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EDITORIAL

BULLY FOR HOEHN!

By DANIEL DE LEON

IT is the first time, in our recollection, that the organ of the Socialist Labor Party has shouted a cheer to G.A. Hoehn of St. Louis. While one can have contempt only for the sneaking doormat thief, the brazen burglar does arrest admiration, some kind of admiration—for a little while.

Every observer of the American Movement is familiar with the practice of the Socialist party's Officialdom in shouting against tax assessors on the allegation that they over-assess the property of the working class, despite the fact that the proletariat has no property to be assessed; in fusing with capitalist politicians; in rooting for the Labor-disrupting Civic-Federationized and Militia-of-Christized A.F. of L.; in fanning the flames of racial hatred with anti-immigration pronouncements; in speculating upon the Socialist and Labor Movement by means of a privately owned press; etc.; etc.; etc.

Everyone, who is at all posted is aware that these practices of the S.P. Officialdom are contrary to Socialist economics, contrary to the interests of the working class, contrary to the policy of International Socialism, are in violation of Socialist ethics, and are subservient only to the aspirations after place and pelf on the part of the Officialdom referred to.

Furthermore, every follower of things in the American Movement is aware of the S.P. Officialdom's conventional procedure of vociferously lauding their practices as evidences of "loyalty to the International Socialism," and of accompanying the laudations with truthful declarations to the effect that the said practices are non-De Leonistic and anti-De Leonism.

Finally, every observer, even if he has but one eye, has noticed that, whenever challenged, the S.P. Officialdom has ducked. It played the ostrich act.

Otherwise G.A. Hoehn a product and once a member of the said Officialdom.

Thrown out more than a year ago by the rank and file of the Socialist party of Missouri for rank corruption; having—thanks to the election laws of Missouri, which left the electoral machinery of his party in St. Louis in the hands of himself and his close associates—virtually set up an independent party under the usurped name of the S.P.; having, with the assistance of the S.P. Officialdom, sought, to use the advantages, that the election laws happened to leave in his hands, as a club to compel the Missouri rank and file to surrender to him; failing in this, the move having been overwhelmingly voted down by the rank and file of the S.P. nationally;—at the end of his tether along that line, Hoehn appears in his privately owned *St. Louis Labor* of last December the 30th, behind the signature of one of his creatures, Wm. M. Brandt, and under the false colors of “General Committee Socialist party of St. Louis” with a pronouncement that, in one respect is of a piece with the traditions of the S.P. Officialdom; in another respect, however, presents a radical change.

In keeping with the traditions of the S.P. Officialdom, Hoehn coolly lies—

He, who had engineered in 1910 the scandalous double fusion with the Democratic and the Republican party, whereby the Democratic candidate Owen Miller was inserted simultaneously on the S.P. ballot, and the S.P. candidate Emil Simon was inserted simultaneously on the Republican ballot, on account of which Hoehn was bounced,—he coolly asserts that “no compromise with capitalist parties” had ever been, and will continue to be his guiding star.

He, who, in his corrupt political deals was enabled to sandbag the clean elements in his party in St. Louis by turning to his advantage the circumstance that the two papers of the St. Louis S.P. are private corporation property—he coolly refers to the plant that issues the two papers as “co-operatively owned.”

He, notoriously a rounder and gouger for the A.F. of L., the system of which inevitably breeds Anarchistic acts of violence,—he, at this very season when every single A.F. of L. Professor is under the cloud raised by the dynamitic performances of the A.F. of L. products, the McNamaras and McManigals—he coolly lectures “the many confusionists who have of late been trying to side-track the American Socialist movement in the direction of the old-time Anarchism,” etc.

All that is strictly in accord with the traditions of the S.P. Officialdom, and likewise in accord with the said traditions are the passages denunciatory of “De

Leonism.” All this sort of thing is traditionary stale. What breaks from the said traditions is the passage with which the pronunciamento almost opens. While the traditionary conduct of the S.P. Officialdom is, when challenged, to duck, run away and “leave well enough alone,” G.A. Hoehn is driven by such stress that he loses the sense of “prudence” and challenges, yes challenges, refutation that there is anywhere “a more class-conscious,” “a more militant” bunch, or a bunch “more in touch with the aims and objects of the great labor movement, more hated by the capitalist political parties,” etc., etc., than his bunch!

Is the loss of all sense of “prudence,” that G.A. Hoehn is driven to, symptomatic of whither the rest of the Officialdom aforementioned are being driven? In the meantime admiration is due to Hoehn’s heroism, dementia though it denote.

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