

EDITORIAL

BLUNDERBUSSING AGAINST THE S.L.P.

By DANIEL DE LEON

A PAMPHLET has reached us—*Sabotage; or, Socialism vs. Syndicalism*—by James Oneal of the Socialist party.

All those who were in the Movement and kept themselves posted before Mr. Oneal's pamphlet falls into their hands, and all those who were not previously in the Movement, but realized the necessity of information on events that have preceded, that is, that element upon which the Movement must depend, need not be told that it is not true that "the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance was born almost in a night"; or that it sprang from "the brain of Daniel De Leon"; or that "it was the concrete expression of the vengeance felt by its author and partisans against the Unions that refused to be led or driven to embrace Socialist views"; and that members of the Socialist Labor Party "who refused to endorse the new policies were expelled and sometimes whole Sections and State organizations were expelled for 'treason' if they criticized these policies."

The thoughtful and well posted elements in the Movement and the land, aware that these introductory allegations of fact are in violent opposition to the actual facts, may conclude that, if the arguments which are to follow against the policy of the S.L.P. need such falsifications of history to stand upon, then the arguments can not be worth reading, and they might throw Mr. Oneal's pamphlet aside. It is to save these readers from forfeiting the treat of reading the argumentative part of the pamphlet that this article is written.

Very aidful to the appreciation and grasping of a sound principle is the heels-over-headedness of the arguments and dialectics that dash themselves against it. Of these Mr. Oneal's pamphlet offers a choice collection. Let us take one for a sample.

Referring to the S.L.P. pamphlet *The Preamble of the I.W.W.*, which lays down

the Marxist principle that political action is necessary for the Socialist Revolution, but that political triumph would spell disaster if the class-conscious organization of the proletariat was not ready to execute the revolutionary act of displacing the Political State with the Industrial Administration; consequently, that the real political triumph of Socialism is the signal for the disbandment of the political organization,—referring to that, Mr. ONeal ridicules the reasoning with this other:

“Political action is not completely rejected [in the pamphlet], but to abandon political power after winning it differs little from refusing to struggle for it in the first place.”

This is a choice chunk of dialectics. According to such logic—

To have demolished the Bastille, after having captured it, differs little from having refused to capture it in the first place; or—

To have disbanded the Federal Armies, after having overthrown Secession, differs little from having refused to gather the Federal Armies in the first place; or—

To cast off your crutches, after you have regained the use of your legs, differs little from having refused to use crutches in the first place.

Mr. ONeal’s pamphlet should be read. It is a dialectical blunderbuss fired at the S.L.P. from a blunderbuss that “kicks” the blunderbusser.

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