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EDITORIAL

HAILING THEIR OWN DEATH DIRGE.

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IN the very midst of the shouts that are going up from the Social Democratic camp at their increased vote, a certain polemic practical, burning and consuming has sprung up. It is the discussion on the recent political occurrences in their own party in California. The significance of it all cannot be duly appreciated without an exact knowledge of the underlying facts. At the cost of length, and rather than condense the facts ourselves, we shall premise our observations by here reproducing a communication from a California Social Democrat himself, published in Social Democratic organs themselves. Here it is:

The San Francisco Local Convention of the S.P., composed of delegates elected under the new primary law, met on Sunday, September 21, at the Turk Street Temple. A motion was made "that we now proceed to nominate a local ticket for assembly, state legislature, judiciary," etc., which was defeated by the opportunist element with a 21 to 19 vote.

The burden of the argument that won the day was that the S.P. ["Socialist," alias Social Democratic party] should not nominate a ticket in opposition to the Union Labor Party. That this party, **with its capitalist or private ownership principle**, should be aided by the S.P. in electing its local ticket and that it would in turn aid us in electing our state ticket. They also tried this fusion game in the state convention regarding the Fourth and Fifth Congressional ticket, but we nominated our candidates in spite of them.

The opportunists, compromisers, and fusionists gained their point. This was the consummation of their political trade. The class-conscious comrades are up in arms against such high-handed action and treasonable conduct and as a result there is a strong sentiment of reaction setting in.

Many of the comrades are beginning to realize that they were the dupes of the political traders—cow-traders—as William Liebknecht called them in Germany. The opposition are quarreling among themselves and flying at each other's throats. And on the heels of this, complaints are coming from the country throughout the state. *The Advance* is rapidly losing ground. Notices are coming in to stop the paper and members are sending in their resignations

from the party.

The Union Labor Party has adopted a fusion policy by leaving vacancies on its ticket in favor of the Democratic party and by accepting endorsements at the hands of that party and by nominating certain men proposed by that party. Its is simply the tail of the Democratic kite.

A Democratic politician, upon being interviewed, spoke as follows: "The Democrats realized that they were not strong enough to win out against the Republicans, so they proposed to the leaders of the Union Labor Party that if they would nominate certain men named by us, among which was one Livernash, a non-unionist and Democratic lawyer, for Congress in the Fourth District, the Democratic party would endorse those candidates. This programme was subsequently carried out." He continued further: "With the help of the Union Labor Party the Democratic party will sweep the state."

Our movement in San Francisco has been completely demoralized since the advent of Walter Thomas Mills, who is a disintegrator of the most dangerous type. While it is true that he talks of the historical class struggle, he ignores the raging class struggle of to-day as the central point of Socialist propaganda by arguing that the proletariat must look to the plutocratic and middle class saviors for leaders. That the working class cannot free itself without the aid of the brains of the middle class and that the superior minds of the bourgeoisie are more to be trusted than proletarian leaders.

To which the scientific Socialist replies that capitalists should not be allowed to shape the policy of a working class organization, whether they are members or not. The S.P. is the party of the working class, which must be governed by and in the interests of that class, and when it ceases to be so governed it ceases to be a working class party.

So long as the workers let capitalists control their movement they will be led like sheep to the shambles; so long as the proletarians look to the "middle class saviors" for guidance they will be offered upon the altar of capitalism like cattle on the slaughter bench.

As a result of the Mills propaganda we have our local controlled by a combination of aspirant capitalists, bankrupt speculators, indebted labor skimmers and designing politicians, who would ride to wealth and power upon the shoulders of the proletariat, leaving it forever in wage slavery. This bourgeois element has been running things with a high hand. At our state convention on September 10 they disenfranchised sixty-eight dues-paying proletarian comrades by preventing the seating of the three delegates elected by District No. 1 with the names of said sixty-eight members attached to their credentials.

With the opportunists, principles, like shoddy commodities, are made to palm off on others, not for home use. Thus in the name of revolution these political schemers serve the cause of opportunism and reaction, in the name of ethics and morality they commit the most immoral acts; in the name of liberty they trample under foot the interests of the proletariat.

In other words:

The relentless logic of events has produced the inevitable fruit. In California is rising to-day in suffocating denseness the dust of the mud stirred in this State, in the 16th Assembly District of this city in particular, when the present Social Democratic party was started to combat and annihilate the Socialist Labor Party. Outside of California the political midwives of the Social Democratic abortion are now justly concerned for their own existence. They justly ask, If in California, why not in Illinois, New York and elsewhere? What is happening to the Social Democracy is the inevitable result of their false Trades Union Policy.

The Socialist Labor Party maintained, as it maintains now, with proof unquestionable that the pure and simple Trades Union is not an organization of Labor; that it is a wheel in the mechanism of capitalist society. The Party proved its assertion with the identical reasoning that the California Social Democrat, quoted above, states the Union Labor Party to be non-Labor,—its capitalist or private ownership principle. As a logical deduction from these premises, the Socialist Labor Party drew the sword, and threw away the scabbard, against the leaders of these pure and simple bodies, and initiated the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance as a bona fide Trades Union, in which Labor, and not Capitalist economics should be taught; and which should be operated, not upon the theory that harmony of interests exist between capitalists and workingmen, but that between the two there rages a conflict, not only irreconcilable, but irrepressible. The Party's Trades Union policy was but a reflex of its own political policy,—war to the knife, and from the knife to blade, on Capitalism and all its props. "Not so," declared the founders of the Social Democracy; "we must go over to the lines of the labor fakirs and bore from within." And unflinching was the Socialist Labor Party reply: "If we do, the standard of Socialism is lowered; the corrupting influences of false reasoning, that to-day debase the Unions and render them subservient to the pack of labor fakirs, will absorb our strength; we shall not be able to raise them; they will drag us down." Designing men with axes to grind held up the anti-Socialist Labor Party position, and visionaries in pursuit of the rainbow chimed in with them. The labor fakir element gave the Social Democratic theory a color. It allowed Social Democrats to "address the unions," and it jollied them along with an increasing vote. And now comes

the crop that sin ever gathers. The men who could rally around a Mitchell as a “great, able and sound leader of Labor,” a Mitchell, who holds out to his rank and file the lure of “harmonious relations” with their capitalist fleecers,—such men have no right to object to a political party of Unions. Every argument they made and combine to make for “boring from within the pure and simple, fakir-led unions” holds good for “boring from within a pure and simple, fakir-led Union party.” Ridiculous sets upon their lips the Socialist Labor Party contention against “boring from within” when they now apply that argument to the abortion and monstrosity that they themselves begot—a Union Labor party with capitalist principles.

That this “Union Labor” party question should rise now to perturb the souls of both crooks and visionaries in the Social Democratic party—**now** that they are shouting with joy at a vote, the price of which was the very “boring from within” policy,—is but one more evidence of the relentless sequence of Effect upon Cause. The spectre has risen which announces their death, and the swollen Social Democratic vote—swollen with the praises of a Mitchell—is their death dirge.

While the Socialist Labor Party, generally holding its own, holding firm the fort of the Cause of Labor—as emphasized by the simultaneous smash-up of the “only logical center” Pennsylvania deserters and the brilliant showing on the real battlefield, this State, especially this city; while thus the Socialist Labor Party is attesting with self-controlled joy the unshakableness that comes from soundness, it is but natural to see the Social Democratic party given over to uncontrolled rejoicings over its own vote,—thus hailing its own death dirge.

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