

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 10, NO. 325.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 21, 1910.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

A MONTH OF SEIDEL.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WITHOUT retracting a word of what was said in these columns, or in any way qualifying the same; on the contrary, by reason of, and based upon the criticisms passed upon last month's Milwaukee victory, a month of the Social Democratic administration, which this day closes its first month, justifies certain conclusions which it is pleasurable to record.

The Movement in Europe has far behind it that dangerous period which the Labor and Socialist Movement of this country is just now in the toils of. The period may be called the "infant complaint" period, not because it is a period that affects infants, but because it is one that affects adults at the infancy of a Movement. When adults are seized with diseases of infants the malady is more apt to be serious.

The infant disease of the present Movement is *Insolence*. It is a vestige of the cabbishness of Anarchy, which clings to many a militant even after he has outgrown all Anarchistic tendencies. The disease of *Insolence* is the bane of organization. The Insolent interprets democracy to mean that all men are at all times fit for all functions. The Insolent, his mind obsessed with modern artificial conditions, has no conception of the dignity that attaches to any function which is a factor in the reaching of a common goal; obsessed with modern artificial conditions, the Insolent, accordingly, sees distinctions in ranks, wherefrom is bred a restlessness to "distinguish" himself, not in that for which he is fittest, but in that in which he imagines there is exclusive glory. In short, the Insolent knows not that in all organization there is a place for each—and each should take his place with equal dignity, equal glory, and equal distinction.

That a revolutionary Movement should at some date be affected by the infant complaint of *Insolence*, is inevitable. It is in the order of things. In this country a sinister circumstance contributed to nurse, to foment, to incite, to spread the

malady. Due to the very law of its existence, the Socialist party had to and did become a breeder of the malady, which thereby became a veritable plague. Whereat Capitalism chuckled complacently. If only the disease could be properly prolonged, the silent conviction would become rooted with the masses that the word Socialism was identical with utter unfitness for ORDER—for order, a *conditio sine qua non* of all progress, a condition that, the more revolutionary the progress, is all the more essential. Under these circumstances the Social Democracy of Milwaukee was voted into control of the city. The supreme question of the hour was would the Milwaukee victors demean themselves, like their Socialist party cousins outside of Milwaukee, as a collection of Insolents? A month of Seidel has answered the question emphatically in the negative.

Despite all that has been said in these columns, and truthfully said, against the Socialism of the last April's Milwaukee Social Democratic victory, the fact remains that the victory was won under the flag of Socialism. There ARE evils that will arise to Socialism from this fact; but these evils should be no cause to overlook the advantage that has been gained for Socialism in the spectacle of self-control, in other words, in the absence of *Insolence*, on the part of the Milwaukee officials who took possession on the 19th of last month. This is a solid gain for the revolution; a gain, which, having been made, however inaccurately, in the name of Socialism—how inaccurately may be judged from the Mayor's act of putting the flag of the City Hall at half mast on the death of Edward VII, not to mention other instances,—Socialism is justified to seize, and to profit by—and correspondingly to acknowledge thankfulness for.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded May 2011

slpns@slp.org