation of Labor in 1897, and was regarded as a progressive economic organization. The American Labor Union was practically only another name for the Western Federation of Miners, called into existence to give the miners' union a national character. It was the organ of that body, the *American Labor Union Journal*, that gave cause for the hope that an awakening had taken place. The articles in this paper denounced craft unionism as well as pure and simple Socialist politics. It looked very much as though the leaders of this Western movement had at last grasped the situation and were beginning to heed the teachings of Daniel De Leon.

How much, in this formative period of industrial unionism, the articles in this journal resembled De Leon's position may be seen from the following quotations, the first from De Leon's great lecture, *The Burning Question of Trade Unionism*, delivered at Newark, N. J., on April 21, 1904, and the second from an article in the *American*

*Labor Union Journal* in the December issue of the same year. From De Leon's *Burning Question of Trade Unionism*:

*Followed De Leon's Lead*

The parliament of civilization in America will consist, not of Congressmen from geographic districts, but of representatives of trades throughout the land, and their legislative work will not be the complicated one which a society of conflicting interests, such as capitalism requires, but the easy one which can be summed up in the statistics of the wealth needed, the wealth producible, and the work required—and that any average set of workingmen's representatives are fully able to ascertain infinitely better than our modern rhetoricians in Congress. . . .

\* \* \* \* \*

In the first place, the trade union has a supreme mission. That mission is nothing short of organizing by uniting, and uniting by organizing, the whole working class industrially—not merely those for whom there are jobs; accordingly, not only those who can pay dues. This unification or organization is essential in order to save the eventual and possible victory from bankruptcy, by enabling the working class to assume and conduct production the moment the guns of the public powers fall into its hands—or before, if need be, if capitalist political chicanery pollutes the ballot-box. The mission is important also in that the industrial organization forecasts the future constituencies of the parliaments of the Socialist Republic.

From *American Labor Union Journal*, December, 1904:

The economic organization of the proletariat is the heart and soul of the Socialist movement, of which the political party is simply the public expression at the ballot-box. The purpose of industrial unionism is to organize the working class in approximately the same departments of production and distribution as those which will obtain in the Co-operative Commonwealth, so that, if the workers should lose their franchise, they would still possess an economic organization intelligently trained to take over and collectively administer the tools of industry and the sources of wealth for themselves.

The leaders in the American Labor Union were members of the Socialist Party—at least a good many of them were. This made the situation still more hopeful, for if the men who advocated industrial unionism should carry their convictions into the Socialist Party camp it could only mean the recognition of the correctness of

Socialist Labor Party principles, and unity would be bound to follow.

The members of the Socialist Labor Party in the East did not question the integrity of the American Labor Union leadership; least of all did De Leon himself, who, judging men by his own standard of sincerity and earnestness, trusted the men at the head of this new movement to be sincere. At the 1904 national convention of the Socialist Labor Party a delegate from Colorado, Chas. H. Chase, who knew most of the officials in the American Labor Union, declared his doubts as to their integrity. Time proved Chase's suspicions well founded. Nevertheless, the events that followed demonstrated that De Leon foresaw the birth of the industrial union from which the revolutionary Socialist could not stand apart, and that, regardless of the character of some of its founders, was a long step toward the social revolution.

### *De Leon at Amsterdam Congress*

At the 1904 national convention of the Socialist Labor Party, Charles H. Corregan of New York and William W. Cox of Illinois were chosen as the party's standard bearers in that Presidential election. Corregan's speech at a ratification meeting held in Cooper Union still lingers in the memory of many Socialist Labor Party men who heard him that night. The "little giant" was at his best.

In August, 1904, the International Congress was held at Amsterdam. De Leon represented at that Congress the Socialist Labor Party of the United States, and held also credentials from the Socialist Labor Parties of Australia and Canada.

The Kautsky resolution adopted at the Paris Congress in 1900, which practically confirmed the acceptance of a ministerial post by Millerand, was the most important question to be acted upon by the Congress. Millerand had become a party to the shooting by the military of striking workmen at Chalon and Martinique by remaining a member of the French Cabinet while those butcheries were perpetrated.

The revolutionary spirit among European Socialists was not then so conspicuous by its absence as in these latter days; the words of Wilhelm Liebknecht, that "to parliamentarize means to sell out" were still ringing in the ears of many among the rank and file. The International Congress of 1904 was looked up to to wipe out the shame of the Kautsky resolution. The original Kautsky resolution was not repealed or reaffirmed, but was replaced by another resolution originally adopted at the national convention of the German Social Democratic Party held in 1903 at Dresden. The only resolution submitted that unqualifiedly and without sophistry repudiated the Kautsky resolution was the following one submitted by Daniel De Leon:

*De Leon's Resolution Against Compromise*

Whereas, The struggle between the working class and the capitalist class is a continuous and irrepressible conflict, a conflict that tends every day rather to be intensified than to be softened;

Whereas, The existing governments are committees of the ruling class, intended to safeguard the yoke of capitalist exploitation upon the neck of the working class;

Whereas, At the last International Congress, held in Paris, in 1900, a resolution generally known as the Kautsky Resolution, was adopted, the closing clauses of which contemplate the emergency of the working class accepting office at the hand of such capitalist governments, and also and especially PRESUPPOSE THE POSSIBILITY OF IMPARTIALITY ON THE PART OF THE RULING CLASS GOVERNMENTS IN THE CONFLICTS BETWEEN THE WORKING CLASS AND THE CAPITALIST CLASS; and

Whereas, the said clauses—applicable, perhaps, in countries not yet wholly freed from feudal institutions—were adopted under conditions both in France and in the Paris Congress itself, that justify erroneous conclusions on the nature of the class struggle, the character of capitalist governments, and the tactics that are imperative upon the proletariat in the pursuit of its campaign to overthrow the capitalist system in countries, which, like the United States of America, have wholly wiped out feudal institutions; therefore, be it

Resolved, First, That the said Kautsky Resolution be and the same is hereby repealed as a principle of general Socialist tactics;

Second, That, in fully developed capitalist countries like America, the working class cannot, without betrayal of the cause of the proletariat, fill any political office other than they conquer for and by themselves.

That De Leon's vote alone was cast in favor of this clear-cut resolution demonstrates that De Leon stood head and shoulders and some more above the leaders of the Socialist movement in Europe. In De Leon's *Flashlights of the Amsterdam Congress* men and conditions in the movement abroad are depicted in a manner which subsequent happenings have proved to be as accurate as pictures of a panorama caught upon the film by the camera. At the Amsterdam Congress the following "Unity Resolution" was adopted:

*Amsterdam Unity Resolution*

In order that the working class may develop its full strength in the struggle against capitalism, it is necessary there should be but one Socialist party in

each country as against the parties of capitalists, just as there is but one proletariat in each country.

For these reasons all comrades and all Socialist organizations have the imperative duty to seek to the utmost of their power to bring about this unity of the party, on the basis of the principles established by the International Conventions; that unity which is necessary in the interests of the proletariat, to which they are responsible for the disastrous consequences of the continuation of divisions within their ranks.

To assist in the attainment of this aim the International Socialist Bureau, as well as all parties within the countries where unity now exists will cheerfully offer their services and co-operation.

Following the Amsterdam Congress the columns of the DAILY PEOPLE were opened to the discussion of the question of unity, and this theme became the all absorbing topic, interest being increased by the fact that at the same time the Industrial Union movement had begun to take shape, presupposing on the part of its advocates the acceptance or recognition of Socialist Labor Party premises, the necessity of a class conscious economic organization.

A young man just out of college made his debut at the 1904 national convention of the Socialist Labor Party. Many thought that the young man was quite an acquisition to the movement. With the physique of an athlete, the air of a college professor, and the politeness of a funeral director at a first class funeral, when the funeral fees are paid in advance, he was hailed by the delegates as the man of the hour. This young man was Frank Bohn.

### *Advent of Frank Bohn*

Bohn was made national organizer of the party, made extensive trips through the country, and wrote very many reports and letters to party headquarters, depicting how he was carrying the message of the Socialist Labor Party to the workers everywhere, aye, even into the darkest corners of the Socialist Party.

De Leon held Bohn in high esteem and regarded him as a man who had the capacity to take his (De Leon's) place in the editorial chair of the DAILY PEOPLE. It may be, too, that Bohn at that time actually was what De Leon and other party members thought him to be—a well-informed, level-headed, studious, able, and devoted adherent of the sacred cause of proletarian emancipation. The fact that a few years later he turned on the Socialist Labor Party, the organization which he himself had declared to be the only true party of Socialism, does by no means determine

insincerity in his earlier days. Men are not born traitors, and the most degraded prostitute was without doubt a virtuous maiden once upon a time.

While traveling as an organizer of the Socialist Labor Party Bohn came into personal contact with some of the leading men who were at the time laboring to bring about a concrete body of the revolutionary forces of the labor movement on the economic field.

Some of the conferences held at Chicago by officials of the Western Federation of Miners, the American Labor Union, and individual members of other organizations for the purpose of calling a convention to form such a union of workers were attended by Bohn, and when the Industrial Union Manifesto was issued in February, 1905, Bohn's signature was one of those attached to it. Bohn was the only member of the Socialist Labor Party who had his signature attached to that document. The other signers were practically all members of the Socialist Party.

### *Industrial Union Manifesto*

Very few members of the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance questioned the integrity of the authors of the Industrial Union Manifesto. Some of those who had their signatures attached to that document, however, had an unsavory reputation, such as A.M. Simons and a few more of his kind. It was explained by Bohn, however, that Simons had his signature attached to save the circulation of the *International Socialist Review*, and that fellows like Simons were the fifth wheel of the wagon anyhow—the men who were actually the prime movers, the head and soul, were Wm. D. Haywood, of the Western Federation of Miners; Clarence Smith, editor of the *American Labor Union Journal*; Wm. E. Trautmann, editor of the *Brewery Workers' Journal*; Thos. Hagerty, the ex-priest,—all of whom were known to have publicly given utterance against pure and simple politicianism. Eugene V. Debs, whose signature also was attached to the Manifesto, did not personally participate in the conferences; his signature was obtained by appeals to his consistency, by reminding him of his verbal declarations and his promises.

The Manifesto threw a breath of new life into the Socialist and labor movement; it aroused the working class spirit of class consciousness among men who had formerly not been reached by the advocates of revolutionary unionism; in the ranks of the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance it was hailed as the “turning of the lane,” as a realization and acceptance of all that Daniel De Leon had taught and insisted upon. Among the American Federation of Labor leadership and

Socialist Party officialdom it created apprehension of what might be in store for them should the new movement succeed.

The Manifesto called upon all trade union bodies regardless of immediate affiliation and upon all individual members of the working class to attend a convention in July, 1905, at Chicago.

### *De Leon at First I. W. W. Convention*

De Leon and twelve other Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance delegates attended the first convention, where the Industrial Workers of the World was founded. I was not present at the first or the second convention of the I.W.W., but the stenographic reports of the proceedings of these two conventions are today historical documents that can be read by all who are seeking to be well informed.

It is not within the scope of these reminiscences to describe in detail the many interesting and important happenings at the first I.W.W. convention. Suffice it to say that it was due to Daniel De Leon that the stenographic report of that convention was taken. De Leon foresaw what might come. No one can prevent the enemies of the movement, the wolves in sheep's clothing, from spreading their slanders, nor can every slanderer be answered even when he deserves answer.

As regards the motives of De Leon and the S.T. & L.A. delegation, the stenographic report of the first I.W.W. convention answers them all in advance. It shows that De Leon stood for and fought for the essential principles without which Socialism would remain an aspiration and the goal never be reached.

The Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance was installed in the Industrial Workers of the World with a membership of 1,400. Not one of the S.T. & L.A. men was elected at the first convention to the General Executive Board and yet the S.T. & L.A. was the only body that became part of the I.W.W. that had the actual membership it claimed to have, and upon which the vote in the convention was allotted. The Western Federation of Miners delegates claimed 27,000 members, but never actually paid the per capita tax to the organization. The Metal Workers claimed 3,000 members, and the voting strength of its delegates was based upon that number, but it existed only on paper; yet one of its delegates, Sherman, was elected president of the new organization. Wm. E. Trautmann was elected general secretary-treasurer.

Leaving the convention, De Leon delivered his great lecture on *The Preamble of*

*the Industrial Workers of the World*,<sup>1</sup> at Minneapolis, Minn. This lecture is in itself a strategic chart of the course that must be taken by the organized workers to assure the road to victory.

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<sup>1</sup> [Subsequently published as *Socialist Reconstruction of Society*.—Editor.]

# FROM 1905 TO THE SPLIT IN THE I.W.W. IN 1908

**High Hopes Raised by New Union—Perfidy of the S.P.—Discord Within the I.W.W. and S.L.P.—De Leon’s Fight Against “Physical Force Only”**

**T**HE SOCIALIST TRADE AND LABOR ALLIANCE not only actually installed its membership in the Industrial Workers of the World, but became the most active force in the new organization. All the pent-up energy of the S.T. & L.A. was now put into action. Locals of the I.W.W. were organized wherever the S.T. & L.A. and the S.L.P. had adherents.

The zeal displayed by these organizations in behalf of the I.W.W. gave the officialdom of the Socialist Party and other reactionary elements a pretense to make all sorts of allegations to the effect that De Leon and the S.L.P. were out to gain control of the I.W.W., to use such control to bolster up “the dying S.L.P.,” which after having been proclaimed dead and buried many times, again was attested to be alive and full of vigor. How sincerely the membership of the S.L.P. worked for the I.W.W., expecting the only reward that men and women who hold a cause higher than all else expect, was shown by the fact that the year following the first I.W.W. convention the political propaganda work of the party was considered secondary in importance, and in some states wholly neglected.

In New York city the existing S.T. & L.A. locals, which were all chartered by the I.W.W., formed the basis for an industrial council, a central body of industrial unions that looked very full of promise indeed. Although the former S.T. & L.A. men were in the majority in this district council they did at no time as much as assert their connection with the S.L.P., so as not to give offense to some delegates who were S.P. members, like Hanneman; ultra conservatives like Keough, of the stationary engineers, or Anarchists like Dumas, of the silk workers.

The self-denying, conciliatory demeanor of the former S.T. & L.A. men was of no avail, for it soon became as plain as day that no matter to what lengths of tolerance the delegates who were true industrial unionists went, there were always some who shouted that they were abused by De Leonites.

*High Hopes Raised by Debs*

In December, 1905, Debs came to New York to speak for the I.W.W. His first speech was delivered before a large audience in one of New York's largest halls, the Grand Central Palace. This speech was taken down stenographically, and afterward published in pamphlet form. Surely none could find fault with anything the speech contained. It was perhaps the soundest speech Debs ever made.

That day, Dec. 10, I saw some of the brightest expressions on the faces of both S.L.P. and S.P. men,—the revolutionary union, presaging the unity of the workers on the political and the economic fields, was here. There were also some very, very sad countenances to behold, such as the notorious peddler, Michaelovsky, for whose special edification De Leon had a “Letter-box” answer appear in THE PEOPLE in Hebrew characters. Michaelovsky, a dyed-in-the-wool S.P.-ite, an old man with a white beard, paced nervously back and forth in a room back of the stage while Debs was speaking, with knitted brow and clenched fists. “Ah!” he said to me, sneeringly, “now you have got a new Moses!”

We had our fun with the *Volkszeitung*, too, then. Shurtleff, the official representative of the General Executive Board of the I.W.W., organizer of “musical industrial unions” and organizer for the New York district of any other kind of industrial union, etc., etc., was bent upon having the Debs meeting advertised in the *Volkszeitung*. I accompanied him to the *Volkszeitung*'s office; it was the first time since July 10, 1899, that I had stepped on *Volkszeitung* premises. The advertisement we presented was not only for the meeting at Grand Central Palace where Debs alone was to speak, but for two other meetings as well, where Debs and De Leon were to speak together. When the *Volkszeitung* employee saw what the ad contained he changed colors. “Wait a minute,” he said, and rushed to the editorial department. He returned more composed and with a forced smile. “All right, we will insert it,” “How much?” asked the grand musical organizer, who, I forgot to say, was an S.P. man. “Seventeen dollars,” replied his S.P. comrade of the *Volkszeitung*. The ad went in; the I.W.W. paid the price; it was dear, but it was worth the money.

*Debs and De Leon Together*

Of course, the DAILY PEOPLE and all other S.L.P. organs published all announcements of meetings of the I.W.W. without asking payment, no doubt some more of that De Leonistic fanaticism, of which Socialist Party papers are utterly devoid.

The night following the Debs meeting at Grand Central Palace, Debs, Sherman, and De Leon spoke in a large hall in the Bronx. Sam French was appointed by the District Council to act as chairman. French was late, and I had to act in his stead as chairman of this memorable meeting—memorable because the first where Debs and De Leon addressed an audience together, and because both Debs and De Leon were at their best. Sherman was sandwiched in between the two and cut a sorry figure.

It was a grand meeting. The audience consisted of men and women from both the Socialist Labor Party and the Socialist Party, members and sympathizers. Debs's speech was better than the one stenographically reported which he had delivered the day before. De Leon's speech was a masterpiece. The audience applauded both speakers loudly and long.

In introducing the speakers I was not prepared to deliver a eulogy; it is not S.L.P. style, anyhow. I introduced Sherman as the president of the I.W.W., the future Workers' Republic, and Debs as the hero of Woodstock jail. De Leon I introduced as the man "without friends"—and, hesitating there a moment, I added—"among labor fakers."

The principles and form of organization of the Industrial Workers of the World became the all-absorbing topic in the world of labor. It certainly looked as though the new union would carry everything before it. Workingmen flocked to the meetings where the speakers of the I.W.W. were to dwell upon industrial unionism; the atmosphere was getting warm with the heat generated by the propaganda of revolutionary economic action of the working class.

### *Labor "Leaders" Feared the End*

"An injury to one is the concern of all," was to be applied in the everyday struggles of the workers; no more craft divisions to divide the workers; no high initiation fees and dues to bar them from unionizing; no more labor fakers to use the union as a ladder to climb to political office while preaching "no politics in the union."

One thing was sure, that should the I.W.W. succeed in firmly establishing itself and drawing large numbers of workingmen and women to its standard, it would be "all off" with the well-paid advocates of the theory of brotherhood between capital and labor, in the old labor unions, and incidentally "all off" with their counterparts, the political hucksters in the Socialist Party, who claimed to be neutral toward unions while supporting the American Federation of Labor craft unionists and advocates of

brotherhood between capital and labor. The success of the industrial union movement would sound their death knell, and they were aware of that fact.

The Industrial Workers of the World could not be attacked with the same weapons and in the same manner as the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance had been. The Davis cigar shop tales and other similar falsehoods could not be warmed up and used over again (though such attempts were made), so other means were resorted to to combat the new organization. Men joined the I.W.W. for the sole purpose of creating dissension; to obstruct, create suspicion, and play all the roles that true disciples of St. Loyola are masters of.

### *New Jersey Unity Conference*

How otherwise can one explain the following occurrence? At the beginning of the industrial union agitation, shortly after the Industrial Union Manifesto was issued, at the time when the waves of industrial unionism ran high, a state convention of the Socialist Party of New Jersey invited the Socialist Labor Party to a unity conference to find a basis for unity of both parties. After the invitation had been accepted by the Socialist Labor Party and sessions held (beginning December 17, 1905, and ending March 4, 1906), the delegates of both parties arrived at the same conclusions and unanimously recommended a basis for unity—a basis that was indeed the only kind to bring about unity, namely, the recognition of the necessity of a revolutionary economic organization such as the I.W.W. then was. But the conclusions unanimously arrived at by the delegates of both parties were rejected by a referendum of the Socialist Party in New Jersey with all against some thirty votes! How could it have happened that the thirty “revolutionists” swallowed all their statements made at the unity conference? How could it have happened that one of the thirty, and he a delegate to the unity conference, Wm. Glanz, whose denunciations of the American Federation of Labor and of private ownership of the party press were emphatic, joined both the I.W.W. and the Socialist Labor Party, only to get out again when enough poison of discord had been spread, and with canine felicity return to his vomit and rejoin the Socialist Party?

It goes without saying that the conclusions of the conference were adopted practically with a unanimous vote by the Socialist Labor Party organization in New Jersey. The following is the finding on unionism of the New Jersey Unity Conference, embodied in a manifesto adopted by the conference and rejected by the Socialist Party referendum:

The Conference holds: that, unless the political movement is backed by a class conscious, that is, a properly constructed economic organization, ready to take and hold and conduct the productive powers of the land, and thereby ready and able to enforce if need be, and when need be, the fiat of the Socialist ballot of the working class—that without such a body in existence the Socialist political movement will be but a flash in the pan, successful, at best, in affording political preferment to scheming intellectuals, and thereby powerful only to attract such elements. On this specific head the Conference moreover holds that a political party of Socialism which marches to the polls unarmed by such a properly constructed economic organization, but invites a catastrophe over the land in the measure that it strains for political success, and in the measure that it achieves it. It must be an obvious fact to all serious observers of the times, that the day of the political success of such a party in America would be the day of its defeat, immediately followed by an industrial and financial crisis, from which none would suffer more than the working class itself.

The Conference holds, that for the Socialist political movement to favor A.F. of L. craft unionism is bluntly to deny Socialist principles and aims, for no matter how vigorously the A.F. of L. may cry “Organize! Organize!” in practice it seeks to keep the unorganized, the overwhelming majority of the working class, out of the organization. The facts can easily be proved to a candid world. High initiation fees, limitation of apprentices, cornering the jobs for the few whom they admit into the organization, are but a few of the methods used to discourage organization, which results not only in lack of organization, but by the craft form of what organization they do have, they isolate the workers into groups, which, left to fight for themselves in time of conflict, become the easy prey of the capitalists. On the other hand, the readiness with which certain portions of the exploiting class force their victims to join the A.F. of L. is sufficient condemnation of the organization.

By its own declarations and acts the A.F. of L. shows that it accepts wage slavery as a finality; and holding that there is identity of interest between employer and employee, the A.F. of L. follows it out by gladly accepting the vice-presidency of the Belmont Civic Federation for its president, Gompers, thus allying itself with an organization fathered by the capitalist class for the purpose of blurring the class struggle and for prolonging the present system which is cornered upon the exploitation of labor.

For these reasons the Conference concludes that it is the duty of a political party of Socialism to promote the organization of a properly constructed union, both by elucidating the virtues of such a union and by exposing the vices of craft unionism. Consequently, and as a closing conclusion on this head, it rejects as impracticable, vicious, and productive only of corruption, the theory of neutrality on the economic field. The Conference, true to these

views, condemns the A.F. of L as an obstacle to the emancipation of the working class.

Holding that the political power flows from and is a result of economic power, and that the capitalist is entrenched in the government as the result of his industrial power, the Conference commends as useful to the emancipation of the working class the Industrial Workers of the World, which instead of running away from the class struggle bases itself squarely upon it, and boldly and correctly sets out the Socialist principle “that the working class and the employing class have nothing in common” and that “the working class must come together on the political as well as on the industrial field, to take and hold that which they produce by their labor.”

### *S.P. Actions Contrary to Words*

In several other states besides New Jersey the Socialist Party, for the sake of expediency, feigned attempts at unity with the Socialist Labor Party. All these ended as the New Jersey Unity Conference had ended. The Socialist Partyites agreed on all occasions with the Socialist Labor Party men in regard to principles and tactics; they agreed that industrial unionism was requisite to the Socialist movement and the realization of Socialism; that the Industrial Union was the Socialist Republic in embryo. They agreed also on other vital questions, such as party ownership of the press, and on the question of discipline in the movement, but they would have agreed with anything and anybody as a means to extricate their party, caught in a cleft stick, as it were. Their actions did not square with their declarations of desire for the unity of Socialist forces.

The cleft stick the Socialist Party was caught in was this: to oppose industrial unionism openly or to combat it meant certain destruction in case the Industrial Workers of the World should succeed in organizing large numbers of the working class under its banner; openly to line up for industrial unionism, on the other hand, meant to endorse what they had been denouncing as “rank De Leonism”—it meant nothing less than the recognition of the correctness of the Socialist Labor Party position on the question of the attitude of the party toward the economic organization of labor. To oppose the new industrial organization that threatened to sweep everything before it was to be swept into oblivion along with other rubbish; to be allied with it meant to promulgate Socialist Labor Party tenets, promote the growth of that party, and admit the incompetence of their own Socialist Party. Hence all the talk of unity, all the unity conferences, etc.

*Perfidy of S.P. Press*

There was no sincerity in all the declarations of Socialist Party conferees, as subsequent developments demonstrated. The Socialist Party press, with its self-appointed editors, accordingly did not dare openly to fight against the Industrial Workers of the World, or to fight for it, but all these editors sought to harm the new union by minimizing its successes and magnifying its mistakes and shortcomings, or by resorting to the method employed by the capitalist press toward the Socialist movement, by silence as silent as the grave.

The only means for saving the Socialist Party was to create discord and dissension in the Industrial Workers of the World. Slowly but surely this was accomplished. Insinuations of the basest sort against the Socialist Labor Party in general and against Daniel De Leon in particular were thrown about by men wearing the mask of industrial unionism—all calculated, of course, to disrupt the I.W.W.

The following episode is an instance in point. The star witness in the case is a member of the Socialist Party, a very prominent member too, one of the secretaries of the New Jersey Unity Conference of yore, member of the Socialist Party National Committee a number of times, speaker, lecturer, writer and what not, as sleek as an eel, but not sleek enough to have escaped from the hand of De Leon, who got James Reilly, for it is no other, to give the testimony against his comrade, Algernon Lee, over his own signature in the columns of the DAILY PEOPLE. This testimony of James Reilly throws light in only one dark corner, but it is sufficient to prove my allegation.

*A Ghost-Story About De Leon*

After a mass meeting held by the I.W.W. on Union Square, New York, where both De Leon and Reilly were speakers, a number of comrades invited De Leon to a glass of Wurzburger. Reilly, too, went along. The conversation was, of course, regarding the situation in the movement, and incidentally the talk turned to the horrible tales that were being circulated about De Leon by his friends of the Socialist Party. De Leon chuckled with glee at the wonderful ghost-stories which were being told, wherein he was the ghost and in which things were implied, to have been guilty of committing which De Leon must needs have been among the living from the time his ancestor, Ponce De León, sought to discover in Florida the Fountain of Youth.

It was then that Reilly volunteered to tell what Algernon Lee, another shining light in the firmament of the Socialist Party, was in the habit of telling confidentially to all who would believe him—that De Leon, while a resident in Germany, was a

Bismarck spy! We all thought this as good a ghost-story as we had heard. De Leon himself had his chuckle out of it, but he requested Reilly to write a letter to the DAILY PEOPLE in the form of an inquiry regarding Algernon Lee's allegation. Reilly, after having made the statement, could not refuse to comply with De Leon's request or himself stand branded as a base slanderer. He did write such a letter, which was published in the DAILY PEOPLE with De Leon's answer appended.

It was quite certain that at the second convention of the I.W.W. some attempt would be made to cause dissension, the way having been prepared by the work of the Lees and kindred spirits. It was for this reason that De Leon sought to secure the promise of Eugene V. Debs at the time of their meetings in New York and New Castle to attend the second convention, and thus disarm the fellows who were circulating the false statements that the I.W.W. was the tail to the Socialist Labor Party kite.

### *Desertion of the I. W. W. by Debs*

Debs promised to come, but did he, the very one who declared with emphasis that a man who turns his back upon industrial unionism betrays the working class, keep the promise made to De Leon, or did he turn his back on industrial unionism at a most critical moment?

The failure of Debs to keep his word and attend the second convention of the Industrial Workers of the World was doubly an act of betrayal of the cause of industrial unionism. Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone, three officials of the Western Federation of Miners—then, nominally at least, the Mining Department of the I.W.W.—had been kidnapped in the state of Colorado and taken to Idaho, there to stand trial on a charge of having murdered ex-Governor Steunenberg.

The fact that the Idaho authorities took the three officials of the miners' union by force instead of proceeding according to law by instituting extradition proceedings against the accused men was a sample of the lawlessness practiced by the ruling class of that state. The "starring" of the leading witness for the state was on a par with the mob law methods of kidnapping men whom it was thought difficult to get into custody by due process of law. Harry Orchard, a self-confessed murderer, was this star witness.

A wave of indignation among the workers of the land rose high in protest against the outrage. Workingmen and women, organized and unorganized, Socialists and non-Socialists, radicals and conservatives, demanded a fair trial for Moyer, Haywood

and Pettibone.

The DAILY PEOPLE was the first paper to come out boldly and unhesitatingly in favor of the three accused men and against the foul conspiracy of the mine owners and their political hirelings. De Leon's editorials were not hysterical outcries against the atrocious acts of the Citizens' Alliance, like many articles in Socialist Party papers, but the question was handled consistently and fearlessly. De Leon's articles and editorials were the real call to arms to the working class, should the capitalists of the Western states carry out their brutal intent to murder men whom they thought dangerous to their interests.

### *S.L.P. Endorsement of Haywood*

The first and only instance in its history of the Socialist Labor Party's lowering its standard and practically endorsing a candidate of another party, occurred at that time. The candidate was Wm. D. Haywood for governor of Colorado, and the party was the Socialist Party. "Theirs the shame and ours the glory," for it does not matter that, since the day that the Socialist Labor Party put up no candidate in opposition to Haywood, he has retrograded and proved a disappointment, and turned upon the true industrial union movement.

In 1906 the Socialist Labor Party, against the protest of some of its members, bowed to the revolutionary requirements of the time, and the S.L.P. men in Colorado voted for the industrial unionist, Haywood, who at that time typified the revolutionary element in the Socialist Party. For that matter, he perhaps typifies it today, only that in 1906 this "revolutionary element" in the Socialist Party was believed to be real, whereas in the decade that has passed since it has proved itself to be very much like the rest of the Socialist Party—revolutionary only in phrasemongering.

At such a time, however, when by pressure of emboldened capitalism threatening the whole labor movement, a realignment of revolutionary forces was actually expected, for a man like Debs to fail to appear at a convention of the Industrial Workers of the World when it was known that reaction would show its head and would have to be combatted was indeed to betray the working class. Before relating some of the important happenings at the second convention of the Industrial Workers of the World some of the activities and occurrences in the Socialist Labor Party should be mentioned.

Henry Kuhn resigned as national secretary of the party, a position he had filled

for fifteen years. It is safe to say that few men ever worked harder, with more devotion, promptness, system, and efficiency, in any organization. In determination, zeal, and moral and physical courage, Henry Kuhn, national secretary of the Socialist Labor Party, was never found wanting. On many occasions, in the darkest hours of the party's existence, Kuhn was at his post, cool-headed and with a steady hand on the steering wheel, keeping the S.L.P. to its course. During the time that De Leon was worn out by the strenuous days of 1899 and 1901–1902, Kuhn was at the helm and bore the brunt of the battle.

Frank Bohn was elected in Kuhn's place. A German proverb tells of "making a goat the gardener." That is exactly what was done when Bohn was chosen to fill such an important position, as subsequent developments showed.

### *Second Convention of the I.W.W.*

The second convention of the Industrial Workers of the World was a turbulent one; it turned out to be a "battle royal" between the reactionists and the revolutionists. The Western Federation of Miners delegation consisted of four men, two of whom {Mahoney and McCabe} were the leaders among those who sought to turn the organization into a "pure and simple" affair, while the other two, Albert Ryan and Vincent St. John, stood for revolutionary principles.

De Leon led the fight against reaction and outgeneraled the bulldozing Mahoney and McCabe who employed all the tricks of common political crooks. After they saw that the large majority of the delegates were against any crab-step taking, this gentry tried methods of obstruction, calculating that many of the delegates who represented numerically smaller locals of the I.W.W., and whose financial resources were consequently very limited, could not remain very long in attendance at the convention, and that they would have to return home and leave the Mahoney kind in full control.

For this purpose the tactics of obstruction were employed, and the convention prolonged for many days. Soon the majority of delegates, who had come equipped with "rations" for only a few days, were without means to pay for meals and lodgings, while the few reactionaries were well equipped with rolls of greenbacks, of which they occasionally bragged. The convention overcame this difficulty by voting \$1.50 a day while the convention lasted to the delegates without means of subsistence.

*Sherman Deluded by S.P. Men*

Chas. O. Sherman, the president of the I.W.W., was found out to be the worst kind of man to be placed at the head of any labor organization, much less of one such as the I.W.W. was originally designed to be. The financial reports showed him to have exploited the organization shamefully. This precious president cost the young organization in one year nigh seven thousand dollars<sup>2</sup> in salary, mileage, and incidentals. Sherman, who had called himself a revolutionist at the first convention (though he never was one), later changed his convictions (though he never really had any). He had been with a stock company for some years, playing the part of a villain, and his histrionic abilities had stood him in good stead at the first convention of the I.W.W.—it was all acted. Besides, so far as he was concerned the revolution was accomplished, and he enjoyed the fruits thereof; as for other humans—well, they could wait a few centuries or so.

The Socialist Partyites who were bent upon causing a split in the I.W.W. told Sherman that “millions of workers” would join the organization if De Leon and the De Leonites were removed. Sherman nursed the fond hope of seeing these millions of members come in and send in the per capita tax by freight to the headquarters on W. Madison street.

Fate willed it otherwise, however. Instead of removing the De Leonites, the office of president was abolished by the convention. This was sufficient cause for Sherman and those who used him to repeat the kangaroo act of the disturbers in the Socialist Labor Party in 1899. The whole scheme to sidetrack the I.W.W. was frustrated for the time being by the revolutionary majority at the second convention. Beaten upon, the floor of the convention the reactionists resorted to physical force methods. They did not themselves do any slugging, but hired private detectives, vermin with which the city of Chicago is infested, to do the slugging for them.

*Attempt to Split Unsuccessful*

Sherman, Mahoney and McCabe took possession in that manner of the headquarters and proclaimed themselves to be the I.W.W. They also took the cash on hand, as well as all supplies. A Socialist Party man, Hanneman of New York, was made “secretary” of the usurpers. Sherman of course remained “president.” A few locals stayed with him; his “organization,” to be sure, had not a single De Leonite in it

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<sup>2</sup> [The equivalent of \$151,470.00 in 2006 dollars.—*Editor.*]

to keep out the millions that were to join.

The millions did not join, and the few locals soon stopped paying their per capita tax. The miles upon miles of freight trains running into the various railroad yards of Chicago still kept on running undiminished in number, but nary a one was directed to 148 W. Madison street, filled with dollars, half dollars, quarters, dimes, nickels, or even coppers, and “President” Sherman waited in vain.

On the other hand, the I.W.W., cleansed of the Sherman gang, again made headway. Though the new administration was left without as much as a postage stamp in funds or supplies, money was soon gathered, a new headquarters fitted out in Bush Temple, and the work of organization continued. Trautmann retained his post as secretary-treasurer; St. John was elected general organizer; and Edwards became the editor of the *Industrial Union Bulletin*, the weekly then started by the I.W.W.

To all industrial unionists who were rightly informed upon what took place in Chicago at the second I.W.W. convention it was clear that the cause of the fight was the attempt on the part of reactionists to disrupt the I.W.W. There were nevertheless many who were misinformed by the false reports of Socialist Party privately-owned papers which were secretly part of the disrupting elements. That De Leon was blamed for what they called “the split” goes without saying. These very papers, that had hardly mentioned the I.W.W. before, gave much space to the “Sherman faction” now, with the ill-concealed wish to kill both “factions.”

The Sherman clique soon petered out. But a serious blow was dealt the I.W.W. from which it never wholly recovered.

That De Leon was to be blamed for the “split” at the second I.W.W. convention was a foregone conclusion, and no doubt a part of the scheme of those who engineered that “split.” It was comparatively easy to blame De Leon among the superficial readers of the Socialist Party papers, who were only too willing to believe anything wicked about De Leon.

### *De Leon Blamed by His Enemies*

Surely, it had to be that De Leon was the cause of all the splits in the labor movement. “Was he not in the Knights of Labor and was there not a split in that organization? Was he not a member of the Socialist Labor Party, and was there not a split there? Even in the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance there was a split. So there had to be a split in the I.W.W.”

So argued the pure and simple politicians, and a credulous audience was not

wanting. They cited the old proverb in support of their generalities, that “where there is so much smoke, there must be some fire.” No specific act of De Leon’s in the Knights of Labor, the Socialist Labor Party, or the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance was ever referred to, unless some of the weird tales, such as were whispered by Algernon Lee (that De Leon was a Bismarck spy) and by others of the same ilk (that De Leon was a South American Indian) can be called such. To the superstitious it was even whispered that De Leon had underground connections with His Satanic Majesty.

All such statements were again only generalities and had no bearing on the question of the splitting of organizations; yet it is true, without a doubt, that “there must be some fire where there is so much smoke.” The fire was there in all those organizations in the shape of pro-capitalist reactionists whom De Leon invariably drove from cover; hence all the smoke and fire whenever De Leon sought to rid the Socialist movement of such creatures.

The stenographic report of the second I.W.W. convention is the authentic document that is another positive proof of De Leon’s integrity and loyalty to the cause of Socialism, and of his ability as well, for such men as Trautmann, Edwards, Heslewood, and a score of others who afterward turned on the organization and became De Leon’s enemies, said that De Leon had saved the I.W.W. at its second convention.

The Socialist Party officialdom heaved a sigh of relief, for the rumpus at the second I.W.W. convention, the setting up of a bogus I.W.W., and the withdrawal of the Western Federation of Miners from both “factions” of the I.W.W. extricated their party from a very tight and unpleasant situation.

### *The Time but Not the Men*

All sincere industrial unionists were at that time hopeful that there was at least one man among the leaders of the Western Federation of Miners who would exert all his influence in favor of the bona-fide I.W.W. and against the reactionists of the Mahoney type in that organization. This man was thought to be Haywood as it was generally believed that he would be acquitted, and that once free he would with Vincent St. John turn the tide in the Western Federation of Miners. This expectation, as we shall see later, was not fulfilled.

At times like those, when the brutal, bloodstained hands of the monstrous capitalist class in Idaho sought to stamp out the economic organization of the wage slaves by hanging their leaders; when the only-one-year-old industrial union, the

I.W.W., was treacherously wounded in its vitals by the scheming politicians wearing the mask of Socialism and hiding behind a Socialist cloak; and at a time when the masses of workers were at the crossroads, about to choose whether to take the road that leads to Revolution and Industrial Democracy or to continue on the road of reform promises and craft unionism that winds its way to prolonged wage slavery,—at such a time the Socialist Labor Party was in need of strong men at the helm, men with one purpose alone: to serve the working class by standing unflinchingly for the principles for which the party had fought and bled so many years, for an uncompromising, revolutionary attitude on the political field, and for a class conscious union on the economic field. The Socialist Labor Party needed men at the national headquarters who would have no axes of their own to grind, no ambition but to serve the cause, men such as De Leon himself was.

At this time the party found itself with Frank Bohn as its national secretary, James Connolly as a member of the National Executive Committee, and Justus Ebert in the editorial room of the DAILY PEOPLE. Each one of the trio had his own ambition, each one wanted to become the editor-in-chief of the DAILY PEOPLE, though each one had a different purpose in that desire.

### *The Self-Seekers in the Party*

Bohn, whom I have described as resembling in manners a funeral director, wanted to become the editor of the DAILY PEOPLE so as to be able to turn over the Socialist Labor Party in bulk to the Socialist Party, and thus become the undertaker indeed. Did he not write, after his schemes had failed, in the New York *Call*: “I have bearded the lion in his den, etc.” Yes, he had “bearded the lion in his den”; he bore the scars to prove it.

James Connolly wanted to become the editor of the DAILY PEOPLE because he imagined himself to have been born to be an editor and incidentally because he imagined it a much easier job than to work as a machinist’s helper in the Singer sewing machine factory in Elizabethport, N.J. It would pay better and one would not need to get his hands dirty with oil and grease; not to speak of the opportunities to show one’s intellectual accomplishments, as, for instance, to demonstrate how a person can be a revolutionary Socialist and yet remain a good and pious son of Mother Church.

Justus Ebert, who had been De Leon’s assistant editor of the DAILY PEOPLE for a few years, wanted to become the editor-in-chief just because De Leon’s intellectual

superiority became galling to him.

At such a critical period when more than ever the party membership needed to draw closer, these three fellows worked up a feeling of distrust among the party membership, and again some good workers for the S.L.P. principles were led astray. It was the last conspiracy De Leon had to combat in the party.

*De Leon Burdened by Controversy*

In 1907 De Leon went on a lecture tour from coast to coast, enduring many hardships, which, in addition to the convulsions that the Socialist Labor Party was subjected to by the intrigues of the three would-be editors of the DAILY PEOPLE—Bohn, Connolly and Ebert—weighed heavily upon him. The following part of a letter written by De Leon to the N.E.C. Sub-Committee shows how he felt at that time:

Los Angeles, Cal.,  
March 29, 1907.

Wm. Teichlauf, Sec'y.  
Dear Comrade:

Your communication reached me at Ogden, Utah, on the 19th inst., where I arrived tired in body and preoccupied in mind. I was tired in body from a four days' trying railroad travel from Denver, broken up by frequent freight wrecks which delayed my journey; from two consecutive nights' sleeping on the train, and able to board the train, one night not before 1.30 a.m., the second as late as 2.30 a.m.; from being ashore—in Cripple Creek, Florence, and Grand Junction—either addressing meetings, or, up to the late (early) hours of boarding the trains, in constant conference with friends and party members, whom it was necessary to confer with; finally, from the culminating trial of physical endurance experienced in Salt Lake, where my train reached ten hours later than schedule time, and half an hour after the hour announced for the meeting, where, due to this delay, I had to be driven straight to the meeting, and, due to the dining car having been removed at noon, I had to speak upon a ten hours' fast; finally, where I had to address three meetings within twenty-four hours. I arrived in Ogden preoccupied in mind because, from information received at the ticket office in Salt Lake, there was a washout on the Salt Lake, San Pedro and Los Angeles road, thereby rendering doubtful my being able to take, from Rhyolite, the train for Los Angeles at Los Vegas—a contingency, which, had it proved actual, meant the smash-up of the Los Angeles arrangements, besides heavily increased railroad expenses to reach Los Angeles by the wide detour of back

to Hazen, Nev., and down again over Sacramento so as to save whatever could be saved of the Los Angeles meetings. In this state of body and mind I received your letter asking for an early answer.

Of course, you could not foresee this aggravating conspiracy of circumstances. Nevertheless, it does seem to me that your Committee should have realized that—even under the least adverse circumstances—a party member who, though not a broken down octogenarian, is no longer a spring chicken, sent out on so long a journey and so arduous a party mission as I am sent out upon, should be kept as free as possible from annoyance, all the more seeing that not a question you ask but has been amply answered in advance both by my letter to the New Jersey party man who demanded from me an explanation of the conduct imputed to me by Connolly (DAILY PEOPLE, Feb. 8th), and by my reply to Connolly's attempted answer (DAILY PEOPLE, March, 11th), 13 days and 3 days, respectively, before the date of your letter.

In view of this I concluded to give the right of way to the work upon which I was sent, and postpone answering your letter to the earliest convenience to the party's interests.

As I said, you had in your possession an ample answer when you wrote to me; nevertheless, never forgetting that discourtesy breeds bad blood, I shall avoid seeming discourteous, and now yield to your wishes.

De Leon then answered the N.E.C. Sub-Committee in New York which allowed itself to be misled by Bohn and Connolly. The following is a synopsis of the Connolly-Bohn matter.

De Leon refused publication to certain articles in the DAILY PEOPLE which emanated from Connolly. Instead of availing himself of the opportunity to seek constitutional redress and appeal against the action of the editor, Connolly, as member of the National Executive Committee, tried a sleight of hand performance, by moving at the January, 1907, National Executive Committee session that the N.E.C. Sub-Committee should have the right to decide whether certain kinds of matter should or should not be printed in the columns of the official organ. His motion defeated, he claimed afterward that the defeated motion made by him was to clothe the National Executive Committee with such power. The National Executive Committee, being the highest executive body in the Socialist Labor Party, always had such power and it would have been preposterous to take such a vote.

### *Trickery of Frank Bohn*

Any old trick is good enough so long as it serves its purpose, so Connolly, ably

seconded by Bohn, set forth the claim that the National Executive Committee members of the Socialist Labor Party had voted down a motion giving them power over those of the editor, that they were manikins of the “pope,” De Leon. It was not until almost a year afterward that Paul Augustine, who, having succeeded Bohn as National Secretary, had been in office for several months and had put in order all party documents which under Bohn’s administration were lying loose in a haram-skarum condition about the office, discovered the trick that had been played. Augustine found the original motion as written by the recording secretary of the Subcommittee, and found that it had been falsely transcribed by Bohn so as to read, by leaving out the word “Sub,” “to empower the N.E.C., etc.”

The motion as originally written was photographed and electrotyped and reproduced in the columns of the DAILY PEOPLE. Bohn was charged with having thus falsified the N.E.C. minutes; he was challenged to refute the charge; he could not. Before facts in this case were fully known by the party membership, Connolly, as a delegate to the New Jersey state convention of the Socialist Labor Party, made, together with Patrick Quinlan, the false allegation as stated above. The part of De Leon’s letter quoted related to this Connolly matter.

Before dropping the three former members of the Socialist Labor Party, Bohn, Connolly and Ebert, let it be told what became of them, which better than anything else will show “who’s who and why.”

Bohn’s chief argument against De Leon was that the DAILY PEOPLE was not edited in an up-to-date, twentieth century manner, that the absolutely correct principles of the Socialist Labor Party must be carried to the membership of the Socialist Party not in long editorials, but in short terse paragraphs such as only Bohn could write. Bohn demonstrated his inimitable style of converting S.P. members to the absolutely correct S.L.P. position by joining the organization he claimed he knew the art to convert, and in the end advocated the using of lead pipe as a means of working class emancipation.

Connolly actually did become an editor, but as he could not be the editor of the DAILY PEOPLE he did as the sinner who was refused admission in heaven and was not wanted in hell, who got himself a bundle of straw and started a place for himself. Connolly became the editor-in-chief of *The Harp*, a sheet published by the Irish Socialist Federation, an organization composed of James Connolly principally, if not altogether.

Justus Ebert, however, the last of the aspirants to the editorship of the DAILY

PEOPLE, the man who blamed De Leon for having gone too far with the Anarchists at the first I.W.W. convention, went over to the Anarchist I.W.W. himself, body, soul, and breeches.

*Third Convention of I.W.W.*

Upon his return from the lecture tour De Leon sailed to Europe to attend the International Socialist Congress held at Stuttgart, Germany. F.W. Heslewood represented the I.W.W. at this congress. De Leon made strenuous efforts to enlighten the European comrades upon American conditions and the new industrial union movement. All delegates to the Congress were supplied with I.W.W. literature. Heslewood carried with him some striking proof of the pro-capitalist character of the American Federation of Labor, such as copies of a journal published by the Civic Federation in which there was a double-page picture of this Federation in session, showing Gompers, John Mitchell, and other officials of the A.F. of L. sitting alongside of the leading American capitalists like the founder of the Civic Federation, Marcus Hanna, and church dignitaries like Archbishop Ireland, discussing how to establish permanent peace between Brother Labor and Brother Capital.

As soon as De Leon returned to New York from Europe, without having much time to spend with his family, he went to Chicago to attend the third convention of the I.W.W.

At the third convention of the I.W.W., which opened its sessions on Sept. 17, 1907, in Chicago, almost complete harmony prevailed. The organization had so far recuperated from the blow it had received the year before that several organizers were being employed and many new locals had been formed. A big strike had been conducted by the I.W.W. in Bridgeport, Conn., and some smaller strikes among the silk workers in Paterson, N.J. The Paterson locals alone had sent during that year (Sept. 1906 to Sept. 1907) \$3,500 in per capita tax to general headquarters.

Out of the 130 votes apportioned among all delegates at the third convention according to the number of members they represented, three Paterson delegates were accorded 28 votes. Among these there was the Anarchist, Ludovico Caminita, editor of the Italian Anarchist paper, *La Questione Sociale*, the sheet which was later suppressed by Roosevelt for publishing alleged incendiary articles which were written by Caminita. The other two delegates were Chas. Trainor and myself.

Caminita did not try to conceal his Anarchist notions behind innocently sounding names. There were, however, three or four fellows at that convention who

had the same ideas as Caminita, but who indignantly resented being called Anarchists. They were Foote of Kansas City, Axelson of Minneapolis, and Glover of Cleveland. These men, together with Caminita, sounded the only note of discord at the third convention. They were the shadow cast before by the pure and simple physical force craze that came into full swing a year after. The motion made by these forerunners of the "Bummery" was to strike out of the preamble to the constitution of the I.W.W. the words "on the political field."

### *De Leon's Speech For Political Action*

In answer to the arguments put forth at the convention by Caminita and Axelson, De Leon took the floor. His speech, taken from the stenographic report of that convention, follows here in full:

I was delighted that the discussion was not closed. I know that unless we settle this thing now and for all time, planting ourselves squarely with both feet and without any quibbling of terms upon what experience tells us is the field of civilization, then indeed this body would have gone to pieces, and that is quite the reverse of the manner in which it was suggested by one of the delegates.

I am delighted that the leading objectors were given twice the time, that is to say, they were allowed to speak twice, so there would be no question about gag law or that they were not given an ample opportunity to be heard.

There are two principles underlying their position. One a principle that I thoroughly sympathize with, and another a principle that is utterly mistaken. Before taking up those principles, however, and so as to lead to them, I wish to take up the incidental errors that cropped out from their arguments. Your name is Axelson (addressing Delegate Axelson).

DEL. AXELSON: Yes, sir; Axelson.

DEL. DE LEON: Axelson, to my great delight, praised Marx, considered him the leading man whose every thought should guide us. Now, Marx did not write the bible, out of which you can take what you like and leave out what you do not like. Marx was a man, as you justly say, who wrote coherently and consistently, and you will not find in Marx one passage kicking a previous one; therefore he who quotes Marx quotes all that Marx said, and among the things that Marx said was that only the economic organization can set afoot the political movement of labor.

Now, I did not throw over the church in which I was born to stop kneeling before one Pope and then kneel down before another. I am not down on my knees before Marx, but I am on my knees before that talent whose utterances have proved to be correct. Marx is right, not because he is Marx, but Marx is

right because experience proves that all he said was correct, and it is passing strange that anyone who quotes Marx should not be an advocate of political action, when Marx was a confirmed foe of that Anarchistic propaganda that has caused so much blood to flow, and he declared himself upon that position which it has been the privilege of American men to be the first to take the position that recognizes the necessity of political action, and knows that without political action economic action is not worth shucks; not worth that much. (Snapping fingers.)

Now, I pick out these errors in the hope that I may make some progress in the minds of those who are wedded to them. There is a contradiction, they say, in the preamble, where it talks about the political field and then decides to take and hold without affiliation with any political party, and also orders the General Executive Board in the constitution never to engage an organizer from any political party. You call that a contradiction. Well, if that is a contradiction then whatever is the natural result of existing conditions is a contradiction.

The I.W.W. preamble is built upon present conditions and the men who organized the body realized that it would be premature, and it would be throwing the apple of discord into our ranks, to attach ourselves to any political party. In consequence it was a recognition of existing conditions to order the G.E.B. not to engage any organizer of a political party as an organizer for the I.W.W., because by doing so you introduce in advance of time a question that should not now be introduced, and the position of the I.W.W. is that when the day shall come it shall itself project its own political party. (Applause.)

There, consequently, is no contradiction in that part of the preamble, but I have endeavored to explain how correct, according to Marx's own principle, it is that you must take and hold without affiliation with any political party.

The error has gone abroad that a political party can take and hold. It is an error because you cannot legislate a revolution. A political party cannot do it. The nature of its organization prevents it, and that clause was put in there deliberately as a blow in the face to those fellows who imagine that a political movement is capable of a revolutionary act. So far and no further.

The brother said what he thought about political action. Now, I care not if the day after the election there is not a vote outside of mine cast, for whatever political party I may cast my vote; I am a revolutionist, and I know the agitation that I have made has done good. The delegate said here the capitalists are such diplomats that they are trying to take away the ballot from us so as to make us anxious to get it. Do they try to take your wages away from you to incite your appetite for wages? That is too far fetched. Why should you forget? Fellow Worker Trautmann yesterday read to you from the agreement of the Mine Workers' Union where they were pledged not to take

part in legislative action.

Every man who lives with his eyes open knows that the capitalist class fears the political agitation of the working people. They fear it because if we place ourselves upon that plane of civilization, of a theoretical peaceful solution, we can demand anything we want, whereas if you do not put yourselves on that plane then they can do whatever they choose. The vote is not the essential part. If you strike out that political clause and leave there the clause to take and hold, you place yourselves entirely upon the plane that has come to be known as Anarchist, and then good-bye to the I.W.W.

When I said Anarchist I should perhaps make a correction. I do not believe that he is an Anarchist. I do not believe that the I.W.W. thinks he is an Anarchist (laughter), because the word Anarchist properly means a man who denies literally that there is a head, and we have here a chairman, a head.

Caminita says that if we are strong enough we need not bother with politics. Of course not, that is begging the question. A child in its mother's womb remains in a bag for a long while, and when the child has grown strong enough it breaks that bag and comes wholly before the earth, before the light, and until the day when he is strong enough to break that bag, that bag fulfills a necessary function—it is a shield under which that child can develop.

It is begging the question to say that we want political action. I come back to this, I refer to the general strike. We want our political reflex on the day that we are strong enough, but we are not quite strong enough for political action now, we need a political shield.

Then the delegate said, "What do we care if we are called Anarchists?" Wonderful argument! During these twenty years I have been called all sorts of things. I have been charged by some with being a Jew and denying it, and by others I have been charged with not being a Jew and claiming to be one. Samuel Gompers charged me with having received \$50,000 from Tom Platt to set up a daily paper. The gentleman in Denver who originated the term "coffee and doughnut propaganda," charged me with having sat at the feet of Sam Gompers at the Briggs House. These are slanders. But what would you think of a man thus being slandered who says, "Well, I will hobnob with Tom Platt and Samuel Gompers?" No, I am not going to give them a handle to justify the slander just because it is a slander; I must be careful not to give them a handle to justify it. I have denied those charges, and if I were to hold to that philosophy I will be charged anyhow; why, I could associate with Tom Platt and with Gompers, and I think they would be very much delighted to see me sitting there. That sort of argument won't do. If a charge is false against us we must see to it that that charge has no hook upon which it can be hung, and failing that, we fail in our duty.

Now, as to the errors that crop out of Caminita's brain. He certainly is

perpetrating a joke, or else he is woefully misinformed.

He said if you keep the political clause in here, then it is a Socialist organization, but if you will strike out the political clause then you will be greeted as an economic organization. Why, that is a brand new discovery. Socialism is the gospel of the labor movement. Socialism says that labor produces all wealth, but under the capitalist system of production it is not a human being, it is merchandise, and there is no hope of anybody recruiting his wages, and capitalism will lead to worse and worse conditions. That is Socialism, and Socialism says that the emancipation of the working class must be brought about by the collective ownership of the means of production. That is Socialism.

To say that we do not want to be a Socialist organization is an absurdity. It must be our pride to be a Socialist organization, and to imagine differently is a denial of the best literature upon the subject.

He said in France the working class were winning. That is not my information. I know they get it in the neck day after day. It was only the other day when battalions were called out on the streets of Paris.

He said in Italy they are so strong that any day they like they could start a general strike. Why, my dear sir, I am afraid you slander them without knowing it. If they were strong enough for a general strike, they would be cowards if they did not strike. And by a general strike I understand not simply getting out, but doing something, and the fact that they are not ready is shown by the fact that they are not doing it, and it will not do in cases of this solemnity to fritter time away on such words as that, as they are misleading.

He said if we leave the word political there, we open the doors for the politician. Yes, if we say that alone; but if we strike out the word political and leave physical force alone then we open wide the doors for the agent provocateur, and it is not a thing that is imaginary. It was shown in the Reichstag of Germany by the documents there that it was a Prussian minister who furnished the Anarchists of Europe with money to get bombs to be exploded in Berlin. It was shown that where an Anarchist had thrown a bomb in France he had two letters, one from Rothschild, the banker, and another letter from the Archbishop of Paris.

Two years ago at the I.W.W. convention there was a delegate from Barcelona who was an Anarchist, he told me. I met him in San Francisco in April of this year and I said to him, "Are you still an Anarchist?" Well, he shook his head. A Spaniard came to the office and brought me some papers from Barcelona and in those papers were documents showing that men who are imprisoned in Barcelona as Anarchists were not the men who had furnished or manufactured the bombs, but they were manufactured by the college of Jesuits in Barcelona.

Yes, strike out the words, “take and hold!” Strike out the words that indicate the necessity of economic organization, and you have invited the scheming politician; you have invited the man who will logically be elected on such a ticket. Do that, and you certainly open the doors to the politician, but strike out the words “political action” in the sense I use them and leave the words “take and hold,” and then, as it was correctly put, instead of the capitalists wishing to hang Haywood, they would have hanged him by this time, and who knows how many of us would have been on the road to the gallows as well.

Then the delegate asked, “How do you expect to unite those men who are in the Republican and the Democratic parties into a political party?” I would ask him, How do you expect those workmen who are Democrats and Republicans today to unite in an economic organization to overthrow the Democratic and Republican capitalists? The political action is the wedge to get in among those men, it is the wedge that emancipates them from the thrall of political errors, and when all political errors are removed from their minds, then we have a negatively united political action, we at least would stand negatively united upon the political field, and when it comes to that, the man who cannot vote right will do everything else wrong. To imagine that you can leave those men there in that position, that we can leave them there, and try at the same time to organize this body, why, it is the old story of Madam Partington trying to sweep the Atlantic ocean away from her back yard. You cannot do it.

You may unite a Republican and a Democratic workingman in a pure and simple economic organization that stands upon the principle of the brotherhood of capital and labor and says, “I ought to have more,” but never can you unite Democrats and Republicans into an organization that says, “Ours is the earth and the fullness thereof, and we want the whole of it.” Before you can do that you must emancipate their minds of the political errors, and the political movement necessarily does that work. (Applause.)

He asks what is the difference between the S.P., the S.L.P., and the I.W.W. I will only stop a moment upon that, because the question indicates such a fundamental misconception of matters. The I.W.W. is built along the lines of industries. A railroad knows no state or county line. That is its constituency. The I.W.W. organizes the miners wherever the vein runs, and there is the constituency, whether it is in Colorado or in Pennsylvania, or any other state. The I.W.W. organizes the cotton workers, wherever cotton is raised, regardless of geographical or political demarkation, that is the constituency. In other words, the I.W.W. is organizing the future constituency of the government of the working class. (Applause.) The I.W.W. is establishing that constituency or those constituencies which will elect their delegates, and some day instead of being a convention hurrying

through its work in one week it will be able, at its leisure, to sit as a parliament or congress of the United States. The I.W.W., accordingly, is an association of organized new opinion, the opinion of the proletariat.

The S.P., or the S.L.P., or any other political party cannot do that, because they are organized upon geographical demarkations, and the bricklayer or shoemaker may go with me to vote at the same ballot-box. A political organization cannot perform a revolutionary act, but a political organization can carry on a revolutionary propaganda. I can get on the stump and say, "Vote for the principle that will overthrow the capitalist system. Vote for the principle that will put the railroads and all the capitalist institutions of the land into the hands of the workers. Vote for the principle that the man who does not want to work shall be compelled to starve," and when I do that I am free, I am safe. But let me say on the stump of elsewhere, "Let us go and take and hold," and I will have to go then into rat holes and carry on my propaganda; and keep this in mind, the labor movement is one that takes in the masses, and the masses cannot be addressed in rat holes. The masses have to be addressed in the open, and the sun of twentieth century civilization frowns down upon the man who would propose physical force only and reject absolutely the theory of an attempt at a peaceful solution.

As has been well said, the first man who ran away from this convention was an Anarchist, Moore. We who are not Anarchists know it, and by the way, I forgot to mention this; it is said that this preamble must be more accurate, more exact, that it is ambiguous. It is, is it? You ask Sherman whether he thought it was ambiguous. You ask McCabe whether he thought it was ambiguous. You ask all the pure and simple economic crooks and their doubles, the pure and simple political crooks, whether the platform was ambiguous. It was so clear that no sooner was it enunciated than all those crooks put their heads together to give us a licking, and we licked them. (Applause.)

Caminita said that our platform is revolutionary on paper. I want to tell you a joke that Marx cracked on a gentleman who spoke as Caminita did. Marx said that physical force is the midwife of revolution. Anybody who imagines that the ruling class will stand up and peacefully let them do it, is mistaken, but you must exhaust all peaceful means. And Marx said, "Physical force is the midwife of revolution." Then an Anarchist arose and said, "You say physical force is the midwife of revolution. Why, let us take physical force alone." "Why," Marx said to him, "if that were so, if I want a child all I have to do is to go and get a midwife." (Laughter and applause.)

Now, then, we were asked what is civilization? Civilization means that men shall deal with one another as each expects to be dealt with. Civilization means that we shall utilize all the conquests of the human race that have enabled us to do what we are doing here today, talking, although we may

disagree, peacefully, without jumping at one another's throat.

The delegate from Indianapolis made use of a remarkable expression, "Shall we bother with the capitalist ballot?" That is the vein with which I utterly disagree, and I wish now to take up this thing. Caminita said virtually the same thing.

There is no such thing as the capitalist ballot-box, any more than there is such a thing as the capitalist ballot, or such a thing as capitalist free speech. These are all conquests that the human race has wrung from the clutches of the ruling class, and for the same reason that I walk proudly and freely on the highway, and for the same reason that we advocate and exercise free speech, for that same reason we stand by the ballot-box, not that it is the ballot of the capitalist, but it is the ballot of the civilized man—the battlefield where we may go and vote and expect to come out without having our bones broken, and the other fellow's bones broken likewise.

The vein with which I agree is this: I am sure these delegates feel to a great extent the way they do, unknown to themselves, because of the corruption that we know has sprung up in all the parties of labor, and Delegate Young's reference to the Anaconda experience I think covered the point sufficiently; that political movement sprung up; there was no economic organization back of it. It was a rudderless ship, but to say that because political action leads, as we know it does when it is pure and simple political action and not corrupted, therefore, to go to the other extreme is to forget the experiences that we should not forget.

The labor movement began first with the Anarchistic method of physical force, and swung back to the other extreme, the pure and simple, and it has been oscillating back and forth until the time when the I.W.W. came, and not until the I.W.W. came could that position be established where we have the political action in its right place and the economic action, the necessary basis which gives its reflex to the political, necessary to start the political and necessary to make the political triumph a success.

Now, perhaps it is not simply for us here in America. I apprehend that the circumstance of my birth, having fallen on this side of the waters, is what made me think we had to do it in America. Marx said it was a revolution in the United States that rung the knell of capitalism, and I came to the conclusion that it was so, and during the last three years in the conventions and congresses I have attended, I have come to the conclusion that it is our duty, and that it would be a crime on our part if we neglected the experiences of the past. Europe needs the education that the I.W.W. is imparting to it. Those young men who are growing up in Europe now are the superiors of anything Europe has ever seen, and they look upon the I.W.W. as the angel of light, and they look for America to give in this generation the signal which was given in seventeen hundred and something against feudalism in Europe.

Don't let us strike out that clause "political action." Let us, on the contrary, understand what it means and carry that information among the working people. Do not let us yield to the sophistries of the pure and simple politicians who talk about neutrality toward the labor unions. Let us stand upon the square-jointed principle which Heslewood, your delegate, and myself advanced before that congress,<sup>3</sup> and although our time was limited, we got, outside of our own two and a half votes, eighteen votes, the majority of the votes of the French delegation and three votes from the Italian delegation. That resolution says that the industrial organization is the embryo, the seed of civilization.

Without political organizations we can do nothing; we can never triumph because we array ourselves for a civil warfare, and without economic organizations, the day of political triumph would be, today, that of political defeat. Political Socialism in Europe has shown that backward trend; don't let us give a hand to that, by ourselves going back, but let us take a long step forward today, so long that this same question cannot be brought in here again.

The motion made at the third convention of the I.W.W. to strike out the words "on the political field" from the preamble was defeated by 113 against 15 votes, not a very encouraging result for the advocates of "physical force only." The preamble remained as it was framed at the first I.W.W. convention, declaring for both political and industrial action and unity of the working class.

### *Haywood's Deficiency in the Crisis*

In July, 1907, only a couple of months before the third convention of the I.W.W. opened its sessions, Haywood's trial ended with an acquittal; later Pettibone too was acquitted, and Moyer was set free without trial.

Had Haywood remained true to the organization which he was instrumental in launching only two years before and at the first convention of which he had been the presiding officer, he would have attended the third I.W.W. convention even though the Western Federation of Miners was no longer a part of the I.W.W. Instead Haywood was busy in boosting the Socialist Party, the very organization that did its utmost to destroy the I.W.W., its declarations of "neutrality" toward trade unions notwithstanding.

That the Socialist Party exploited Haywood's popularity goes without saying.

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<sup>3</sup> [Stuttgart International Socialist Congress.—*Editor.*]

Haywood was actually popular then; he became notorious afterward. De Leon had regarded Haywood, as he himself expressed it, as a tower of strength in the labor movement. When the prison doors in Boise, Idaho, opened for Haywood and large numbers of workers turned out wherever Haywood was to appear as speaker; when the true working class instinct asserted itself; when the revolutionary spark only needed to be fanned to become a flame, Haywood's speeches were as weak as mush. Haywood only distantly referred to industrial unionism; did not even mention the Industrial Workers of the World; the supposed "tower of strength" turned out to be the very opposite—simply a "moving picture hero" as he was later characterized by a girl strike leader in the New Jersey silk strike.

*Petty Intriguing in the I.W.W.*

Yet, Haywood, or no Haywood, when the third I.W.W. convention had concluded its labors, the delegates were more than hopeful that judging by the progress made during the preceding year, in point of membership, influence, and prestige the young organization would forge ahead and that the ailings of infancy were over. This was not the case, however; indeed, "the worst was yet to come." For no sooner had the delegates returned from the third convention than a most malignant "colic" had the I.W.W. in its grip. The germs of this "colic," barely discernible at the third convention, had multiplied rapidly.

Wm. E. Trautmann, the general secretary-treasurer; Edwards, the editor of the *Industrial Union Bulletin*; St. John, the general organizer, and most of the members of the General Executive Board all showed signs of having turned a somersault, or that they were about to turn one. Trautmann began to find fault with the DAILY PEOPLE, by claiming that E. Markley had been using its columns against the I.W.W. A fellow who was Trautmann's right hand man in the office, who answered all correspondence and was the secretary de facto (by appointment of Trautmann) wrote nasty letters about De Leon. This fellow was Otto Justh, a suspended member of the Socialist Labor Party. Edwards published letters in the *Bulletin* written by Pat Quinlan and James Connolly, wherein the S.T. & L.A. was attacked and De Leon slurred.

How careful De Leon was not to arrive at conclusions hastily; how much concerned he was about all that took place in the organization; how he viewed things after the third convention of the I.W.W., and last but not least, under what difficulties De Leon had to perform his work, can be seen from the following letters:

*Two Letters From De Leon*

28 City Hall Place,  
New York, Nov. 4, 1907.

Rudolph, Katz,  
Lancaster, Pa.

Dear Katz:

I return the two letters you sent me.

As to Trautmann's letter:

His conduct is reprehensible. He does not specify the date of THE PEOPLE containing the alleged objectionable article. When I saw in the last *Bulletin* (Nov. 2) that he says "Markley is using the DAILY PEOPLE against the I.W.W.," I hunted up THE PEOPLE from convention days down to date, that is since September. There is no such article to be found. There are three articles from Markley. Not in the remotest way can they be construed to be against the I.W.W., or any of its officers. Just the opposite.

In this letter of his to you, however, I imagine I see a light. Can it be that because of Markley's past bad conduct, therefore Trautmann is of the opinion that any article Markley may write in THE PEOPLE, even if that article be upon "The Immortality of the Soul," the mere fact of his article being accepted is the "using of THE PEOPLE against the I.W.W."? Such a notion is so ridiculous that I wish to dismiss it. And I dismiss it all the more readily because I now have reasons to believe that Trautmann's explosive nature is being exploited, and his credulity played upon by a fellow whom I now make free to call a scamp. That fellow is Otto Justh.

In order to save me trouble in explaining this matter, I enclose to you a copy of a letter I received from Justh last Saturday. I immediately sent the original to Trautmann by "strictly personal" letter, so as to avoid having Justh purloin it. I said, however, to Trautmann that the letter was not personal but official. I asked Trautmann for his opinion on so fishy a letter from his employee, and that Justh was trying to inject New York S.L.P. dissensions into I.W.W. correspondence. I also told Trautmann that some of his letters tome signed by him (rubber stamp) with O.J. as countersign. This Justh was an S.L.P. man until recently. I understand he was expelled in Chicago for non-payment of dues, or something to that effect. It is clear he is in (underhandedly) with the Connolly crew. How comes he to drag in Connolly? I called Trautmann's attention to the fact that Connolly's name was not mentioned by me or any other delegate on the floor of the convention. Now, then, I suspect that Justh has simply lied to Trautmann about Markley; and he, Justh, being now out of the party, is trying dirty work against it. I also suspect that it is through his "influence" that Connolly's article was published. For all these reasons it will be well for you to insist upon the date of THE PEOPLE justifying Trautmann's false charges.

## *With De Leon Since '89*

This matter should not be allowed to rest. Return me the copy of Justh's letter.

As to your letter to Edwards:

It is first rate as far as it goes. You might add the point that, when you complained to Trautmann about Quinlan's letter Trautmann said, "How do we know who Quinlan is?" It so happens that both Quinlan's letter and Connolly's article introduced the writers. Quinlan ridiculed "the editor of THE PEOPLE"; Connolly slurs the S.T. & L.A. If Quinlan had any real point in economics to make, the point could have been made without throwing ridicule upon me; if Connolly had any real good bit of instruction to convey to the I.W.W. on economics, the thing could have been done without slurring the S.T. & L.A. No one will say that the I.W.W. will be promoted by slurring me or the S.T. & L.A. Both Quinlan and Connolly amply introduced themselves through their slurs.

If anyone has any right to complain, it is THE PEOPLE and the S.T. & L.A. element. But we must not play into the hands of mischief-makers. Edwards and Trautmann are doing wrong through inadvertance. I suspect Justh.

Fraternally,  
D. De Leon.

De Leon's second letter to me on this matter reads:

28 City Hall Place,  
New York, Nov. 6, 1907.

Rudolph Katz,  
Lancaster, Pa.

Dear Comrade:

I would, under ordinary circumstances, feel cheap to discover that I failed to send in a letter the enclosures that I promise. It is, ordinarily, a mark of reprehensible negligence. In my instance, it does not make me feel cheap, it angers me at the difficulties I have to contend with in this office. I am interrupted constantly. This office is the "continuation of the street." The Otto Justh letter goes in now; I also enclose a copy of my letter to Trautmann on that letter of O.J. I did not preserve the copy of the second letter to Trautmann on the subject of his report. Return me the copies.

I also return within the letter to you signed with Trautmann's stamp, but obviously written by O.J. Your answer, copy of which you sent me, is to the point. O.J. is hedging. Trautmann's report reads, "Markley is using the DAILY PEOPLE against the I.W.W." That is a concrete charge, to be proved or disproved by the articles in question. If the charge is true I am guilty. I should not be caught napping by people who wish to use THE PEOPLE against the I.W.W. O.J.'s is still vaguer. He speaks of articles which don't

conform with facts. This is an attempt to impeach the veracity of the allegations in articles that do not concern the I.W.W. Insist upon an answer, and upon retraction when the time comes that O.J. can dodge no more.

Since writing to you, two requests have come to me to answer in *The Bulletin* the misleading article of Connolly's and set things to right. I don't fancy the idea of taking the initiative in the matter. Edwards having exhibited his woeful ignorance on economics by publishing such stuff, and also his lack of alertness by allowing such an assault on the S.T. & L.A. [he surely would not have done so had he been more wide-awake] a spontaneous answer by me might wound his susceptibilities. The best way that occurs to me to proceed is this: Should Edwards answer your letter, and its tone justifies the move, you may reply to him suggesting, in view of the importance of economic clearness and historic accuracy, that he write to me for an answer to Connolly's article, confirming or combatting and disproving his contention. Ten to one Edwards will have good reason to do this. Ten to one letters will come in on the Connolly article. An unseemly clapperclaw in *The Bulletin* may be avoided by a stiff article, written academically, yet without mincing matters, and stating the proposition clearly.

Fraternally,  
D. De Leon.

# FROM 1908 TO DANIEL DE LEON'S DEATH IN 1914

## Fourth Convention of I.W.W. Packed by “Bummery” Element and De Leon Unseated as Delegate—Unity Movement—Milwaukee Craze—De Leon’s Greatness

**A**LL THE EFFORTS OF DE LEON to preserve harmony in the I.W.W. were unavailing. St. John, Trautmann, Edwards, and the majority of the five members of the General Executive Board turned over night, so to speak, against the fundamental principles of industrialism as laid down in the I.W.W. preamble. They no longer recognized political action as necessary. It was a repetition of the stupid Sherman attempt to get rid of the Socialist Labor Party element and thus find it easier to break into the Socialist Party and its much larger membership, and fish in troubled waters.

Once started on the road of inconsistency the “Bummery” stage was soon reached. At a special session of the General Executive Board held in January, 1908, in New York city, De Leon appeared and endeavored to enlighten those who gave signs of being in need of enlightenment. Such examples of wisdom as Trautmann, Williams, and Cole would take no advice from De Leon; they insinuated that De Leon, not being a member of the General Executive Board, had no right to step within the sacred precincts of that highest executive assembly. De Leon was given the floor, but afterward his statements, in the published proceedings, were deliberately misquoted by Trautmann.

I was accused of the monstrous crime of having consulted De Leon before expressing an opinion as General Executive Board member on certain questions. I did not only consult De Leon but frankly so stated in my official communications to general headquarters. How ridiculous would it not sound today if we should read somewhere in the archives of the early history of the Socialist movement that some official of a German or English trade union had been accused of having consulted Marx on questions then confronting the movement! It sounds equally ridiculous even today, and will sound more so as the years roll by and as deeds of yesterday and today become history, to have been accused of consulting De Leon on questions regarding the labor movement. Woe to the enemies of the working class, had the labor union

officials all consulted De Leon and acted upon his advice!

### *Nomination of Preston*

Another Presidential election came in 1908. The Socialist Labor Party held its national convention in New York city. For the first time in the history of political parties there was nominated for President of the United States a man who was accused of murder. The Socialist Labor Party in convention assembled did nominate as its standard bearer a man whom the capitalists of Nevada sought to brand as a murderer.

Morrie R. Preston, an official of the Industrial Workers of the World, in exercising the right to picket, was attacked by the proprietor of a restaurant the employes of which were out on strike. The proprietor leveled a pistol at Preston; Preston in self-defense drew his gun and laid low the man who wanted to take his life. Class justice, capitalist class justice, declared that Preston was guilty of murder.

It was not for any sentimental reason that Preston was picked out by the Socialist Labor Party as its Presidential candidate; it was to bring before the American working class the question of the right to picket in a strike, and correctly did the Socialist Labor Party reason. No picket, no union; no union, no Socialist Republic; wherever the right to picket is denied the workers there can be no organization, and without an organization on the economic field the capitalists can not be expropriated. Preston was exercising his right to picket; the middle class restaurant keeper was the aggressor. Preston had to defend himself or be killed. No jury in Nevada would find a man guilty who had drawn a gun in self-defense—except in a case where a worker stands for his class against capitalist class interests.

The nomination of Preston was a bold stroke against class justice, it was a fearless act in behalf of industrial unionism. Debs was the nominee of the Socialist Party for the Presidency; he still claimed to be an industrial unionist. It was the acid test of Debs's sincerity. Could he as an industrial unionist run against another industrial unionist whose liberty was to be taken for his loyalty to the cause of industrial unionism?

Instead of Debs saving Preston, Preston saved Debs. Preston, confined in prison (having been sentenced to twenty-five years at hard labor) did not measure up to the occasion. Influenced by his attorneys he did not accept the nomination. Thus the opportunity was lost to make the question of a labor union's right to picket a national issue without demanding such a law as a palliative. August Gillhaus was named as proxy for Preston for President and Donald Munro of Virginia for Vice-President.

Turning again to the I.W.W., the whole organization was in a state of unrest. The membership, upon discovering that the officials were acting in a manner that foreshadowed an ugly conflict within the organization, withdrew in large numbers. The financial and industrial panic which was then on had also a very bad effect upon the newly founded local unions of the I.W.W., and many of these lost members.

The *Industrial Union Bulletin* was then really no longer the journal of industrial unionism but became the mouthpiece of the men in Chicago who sought to overturn the fundamental principles of the I.W.W. As the time set for the holding of the fourth annual convention drew nearer, the contents and tone of the articles in the *Industrial Union Bulletin* became more and more hostile toward political action in general and toward the Socialist Labor Party in particular, and the inclinations toward Anarchistic methods more pronounced.

### ***“Overall Brigade” at 1908 Convention***

Finally, it was announced that the “Overall Brigade” was coming in force from the Far West to attend the convention. This “Overall Brigade” was really not what the name would seem to imply, namely, men in their working clothes, but consisted of that element that traveled on freight trains from one Western town to the other, holding street meetings that were opened with the song, “Hallelujah, I’m a Bum,” and closed with passing the hat, in regular Salvation Army fashion.

The “Overall Brigaders,” though they traveled in box cars where conductors do not collect fares, were nevertheless upholders of “organized labor” ethics—they would only steal rides on railroad lines that employed union men and would rather walk the ties than “patronize” a scab road. It is safe to say, however, that the directors of such scab railroad lines did not consider a boycott by the “Overall Brigaders” a serious blow.

While the “Overall Brigade” was on its way to Chicago, Executive Board Member Cole, in a letter published in the *Industrial Union Bulletin*, dared De Leon to come to the fourth convention of the I.W.W. De Leon did come, the open threat of Cole and the implied threat of the “brigaders” notwithstanding. When De Leon did present his credentials from several New York locals, the very same fellows who had dared him to come closed the doors to him when he arrived. De Leon’s seat in the convention was contested and his credentials were rejected on flimsy pretexts.

De Leon was given the floor to state his case, and he did state it in his characteristic fashion. The “Overall Brigade” were seated all in a row on one side of

the hall, a tough looking lot. Vincent St. John was in the chair, with sinister mien, wielding the gavel and everything else that could be wielded to keep De Leon out of the convention. Alongside of St. John sat Trautmann, not the same fellow at all that he had appeared to be at the previous conventions; in fact, he too looked as though he had traveled all the way from Seattle by freight train.

*De Leon's Rebuke to Slummists*

St. John had his physical force well organized to back up his arguments. De Leon had faced many varieties of antagonists in the labor movement, and he faced this variety with the same composure and courage born of knowledge and integrity. Such remarks as, "I would like to get a punch at 'the pope,'" were overheard in the hall among the "Overall Brigaders," but not loud enough to reach De Leon's ears. Had not St. John, ably assisted by Heslewood, the day before the convention opened tried his pugilistic skill on Delegate [Anthony J. ] Francis?

De Leon told them whither they were drifting—to slummism, to Anarchy, to the movement's destruction. When, in the course of his remarks, De Leon mentioned the fact that he had been dared to come, Cole, the very one who had his name signed to the letter in the *Industrial Union Bulletin* containing the "dare," jumped to his feet and demanded proof that such a letter had been published. De Leon opened his satchel, placed it between himself and delegate Chas. Trainor (formerly of the Locomotive Workers of Paterson, N.J.), and taking out the copy of the *Industrial Union Bulletin* containing the letter in question, handed the same over to Cole, with the remark: "Here is your letter in cold type. Have you forgotten that you wrote such a letter or was your name placed there without your knowledge and consent? Here I am handing you the copy. I trust you will return it. I hope you have not sunk to the level of petty theft."

The brigaders were shifting nervously; St. John turned red to his ears; Trautmann got very busy writing. Cole read his own letter, admitted De Leon had quoted correctly, handed back the copy and sat down. De Leon proceeded.

The "Overall Brigade" sat in judgment upon Daniel De Leon. St. John was the prosecuting attorney. This man, whom De Leon had befriended and whose life was practically saved by the generosity of Socialist Labor Party women of New York who had collected funds to have St. John brought from a hospital in Nevada where he was lying with a bullet wound in his right wrist and where, as rumors had it, he did not receive proper treatment, and made it possible for him to go to Chicago,—this same

St. John whom De Leon had once confided in, turned on De Leon with all the viciousness of a Western desperado.

St. John, one of those characters described by a magazine writer, who can act as a bouncer in a bar-room, salt a mine, or deliver a sermon or a lecture, charged De Leon with not understanding the proper form of industrial unionism, and with being a member of the Office Workers' Local when he should have been a member of the Printing Workers' Local, of which only a branch (linotype operators) was organized in New York. De Leon was not seated as a delegate upon this flimsy technical pretext.

A sufficient number of other delegates were not seated under other preposterous pretexts as to give the "Overall Brigaders" full control of the convention. It was all the work of a miniature steam-roller such as is frequently used at the conventions of capitalist political parties. Being in possession of all the books of the organization it was an easy matter to disqualify delegates that were not wanted by setting up the claim that the locals which they represented were in bad standing, and seat all those who were wanted. How many of the delegates who were seated represented mixed locals existing merely on paper, only those in possession of the books could know, namely, the general officers, Trautmann and St. John. They guarded that secret well.

Chas. Trainor and I visited De Leon in his hotel before his return to New York. De Leon was in as good a humor as I ever saw him, the action of the packed convention notwithstanding. His faith in the working class and its awakening was unshaken. What he predicted then, subsequent events have proved, that the manufactured majority and the element it represented would seek to drag down the name of the I.W.W. into the gutter of slummism and make it synonymous with Anarchy.

### *Political Action Repudiated*

When, by unseating duly elected delegates, St. John became supreme commander of the "Brigaders," the preamble was changed and political action repudiated. At this convention no stenographic report was taken, and this circumstance gave the St. John clique the opportunity to set up all sorts of ridiculous claims as to what had taken place at the convention. In the *Industrial Union Bulletin* of Oct. 10, 1908, there appeared what purported to be the speeches of De Leon and St. John relative to the argument on De Leon's credentials. It was Trautmann's "shorthand" report, styled "The Intellectual against the Worker; Extracts from Arguments Made by Daniel De Leon," and "The Worker against the Intellectual; Extracts from St. John's Arguments

against Daniel De Leon.”

A reader of these “extracts,” however, who would not have known who De Leon and St. John were, would most likely have concluded that St. John was the “intellectual,” for the representation in the “extracts” of what De Leon had to say was the basest kind of misrepresentation that only a Trautmann could have the audacity to put on paper.

After these happenings in Chicago the district councils of New York and Paterson, together with a number of local unions, called a conference of I.W.W. organizations which was held in Paterson, N.J., on Nov. 1, 1908. The delegates to that conference declared that the doings of the majority of the former general officers had placed them outside of the I.W.W. The conference decided to establish new headquarters in New York city, and elected a general secretary and a general executive board to serve until a regular convention could be held.

The acts of the conference were endorsed by all locals there represented. The pirates in Chicago were repudiated by the I.W.W. organizations generally, as shown by the fact that of the entire membership that voted on the referendum issued by the “Trautmann-St. John Administration,” the highest vote cast on any subject was 970, and only three issues of the *Industrial Union Bulletin* appeared after that packed “convention” had done its deadly work.

### *Too Much Talk of Unity*

The Socialist Labor Party vote in the Presidential election of 1908 was anything but encouraging; it had dropped to 14,237. This was due partly to the enactment of laws in some of the states making it extremely difficult for small political parties to file nominating petitions, so that in some of these states where the Socialist Labor Party had previously had a ticket in the field no Presidential electors were nominated in 1908.

The main cause, however, for failure to nominate Presidential electors in various states and for lack of vigorous agitation generally must be ascribed to too much unity talk. The resolution on unity adopted at the Amsterdam and Stuttgart International Congresses and voted for by the Socialist Party delegates from America; the unity conferences held in various states between Socialist Labor Party and Socialist Party representatives, created a feeling of uncertainty among Socialist Labor Party adherents.

As in all of their dealings the Socialist Labor Party membership and officials were honest and upright, so they were on the question of unity. When the International

Congress had adopted the resolutions urging the unification of Socialist forces in countries where the movement was split and where more than one party claimed to be Socialist, the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labor Party immediately notified the National Committee of the Socialist Party that the S.L.P. was ready to abide by the decision of the International Congress. The National Committee of the Socialist Party, always playing, like Bret Harte's Heathen Chinee, with 24 packs in its wide sleeves, pretended to favor unity. The S.P. had its delegates voting in favor of unity resolutions in Europe, but thwarted every effort to unite the Socialist forces at home. The request of the Socialist Labor Party that a committee of each party meet to discuss a basis for unity was hypocritically rejected, without, however, the question being put to referendum vote of the membership.

The three years intervening between the International Congress held in 1907 at Stuttgart and the one held in 1910 at Copenhagen were taken up with unity talk, among groups of individuals from both parties. A good many Socialist Party members, a few locals and even a whole state organization sought to bring the matter before the whole membership of the Socialist Party, but without success. The Socialist Party officialdom would not have it. They had trouble enough as it was, mending political fences, preparing catch-penny schemes, and adding additional quantities of sugar and water to their already much diluted "Socialism." Men with S.L.P. training would only be in their way. It is, after all, contrary to the laws of nature and a very unthankful job to try to unite fire and water.

Nevertheless the Socialist Labor Party with all its integrity was seeking to carry into effect the unity proposition of the International Congress. The least the party expected was that the double-dealing of the Socialist Party would be censured severely by the Copenhagen Congress. Up to the time of the Copenhagen Congress much of the Socialist Labor Party's activity and zeal was lost. The unity proposals became lightning rods down which the S.L.P. bolts were conducted, which otherwise might have done a good deal of damage to the S.P. structure. This no doubt was the most important factor that reduced the voting strength of the Socialist Labor Party in 1908.

None other than the Socialist Labor Party could have withstood so severe a reverse. It withstood the setback in point of its reduced voting strength, quickly recuperating; in 1910 the vote again reached nearly 30,000. This, too, at the time when the city of Milwaukee was carried by the Socialist Party by electing Emil Seidel mayor in the spring elections and sending Victor L. Berger to Congress in the fall elections of the same year.

*Failure to Oust De Leon From I.S.B.*

The Socialist Party went Milwaukee-crazy at that time. Its soap-box orators, like howling dervishes, were shouting, “Milwaukee, Milwaukee, Milwaukee; in Milwaukee; at Milwaukee; to Milwaukee; as Milwaukee; like Milwaukee; Milwaukee, Milwaukee”; “Oh! You Milwaukee.” The “Milwaukee Idea” of opportunism and nonsense was to spread throughout the United States, and then, woe to all capitalists—Morgan, Schwab, Carnegie, Hill, Rockefeller trembled at the very thought of the triumphant Socialist Party buying them out!

De Leon attended the Copenhagen International Congress. Messrs. Berger and Hillquit were there, too. There was an attempt made by Hillquit to have De Leon removed from the International Bureau. First Hillquit maneuvered the Congress into deciding that the number of votes the Socialist Labor Party should be allotted be reduced to one, which was comparatively easily accomplished, as the S.L.P. vote had been only 14,000 in the preceding election. Then Hillquit moved that only such parties should have a representative in the Bureau that had at least three votes in the Congress. This petty scheme the Congress rejected, for while the European Socialists were not abreast of De Leon in his revolutionary attitude, they were not men who would indulge in common trickery. De Leon retained his seat in the International Socialist Bureau.

The “Milwaukee Idea” craze reached its climax when in the Congressional elections of 1910 Victor L. Berger, the foremost advocate of that “Idea” was elected to Congress. All that was necessary to elect Socialist Party candidates to all local, state and national offices, was to emulate Berger’s methods. The S.P. men certainly tried hard, and it was not their fault that they failed to accomplish what Berger succeeded in accomplishing. The Socialist Party candidates for public office outdid Berger and his “Milwaukee Idea” a hundred fold. The larger the salary attached to the office for which they were the running candidates, the more pronounced were they in the advocacy of opportunism.

De Leon had entertained hopes that Berger might some day realize, realize before it was too late, that the road of opportunism leads to reaction instead of progress. De Leon credited Berger with being more of a Socialist and a man of more ability and at least willingness to learn, than many of the S.P. celebrities, until he met Berger at the Copenhagen Congress. While at Copenhagen Berger on one occasion (during sessions of the Bureau, as De Leon himself told me) came around where De Leon was sitting, eager to engage De Leon in conversation. With the familiarity of the ward heeler,

Berger said: “Comrade De Leon, why don’t you come over and join our party?” When De Leon met Berger personally he abandoned his hopes and sized him up to be a typical politician whose mental vision was limited to the border lines of the county or district where he might be running for office.

### *Karl Liebknecht in the United States*

In 1910 the Socialist Party engaged the eminent German Socialist, Dr. Karl Liebknecht, for a lecture tour throughout the United States—a very clever move on the part of that party, a move that was to give the Socialist Labor Party its death blow, for such must have been the real motive of inviting Karl Liebknecht.

There is hardly another prominent lecturer in the Social Democratic Party of Germany who has less in common with the Socialist Party opportunist stand than Liebknecht. Yet Liebknecht, the leader of the revolutionary wing of the German Socialist movement, was brought over to lecture for the Socialist Party here and thus appeal to the revolutionary element developing in its own midst, just as Legien, the leader of the German trade unions was brought over later to show to Samuel Gompers how truly conservative Socialists are, and thus win the good will of Gompers and his followers.

Liebknecht did not realize that his good name was being used for a bad purpose. De Leon vainly sought to meet Liebknecht upon his arrival in New York, but did finally meet him at Newark, N.J., not without having first to overcome some obstacles laid in the way of a meeting between them by the Socialist Partyites, who were evidently much alarmed lest De Leon should spoil their vote-catching scheme.

Liebknecht placed too much importance upon mere numbers. He lectured for the Socialist Party. Socialist Labor Party men, however, attended the Liebknecht meetings everywhere and used the opportunity offered for the distribution of Socialist Labor Party literature, never forgetting to hand a few copies to Liebknecht himself.

That Liebknecht did place too much importance upon numerical strength I have positive proof of. I was at the time on an agitation tour and happened to be in St. Paul, Minn., when Liebknecht arrived there to deliver his lecture. I intended to ask Liebknecht a couple of questions relative to his revolutionary position and Socialist Party “revisionism,” and made my intentions known to Socialist Party members in St. Paul and Minneapolis with whom I had had many tilts during my stay there and previous to the arrival of Liebknecht. I never asked these questions, however, for no sooner had Liebknecht concluded his lecture than a singing society closed the meeting

with the usual “Tendenz-Lieder.”

Liebknecht impressed me as a true revolutionist, more by his manner of speech than by what he said. There were no attempts to reach heights of eloquence, no affectation or stage-strutting.

Not having the chance to ask a question publicly, I tried to have my question answered after the meeting was over. In company with several other S.L.P. members I introduced myself to Liebknecht, but the S.P.ites formed a cordon around Liebknecht and I did not get further than the introduction. Comrade Wm. McCue, a tall and broad-shouldered man, elbowed his way to Liebknecht in spite of the ring of “kangaroos,” and laying his hand on Liebknecht’s shoulder, said: “Dr. Liebknecht, what do you think of the Socialist Labor Party?”

Liebknecht, sizing up the tall questioner, replied with a smile: “Oh, you are all right, but you should join the bigger party. Now the S.P. is the bigger party. I spoke with Comrade De Leon three hours in Newark. Oh, you are all right, but you should join the bigger party.”

In coming to St. Paul Liebknecht had passed through Milwaukee. Evidently the numbers had affected him somewhat. Five years after, we find Liebknecht battling, be it said to his honor, almost single-handed against the “bigger party” in Germany, while the policy that sacrificed revolutionary principles to mere numbers finds the working class shedding its blood in the bloodiest of all wars, with the sanction and approval of the “bigger parties.”

The warning De Leon had uttered at the congresses of the International and that was not heeded was later written on the hills and plains of Europe in the blood and tears of the working class. The “bigger party” in Germany sanctioned the “defense of the Fatherland” by voting billions for the continuation of the slaughter, and—Oh irony of fate!—“the bigger party” also sought to read the revolutionist, Karl Liebknecht, out of its organization.

In a series of brilliant editorials entitled “Berger’s Hit and Misses,” De Leon paid his respects to “the first Socialist Congressman,” Victor L. Berger. These articles, which were published subsequently in pamphlet form, again gave evidence of De Leon’s straightforwardness toward friend or foe. It was not a question with De Leon whether Berger was a member of the Socialist Party; he would have criticized a member of the Socialist Labor Party who would not have squared with correct Socialist principles—if anything, even more severely than he criticized the acts of Berger that were contrary to the proper conduct of the first Socialist in Congress, and

he would not have bestowed as much praise on an S.L.P. member for any act that did measure up to the standard of a revolutionist as he did upon Berger.

One important incident in the class struggle illuminated vividly, although for a short period, the absolutely correct position of De Leon and what came to be known as “De Leonism.” That incident in the class struggle was the strike of silk workers in 1911–1912 that started in Paterson, N.J., and which spread through many cities in New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania.

### *A Big Strike on “De Leonistic” Lines*

The strike was conducted by the Industrial Workers of the World, with headquarters at Detroit, Mich., the organization that had repudiated the Anarchist I.W.W., with headquarters at Chicago. This true industrial union became known as the Detroit I.W.W.; it some years later (1915) changed its name to the Workers’ International Industrial Union.

The silk workers in Paterson, becoming tired of A.F. of L. pro-capitalist tendencies, joined the Detroit I.W.W. en masse. The silk workers in Hudson County, Plainfield, Summit, Phillipsburg, N.J., in New York, in Easton and Allentown, Pa., followed. Thousands of other textile workers joined the Detroit I.W.W. in Passaic, N.J.

This strike movement was conducted differently from the manner in which any other organization “runs” strikes. The opportunity of speaking to thousands of wage workers engaged in a struggle for better conditions was utilized to impart to them class consciousness, to enlighten them upon the goal of the Socialist movement. It was not the old story dished out by the old as well as the new type of “strike leader”: “Boys, stick together and you will win,” or, “Beat up the scab,” etc. The workers were told what they could expect while capitalism lasts; they were told in plain words that the workers produce all wealth and are entitled to all they produce, but that nothing can be gained unless it is gained through solidarity, through united intelligent action on both the political and the industrial fields.

Fifty speakers of the Detroit I.W.W. were on the strike scene; Herman Richter, the general secretary was among them. Arthur E. Reimer, Caleb Harrison, Frank Young, August Gillhaus, Robert McLure, Olive M. Johnson, Margaret Hilliard, Edmund Seidel, M. Angelevski, Boris Reinstein, and many others used their best endeavors and worked overtime to enlighten, encourage, and organize. A number of young people, the sons and daughters of New York comrades, came to Paterson to

help in doing clerical work; thousands of membership books had to be issued for which men, women, and boys and girls who had joined the organization clamored, and which could not be made out as fast as applicants for membership demanded them, for in those days nothing was so cherished as a membership card of the Detroit I.W.W.

### *S.P. and Bummery Treason*

But the hand of treason once more destroyed the newly built organization, which at its very birth was thus not only under the fire of the common enemy, the capitalist class, but was attacked from all sides. The fear of the Socialist Partyites on the one hand that a strike conducted by men most of whom were clear-cut S.L.P. members would not increase the S.P. vote, and of the Anarchist I.W.W.ites on the other hand, who feared to lose their much-sought-for notoriety, the A.F. of L., and all the rest of dark reaction all militated against the Detroit I.W.W.

In the midst of the strike William D. Haywood was brought to Paterson and Passaic; the direct action S.P.ites as well as their anti-direct action comrades sided in with Haywood, and the apple of discord was thrown among the strikers.

Suffice it to say that the textile workers' strike of 1911–1912 clearly demonstrated that the working class will eventually organize as the workers did then and, ripened by experience, will not be an easy prey to treason and deceit.

De Leon had no illusions about the outcome, when I spoke to him at the inception of the strike. He pointed out the numerous enemies the organization had to combat. I argued that the workers in Paterson had had enough experience and could not be fooled so easily. While the strike lasted De Leon gave it the support it deserved and the DAILY PEOPLE was the only English paper outside of the official organ of the Detroit I.W.W., the *Industrial Union News*, that reported all the strike happenings from the strikers' viewpoint. The New York *Call*, of course, supported the other side.

On May 31, 1912, the notorious Recorder Carroll, of Paterson, pronounced a sentence of six months in jail upon me for alleged loitering in front of the Reinhardt silk mill where I was doing picket duty that morning. I was confined in the Passaic County jail until Aug. 12, and had thus to spend the summer under most unpleasant conditions.

The worst feature of jail life is the regulation that compels the inmates to retire each to his cell at a very early hour. At half past five p.m. the bell rang the signal for the prisoners to be put under double lock in the long row of cells. The only thing that

comes near to jail life in my experience is a steerage trip on an old-fashioned steamer across the Atlantic. One is sure to get sea sick in both of these places. The most abominable feature is the filth and vermin with which the walls, ceilings and floors of the very small, dark cells are filled.

It often occurred to me how well such a place could be compared with the capitalist system, inasmuch as neither can be kept clean or reformed because of the very manner of its construction, even when attempts at cleanliness are actually and honestly made. There are bound to be more ills of all sorts, more things to be reformed, under capitalism, than there are reformers; so the vermin in one cell exceeds in numbers the citizens of a populous city or the membership of a reform party. The comparison would also hold good in that it would be as useless to try to reform the capitalists as it would be to try to reform the bed-bugs.

The stone floors of the halls where the prisoners spend the short day are kept scrupulously clean, however. A visitor may easily be deceived, but not if he would stay overnight, especially in summer.

Both Frank Young (who was sentenced to three months) and I had a good many visitors, with whom we were permitted to talk through the bars of a door leading into the main hall. I had the "special privilege" to talk half an hour each day to some representative of the Detroit I.W.W. But each day persons were admitted into the jail hall itself, where they could freely converse with the prisoners. These were persons who had some pull with the sheriff.

### *De Leon's Visit to the Prison*

One set of people seemed to have more of this privilege than any other; they were clergymen of all denominations. A minister of the Gospel had evidently the right above anyone else to come when he liked and go when he pleased. These gentlemen preached and held religious services very frequently. Nothing was allowed to interfere with these services or prayer meetings.

One day I was called to the barred door to speak to visitors. The visitors were Comrade De Leon and Paul Augustine, the then national secretary of the Socialist Labor Party. The very sight of De Leon made me and Young forget our tribulations. I asked the guard at the door to let my visitors inside the hall, but he could not break the rule. De Leon turned to the sheriff, who happened to be near, with the request to be permitted to come inside. The sheriff's little eyes blinked at De Leon's features, and the door was opened.

It was my most pleasant half hour in jail. Later I thought that the sheriff was so overawed by De Leon's venerable appearance and his keen searching glance, that he simply forgot to show his authority which he delighted in showing otherwise, as Victor Hugo's great character, Jean Valjean, was impressed by the countenance of the good bishop. In fact, I had a suspicion that the sheriff of Passaic County did indeed take De Leon for a bishop, and that that was why the door opened for De Leon so quickly.

A few weeks before De Leon was taken seriously ill I called at the DAILY PEOPLE office. "Comrade De Leon, how is your health?" I inquired. "Never felt better in my life," De Leon answered. He then looked the picture of health, robust and strong. The next time I saw him was at the Mt. Sinai Hospital a few days before his death. Daniel De Leon passed away on May 11, 1914.

### *Greatness of Daniel De Leon*

The greatness of this man will be recognized by the whole world. The members of the Socialist Labor Party have held De Leon in high esteem, but not even the most loyal of his comrades could fully appreciate De Leon's genius. His was a master mind. His hand has drawn the strategic plans that will give the working class the power to destroy the forts of capitalism and rear the structure of the Socialist Republic.

De Leon's actions were not prompted by impulse, instinct, whim or policy. The logical deductions of his scientific studies were at all times the determining factors guiding all of his acts. There are perhaps men who possess as much learning as did De Leon, but to be the possessor of knowledge and to give that knowledge acquired by long years of study to the disinherited class of working men and women is quite a different matter. This De Leon did. Not only did he give all his knowledge to the working class, but his whole being as well. He was not only a philosopher but a man of action, taking part in the bitter strife and struggles of the Labor movement.

While others used the Labor Movement as a means to gain applause, or an easy life, or both, and trimmed their sails accordingly, De Leon spurned applause and wealth at the expense of the progress of the movement. He remained poor in the things that money can buy, but was as rich as Croesus in being the possessor of an intellect that all the gold in existence can not procure.

Was De Leon's life a happy one amid the continuous battle against error, prejudice, superstition, reaction, and corruption? Was his life a happy one, with his having to forego many good things and surroundings and companionship congenial to

## *With De Leon Since '89*

a man of De Leon's culture? It was. The knowledge of having served in such a great measure the lofty cause of Socialism compensated him for the lack of other pleasures. His family life was as pure as De Leon's high standard of ethics. The stern, oft-times grim fighter was like a child among his children.

I never sought to intrude upon De Leon in his home, but being invited I visited him with my family (about the size of which De Leon knew no end of jokes) in the summer of 1912. The picture then presented will ever remain in my mind—Comrade De Leon, his wife, and children seated about him on that summer evening.

Millions of human lives have been destroyed by the ravages of war in Europe. Rivers of human blood have been shed, untold misery and suffering created. "Is it possible that to have followed the teachings of one individual could have prevented that most horrible butchery the world has ever known?" the well-meaning doubter would ask.

Yes, it was the indomitable spirit of a Columbus that would not turn back the vessels which set out to reach land by the western route—one man. Yes, the chart drawn by De Leon's hand will eventually be accepted and followed by the working class. Then all the murderous implements of war will become useless; the enlightened members of the working class, organized in an integral body at the point of production as well as politically, will raise the banner of International Socialism not only over the parliaments and capitals of the Political States, but also over the supply stations of the capitalist system, the factories, mills, mines, and end capitalist class rule forever.

When finally all the struggles of the proletariat, all the defeats and victories will have been recorded in history, the greatness and worth will be recognized of that One Man—Daniel De Leon.

(THE END)

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