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EDITORIAL

SINCERE, FOR ONCE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE gentlemen who at the late Socialist party national convention argued in favor of and put through the resolution restricting immigration upon the ground that the S.L.P. furnished a deterrent example of what “fanaticism” leads to, were sincere—for once.

He who watches the S.P. kowtowing to those “bulwarks of capitalism in America” misnamed Unions, must be very much of an innocent if he takes the S.P. for sincerely in the wrong. As the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Labor Party put it in the address it issued last January: “When moneys are given to a Socialist party and the votes are given to another party, then the gift is a bribe; and it goes without saying that when Socialism is bribed it is not bribed in (the) interest of Socialism.” In its attitude of hushing up the iniquities of the A.F. of L. and kindred concerns; in its attitude of acting as a bruiser for the Labor-lieutenants of the capitalist class; in its attitude of promoting the interests of the “Labor Leaders”;—in all this the S.P.’s attitude is dictated by the lust for revenue.—No sincerity there.

Again, he who watches the S.P. hob-nobbing with tax and other reformers must likewise be too green to burn if he holds the S.P. sincere, however mistaken. There is notoriety to be gotten by identification with “Reform,” however freakish—and notoriety is not infrequently followed by cash receipts for articles and speeches.—No sincerity there.

And so on through the whole gamut of S.P. performances, until one reaches the immigration question. Then the aspect changes.

As has been more than once pointed out in these columns anti-immigration is one of the most popularly attractive postures in the land. Pro-immigration almost verges on anti-patriotism. Starting with a fund of Socialist knowledge that is next to

nothing, facing such a popular delusion as anti-immigration, which is of a nature to enlist superstitious hostility, yet justly entertaining supreme respect for S.L.P. principles, the S.P. leader naturally arrives at the conclusion that the S.L.P. principle of liberal immigration is correct, but that, to stand by the principle, is fanaticism, a fanaticism that prevents Socialist growth. Here we have sincerity, however inch-thick the ignorance.

The ignorance prevents the S.P. leader from understanding that the present cue of the militant Socialist is not votes, but the sinking deep of the sunken piers, and the laying solidly of the foundations for that revolutionary structure that no capitalist or reactionary storm can overthrow it. The ignorance blinds the S.P. leader to the fact that he cannot hunt with the anti-immigration hound and yet expect to run with the pro-immigration hare of class-consciousness: he does not realize that his labors accrue mainly to the Radical Reformer, for the voting armies of whom he raises recruits.

For once, on the Issue of Immigration, the S.P. is sincere when it pronounces the S.L.P. fanatic for its posture in favor of liberal immigration. The S.P., on this head, does not realize that, on this head, the strictest theory, is the soundest, and the soundest the sanest and most level-headed. On this one head the S.P. simply does not know better—hence its sincerity for once.

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