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EDITORIAL

THE GERMAN ORGAN OF THE S.L.P.

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TO-DAY the *Socialistische Arbeiter-Zeitung*, the German organ of the Socialist Labor Party, celebrates its fourth anniversary. What this means, what the paper means to the Party, may not at first blush be fully apparent to the membership, and to the increasing number of the intelligent members of the Working Class that are being drawn toward the S.L.P. standard. In making these points clear we are happily aided by the fortuitous circumstance, which serves as the occasion for an article printed elsewhere in this issue and entitled: "Tho' Dodging Caught," and to which the reader is referred.

Most of the papers published here in a foreign tongue have done more harm than good to the nationality that they address. The turn the thing usually takes is to delay the amalgamation of such nationality with the American masses. A personal interest generally gathers force around the managers of such papers. To insure their jobs and living, they have an interest in perpetuating the foreign notions and foreign tastes among their readers. Accordingly, their readers remain virtually aliens, ignorant of and uninterested in the country's affairs, and addicted to the affairs of the old country. Such a state of things naturally produces abnormalities. People living in a country can not choose but become tinged with local feelings and views that are not the feelings and views of the country they left. As a result, such people presently become purely artificial and waifs. They cease to live in the old country; and they do not actually live in this country; they live in a country that does not exist. Obviously the managers of papers, read by such elements, become petty rulers of petty principalities within the nation.



These petty principalities melt away, true enough; but so long as enough of each remains, the petty ruler—and they are usually of the scum of the old country—cuts his mischievous capers.

If this sort of thing is mischievous to the country at large and to the rank and file of the petty “principalities” in general, it becomes infinitely more so when the foreign paper is “dedicated” to the Labor Movement, especially the Socialist Movement. The vilest instincts, that made such petty rulers impossible in their own country, come here to the surface. Their innate corruption and ash-barrel features blossom inevitably into full luxuriance. Such papers being the private property of “select” rings, they are used to the worst purposes. The “principalities” dominated by them are kept in the dark; a Chinese wall is raised around them; their vainglory is puffed up; Socialism, of course, becomes an article of merchandise;—and the petty rulers have high carnival. All this, and much more, is illustrated in the instance of the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* in the article above referred to.

The *Socialistische Arbeiter-Zeitung* illustrates the contrast. Our fellow wage-slaves of Germany can not be left to the tender mercies of the capitalist or of such alleged Socialist papers. The only way to reach them is by means of a paper that, altho’ of their own tongue, is free from all the defects that become the ulcers above described. Such a paper must familiarize its readers with American conditions and seek to wear out the corners of racial prejudice that retard the amalgamation of the foreigner with the native. As the inevitable means to such end, such a paper must not be the private property of “petty rulers” interested in keeping up such racial antagonisms and vanities; such a paper must be property—absolute and unqualified—of the Socialist Labor Party; “strictly under the control,” not of any set of private individuals, but “strictly under the control” of the whole Party; accordingly, moving in strict obedience, not to the whim or caprice of “those German members” only whom a body, irresponsible to the Party, may pick out as “knowing what they are at,” but moving in strict obedience to the pulsations of the whole membership, ascertained under the code that civilized man has prescribed unto himself.

Such a paper is the *Socialistische Arbeiter-Zeitung*. It is cause for rejoicing that it exists. It is cause for rejoicing that it has lived three years. It is cause for rejoicing that it

now celebrates its fourth anniversary. In this celebration the Socialist Labor Party celebrates a principle, the reverse of which has been a clog and a source of danger to the Socialist Movement of the land, a principle that deserves the warmest enthusiasm of the Socialists, and should earn for the *Socialistische Arbeiter-Zeitung* their warm support.

That principle is the public ownership by the Party of its press.

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