

# DAILY PEOPLE

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EDITORIAL

## WORKS, NOT WORDS!

By DANIEL DE LEON

**S**EVERAL good people have off and on written to this office, arguing that Mr. Eugene V. Debs is misunderstood and misappreciated here. In language sweet and touching, these correspondents have argued that, Mr. Debs “preaches the class struggle,” and that “his words prove that he has learned the lesson that, not sentiment, but firmness of purpose” must animate the Socialist movement. This week one of these good souls backs up his plea with a clipping from the *Social Democratic Herald* of last April 27, containing an article by Mr. Debs entitled “Socialists Who Would Emasculate Socialism.” This correspondent closes his plea thus:

“What more can you want? The ‘theory of the class struggle’ is here set forth plump and plain. You may say, as you do in to-day’s Letter-Box column: ‘What does it boot to know a theory if one does not practice it?’ I respectfully call your attention to the paragraph that I mark. Do you ever use stronger language against hypocrites and traitors? What more can you want?”

The passage quoted by our correspondent is this:

“I respect the honest effort of any man or set of men, however misguided, to better social conditions, but I have no patience with the frauds and quacks who wear the masks of meekness and in the name of ‘brotherhood’ betray their trusting victims to the class that robs them without pity and riots in the proceeds without shame.”

Odd is that mental phenomenon that causes some people to imagine they prove a proposition by a mere reiteration. The same good soul who admits above that the stating of the theory of the class struggle,—even though the statement be “plump and plain”—, may be mere declamation, and who understands that preaching unbacked by practise is worthless, is perfectly satisfied with a bit of declamation in lieu of practise on an other score.

It is not the declamation, a man may indulge in against the hypocrites and traitors in the Labor Movement, that he is to be judged by; it is by his actions. Are Mr. Debs' actions in keeping with his denunciation?

Last election Mr. Debs worked for the re-election of Mr. James Carey to the Massachusetts Legislature; and only a few months ago Mr. Debs referred ostentatiously to his canvass in that State as an evidence of his loyalty to the gentleman, and as a factor that contributed to his election. Thus, in practise, we find the man who preaches anathema upon the "frauds and quacks who wear the mask of meekness and in the name of 'brotherhood' betray their trusting victims to the class that robs them," going arm in arm with, supporting and boasting of his support of, a "fraud and a quack who with the mask of 'brotherhood' betrayed his trusting victims to the class who robs them," by voting for a \$15,000 armory appropriation, and boasting to this day that he would do the same thing over again, the "militia being workingmen, the same as letter carriers"!! Are preaching and practise here in accord? Are they not, rather, conspicuously at fisticuffs?

No, the S.L.P. is not satisfied! It wants infinitely more than WORDS; it wants WORKS!

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