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EDITORIAL

ANARCHY, ASSASSINATION AND THE S.P.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IT is with regret that we withhold the name of a Wisconsin correspondent who addresses us a “personal” letter with a “private complaint” to this effect:

“Although I am a member of the Social Democratic party, the *Daily People* is an inspiration to me. I read it regularly, and learn something from each issue. But do you think it is fair to say that the S.P. is affiliated with Anarchists and preachers of murder because Haywood is on our N.E.C., and other members of the Chicago outfit are members of the S.P.? You have deservedly roasted Berger more than once, and I enjoyed seeing you do it, but you never charged him with Anarchy. Do you believe that he, the most influential member of the S.P., would tolerate Anarchists and preachers of murder in the party, or on its N.E.C.? I should appreciate an answer in the Letter Box column to ‘Interested Reader, Wisconsin.’ I expect of your known integrity that the Letter Box answer will rectify the error.”

The theory upon which our esteemed correspondent’s opinion is pivoted, is that “the Chicago outfit,” the so-called I.W.W. with which Haywood is affiliated, is not an Anarchist concern and does not “preach murder.” The witness whom our correspondent summons to the stand in proof of his opinion is Victor L. Berger. We accept the witness, and shall let himself testify.

In the issue of the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* of the 31st of last month is a letter signed by Berger. The letter touches upon the “harmonies” that have arisen in the camp of the Socialist party between the element that Haywood and the *International Socialist Review* represent and the element that Berger may be said to be the spokesman of.

In that letter the *International Socialist Review* is designated as “an organ that defends Anarchy, Free Love, Direct Action and Sabotage.”

In that letter the passage occurs: “We know that this struggle is between the Anarchist and Syndicalist, on the one hand, and the Socialists, on the other.”

Again, in the letter this corroborative sentence is found: “The Syndicalists are only too cowardly to admit that they are Anarchists.”

Nor is this all.

The letter contains this specific and pointed charge: “Seeing that these ‘Radicals’ failed to carry out their purpose of causing the Convention [the late S.P. Indianapolis Convention] to give indirect sanction to sabotage and assassination [“Meuchelmond” in German], they thereupon,” etc., etc.

And the letter returns to the specific charge of “assassination” in the sentence: “They [the Christian Socialists] are merely used by cowardly assassins,” etc.

Finally, the last paragraph but one of the letter clinches the charge with: “We must raise a stone wall against cant and fraud coupled with assassination, Anarchy and sabotage.”

Altho’ in a clumsy translation, the letter will be found in English conspicuously on the front page of the Washington, D.C., *National Socialist*, a Socialist party publication, dated August 3, 1912.

From all of which it transpires, from the testimony of Victor L. Berger—

1. That “the Chicago outfit” is an Anarchist affair;
2. That, being such, it preaches—besides “theft,” “fraud” and other minor Anarchist tenets—the distinctively Anarchist tenet of “assassination,” that is, something worse than murder, cowardly murder;
3. That members and organs of the said “Chicago outfit” being tolerated in the S.P., and one of the said members, Haywood, being on the N.E.C. of the S.P., “the S.P. is affiliated with Anarchists and preachers of murder.”

The statement and conclusions, made by the *Daily People*, the national organ of the Socialist Labor Party, being at all points confirmed by the testimony of our correspondent’s own witness, our correspondent must admit the fairness of our position—an admission that we expect to receive by return mail.

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