

Prospects of the SDP:  
Interview with the *Haverhill Social Democrat*  
(November 27, 1899)

\* \* \*

*On the question of being a candidate for the Presidency next year on the Social Democratic Party ticket, Mr. Debs quoted an interview he had given a Chicago paper a couple of weeks ago, in which he declared he would not be a candidate.*

We have plenty of good material to draw upon for a suitable candidate for President. The Social Democratic Party is not only developing new possibilities in its old workers, but gaining new men who would do the party credit and who would command the support of all true socialists. Our party is different from any other, inasmuch as the office has to seek the man, though there is not a man in the party but would consider it an honor to be chose as the standard bearer in the contest next year. The Social Democratic Party gives every member room to develop and expand and the result is that we are collecting in our ranks an army of men and women whose earnestness, ability, and unfaltering energy, united with their clear, firm grasp upon the fundamental principles of socialism is gathering a force together that will shake the forces of wrong and injustice to their center.

The convention of the Social Democratic Party to be held in Indianapolis next March will be a great gathering of the most determined, unconquerable, aggressive, and intelligent men and women who have ever gathered together on this continent. At that convention will also be organized a Socialist Press Association that will bring together into one organization all the socialist papers of America. I find, in my travels, socialist papers everywhere, some in the most obscure corners, the publishers of which are struggling along in the face of great difficulties, doing their utmost to teach the principles of socialism in their respective localities. Unknown to their brethren in the outside world they are plodding along like true heroes. Now the idea has struck me that it would be a good thing to bring all of these workers, many of whom are unknown to one another, in touch with each

other and establish a mutual bond of helpfulness and sympathy which will aid the work of education and enlightenment to a tremendous degree.

What could be more conducive to the spirit of solidarity and unity than to bring together every year the editors and writers on the socialist press of the land? Here the men and women who have been exchanging thoughts the year round could meet together and by personal contact learn to know and appreciate each other and their work all the better. The Association could meet whenever the party convention met.

*Many other topics, old and new, of interest to socialists, were discussed, and as a final word before going to supper, Mr. Debs said:*

In every part of the country the enthusiasm is intense and all the indications point to a mighty mustering of the class-conscious forces in 1900. In California, Washington, Montana, and other western states there is great activity in organizing and our party will develop phenomenal strength in that section in the next 12 months. The outlook is more than gratifying in the state of Massachusetts. Our meeting at Brockton on the 25th was a magnificent tribute to our comrades there, whose vote in the recent state election was a revelation to the people. Charles H. Coulter, our candidate for mayor of Brockton, is making a splendid fight and has the enthusiastic support of every comrade and many hundreds of others who have cut loose from the old parties. Coulter is an exceptionally able man and no man stands higher in Brockton. His election is generally conceded and I do not hesitate to predict that he will be the next mayor of Brockton by a safe majority.

At Boston our comrades are working early and late to make a good showing on Tuesday next. They have a ticket in the field headed by Sherman, the candidate for mayor, and unless all signs fail, the ticket will poll a large vote.

Here in Haverhill there is a complete combination of the old parties and the fight will be clear cut with all the chances in favor of our party. All our comrades are in the campaign as if their all were involved in it. Chase, Carey, and the rest are stirring the city from center to circumference with their appeals to the people. Their integrity has never been questioned, their ability is conceded on every hand, and their arguments in support of the principles of the party remain unanswered. Chase has a strong combination of capitalist politicians and corporation boodle against him, but he will win and the party will march forward to higher elevations of influence and power.

Altogether, the outlook is most inspiring and all of us rejoice in anticipation of the early and complete triumph of the Social Democratic Party.

Published as "E.V. Debs Interviewed" in *Haverhill Social Democrat*, vol. 1, no. 9 (Dec. 2, 1900), pp. 1, 5.