

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 2, NO. 179.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 26, 1901.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

STAND FIRM ON THE FIRING LINE, THEY ARE OURS!

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE *New Yorker Volkszeitung* of Dec. 24 published a letter from one Robert Steller of Paterson, N.J. The letter deserves reproduction in full. Here it is:

“Allow me a few words on the recent occurrences connected with the ‘Peace Conference,’ and especially on the conduct of Gompers and his kin. It is, indeed, a shame and disgrace that the organized workingmen put up with it. Is it to be wondered at that ALL ENLIGHTENED WORKINGMEN AND SOCIALISTS HAVE, SO TO SAY, ACQUIRED A HORROR FOR THE PURE AND SIMPLE TRADES UNIONS, seeing they do not call a decided ‘Halt!’, and throw the whole pack over-board?! And still greater wonderment must be evoked when, at the late convention of the A.F. of L., Socialists could give their votes for a man whom they know to be one of the betrayers of the organized workingmen!”

It is safe to conclude that Mr. Steller has been a camp-follower of the *Volkszeitung* Infantry. What mental aberration or illusion took him there it may be hard to tell. Certain it is that he does not belong there any longer. Nor can his be an isolated case.

The man from that quarter who admits that “all enlightened workingmen and Socialists must have a horror for the pure and simple Trades Unions,” such a man can no longer be misled into hostility, against the body of men who have that “horror,” by the body of men who declare in their national convention that these pure and simple Trades Unions are “to-day nobly waging the class-struggle.” The man from that quarter who gags at the sight of “Socialists giving their votes” to a Gompers “whom they know to be one of the betrayers of the organized workingmen,” such a man must have eyes off which must have fallen the scales that previously prevented him from perceiving that such “Socialists” are mere pirates sailing under false colors.

It is not enough to have evolution work our way: man must give evolution a helping hand. We know it is not enough to have capitalism strangle itself: the Socialists must—by agitation, education and organization—render society ready to support the Old with the New, lest a social cataclysm overtake the race. And likewise it is not enough to allow the “*Volkszeitung* Infantry,” alias “Social Democratic Party,” alias “Socialist Party,” alias “Public Nuisance Party,” etc., etc., to suffocate itself in its own “Organized Scabbery” mire: the Socialist must—by intensified agitation, intensified education, intensified organization, intensified aggressiveness and enthusiasm—raze to the ground the political-scabbery breastwork of the *Volkszeitung* Infantry that the capitalist class has thrown up alongside of its economic-scabbery breastwork of the Gompers-Lynch “Organized Scabbery.”

There is not a sign of the times that whispers to the Socialists of the land an admonition different from:

“Stand firm on the firing line; the enemy is yours!”

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

Uploaded August 2006