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EDITORIAL

UNITY OF INSIGHT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE expulsion of some of its members by Section Seattle, Wash., Socialist Labor Party, together with the immediate organization of the expellees into a “Revolutionary Socialist League,” serves the Seattle, Wash., *Socialist*—a wild-cat paper with which our readers are acquainted through some choice citations from it in these columns—as a welcome opportunity by which to refute the irrefutable principle that unity of insight is essential to unity of organization. The incident serves, on the contrary, to illustrate the theory of organization on which the S.L.P. banks, and from the safe height of which it gathers ever fresher inspiration as it looks down upon the turmoil in which its would-be imitators and detractors are eternally involved.

The said *Socialist* says that, without disagreeing on fundamentals, dissatisfaction broke out amidst Section Seattle, S.L.P., and rent it in twain; consequently, argues the *Socialist*, unity of insight does not insure unity of organization.

The now familiar earmarks of the anti-S.L.P. man’s disingenuousness in argument can not escape notice in the above method of treatment. We see there, first, the earmark of a careful avoidance of any allegation of a fact, that might enable others to judge for themselves; and tall and protuberant sticks out that other earmark, known as “begging the question.” Nothing is said from which the reader can judge whether, indeed, there really was unity of insight on fundamentals among the two sets. This important point, the only one worth settling, is taken for granted; and, the question being thus begged, the desired conclusion—unity of insight on fundamentals does not insure unity of organization—is triumphantly arrived at. The fact in the case is that, differently from the *Socialist’s* statement, there was a decided divergence of insight on fundamentals between the two sets; consequently, unity of organization was impossible with the two. That essential divergence of insight turned on the Class Struggle. The expelled members denied, Section Seattle

maintains the fact and principle of the Class Struggle.

A test of the insight into the Class Struggle is the attitude on the Trade Union question. The man, who is scientifically poised, recognizes that classes, the same as all other biologic formations, imperceptibly shade into each other; consequently, that, in order to study a class, recourse must be had to the same methods that are adopted in natural science. The naturalist, who wants to study Animal or Vegetal life, does not pick his specimens from the homogeneous species in which the Animal and Vegetal Kingdoms are still, however remotely, interlocked; he does not go down to the protoplasm; he picks out TYPES. So does the scientifically poised laborer in the domain of the Social Question. He looks for the type. The type of the wage-slave is the manual worker in the modern factory. By the study of that type the Class Struggle is understood in all its purity. As a result of the insight thus gained, the Trade Union Question is appreciated as a robust fact to be recognized, grappled with and handled. A correct insight in the Class Struggle teaches, as an inevitable consequence, the necessity of the class-conscious economic organization of the wage-slave as an indispensable battering-ram in the arsenal of the militant Proletariat.

Wholly different is the light in which the man, unscientifically poised, looks at this matter. To him the Trade Union Question is a nuisance; he cares naught about it; "let the Unions alone," says he, and he adjusts his conduct to his unscientific blindness—: like the poltroon, that he is bound to develop into, he ducks to the Labor Fakir, thus leaving the important field of the economic movement, that hot-bed of the Proletariat, in the hands of the Labor Lieutenants of the Capitalist Class; and, like the freak that he is from the start, he proceeds to preach the most vapid sort of stuff which he pleases to call "Scientific Socialism," and gathers his kindred around him.

Of such "insight" and material was the baker's dozen whom Section Seattle, S.L.P., drove out, and they were well typified by their two leaders. Both were "intellectuals"; both were rolling stones, without visible means of support; the one rolled from California, the other rolled from the Social Democratic Federation of England. They met in Seattle and mutually recognized their affinity. In the language of the pious Spanish saying, God made them and the Devil joined them. Why they did not join the Kangaroos from the start is a mystery to this day. Of course, every other word they utter is "Revolutionary Socialism," or "Class Struggle," or "Scientific Socialism." But the S.L.P. has not for naught cut its wisdom-tooth. Its membership has not emancipated itself from old-time credulity in

words, to succumb to the new-fangled phrases. It sees the conduct of the Capitalists towards the workingman, and it spurns their protestations of love for Labor; so, likewise, the membership of the S.L.P. is not taken in by asseverations of scientific socialist knowledge, of Revolutionary Socialism, of devotion to the Class Struggle. It looks into conduct. And when it finds that practice does not tally with preaching, it knows whom or what it has to deal with;—and acts accordingly.

Brought to the touch-stone of the Trade Union Question—that test of insight in the Class Struggle—the expelled members of Section Seattle were found hopelessly, constitutionally, perversely wanting;—and the freaks were sent kiting.

Unity of insight is essential to all organization that has a serious mission to fulfil. United upon an essential principle such organization is proof against all assault and will achieve its purpose,—as the S.L.P. has proved, and will do.

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