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EDITORIAL

HOW PENDULUMS SWING.

By DANIEL DE LEON

A CONSTITUTIONAL convention being on the easel in Connecticut, the Socialist party of the State has come forth with its list of demands.

The list contains upward of a dozen items. Typical of the lot is one that provides for the election at large of all the members of the Legislature.

Thus does a pendulum that is drawn to the extreme, in one direction, ever swing back to the extreme in opposite sense.

Whatever its professions and protestations of sympathy with Industrialism, the S.P. is essentially “craft” in its conception of Unionism. The fact transpires even in its own system of organization. Autonomous State organizations is craftness on the political field. Moreover the intimate relations that exist between the Officialdom-and-Press of the S.P., on the one hand, and the Officialdom of Gompersism, on the other, is too obvious, and has been too frequently exhibited and exposed to need further demonstration. Ignorant of the goal, hence, of the meaning of Socialism; moreover, too thoroughly bourgeois in its conceptions at all to be able to grasp the bearing of Industrialism, the Officialdom-and-Press of the S.P. has its heart where its treasure is—in craft Unionism.

But craft Unionism is a contradiction in terms. The “Union” is a constituent-to-be of the Industrial Republic. Craft implies dislocation. A dislocated constituency is a self-contradiction. Where self-contradictions are found, reaction to the extreme opposite may be looked for. It is Nature’s way to balance itself and keep from plunging into chaos. The law asserts itself in the S.P. proposed constitutional amendment in Connecticut.

Political representation is grounded on geographic divisions. “Congressmen-at-large” and the like are exceptions and only temporary and makeshift exceptions, in

the scheme of the political State. To demand, as a permanent institutional proceeding, that all the representatives to a political legislature be elected at large, is to turn the State into a vessel for a mob population, not an organization. The scheme, moreover is a denial of “representation of constituencies.” Representation of constituencies means representation of different things—in the political State, different localities. Accordingly the proposal of the Connecticut S.P. is the quintessence of contradiction.

It is not Berger alone who flounders in the midst of the social currents of the day. While Berger, in Congress, was utterly unable to bring light to his colleagues, who found themselves in the tangle that the expiring days of the Political State, along with its political representation, threw them into, the Connecticut S.P. likewise flounders in the midst of the social currents that are rushing within its own State—itsself a now archaic subdivision—and that State’s S.P., like its Berger, is unable to bring light to its fellow citizens in the State. Unable to utter the word of Sense, the Connecticut S.P., true to the traditions of the State, hands out a “wooden nutmeg,” and thereby flies to an extreme that will beautifully confuse everybody—except the S.L.P. and the I.W.W. man.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
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slpns@slp.org