

SECOND EDITORIAL

SUICIDE OR SOLIDARITY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

The capitalist press is grudgingly admitting that the strikers at Havre, France, gained what they struck for. But they are too wise to tell the reason for this triumph of the workers over the loafers; they understand what happened so well that there is no danger of their publishing it.

The Socialist Labor Party of France sent its members of Parliament, the deputies, to take charge of the strike and see that the men were not abused. Zévaès, the eloquent fighter for proletarian rights in the chamber, has exposed the treachery of the Millerand masqueraders, who pose as Socialists and then act like the Debsite Carey in this country: side with the capitalists when strikers are shot. So men of the Zévaès stamp hurried to the scene of action and used their official positions to protect the strikers against Governmental brutality.

Against this solidarity of the working class, extending from deck-hand and stoker to congressman, backed by a fighting Socialist Labor Party, the capitalists and their political lackeys dared not move. Confronted by brainy and determined men who plainly told them that each act of brutality would be recorded in the Chamber

of Deputies, and vengeance demanded, the employers, together with the counterfeit Socialists and Republicans, showed the white feather, and the strike was won.

How differently are things done here. No one ever heard of a Congressman going to the scene of an industrial battle and throwing the shield of his office over the strikers in this country. The average working man here cannot conceive of a



ALEXANDRE (BOURSON) ZÉVAÈS
(1873-1953)

political party which orders its elected representatives to the scene of a strike as a soldier is ordered to a battle field. That there can be a brotherhood between the grimy coal heaver and the brilliant orator never occurs to them, nor that it is as much the duty of the Congressman as it is of the laborer to fight always against the robber class.

Yet, the United States should and can be the very country where this kind of Unionism would obtain. All we need to do is to do as the French workers have done: Vote as we strike; make our unions the schools wherein the worker is taught how to use his ballot as a weapon against the enemy; kick out those traitors who try to prevent the discussion of working class politics, and then elect class conscious fighters of the Zévaès type, who regard themselves as officers and servants of the working class army; throw down and smash the pure and simple, fakir breeding style of organization which holds the workers back from the light, and build up the real trade union: the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance.

Malloney and Remmel in America stand for the kind of Unionism that won at Havre. The difference between it and the scabby Gompers' style of pure and simple infamy is the difference between Solidarity and Suicide.

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

Uploaded June 2005