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EDITORIAL

“THE DECISION.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

A MORNING paper yesterday opens an address and “last few words” to the faithful in its political fold with these words:

“Only a few days more, and the DECISION WILL BE RENDERED.”

What paper can that be? What is the political complexion of the faithful thus addressed?

Theoretically, only one of two political parties in the field can be addressed in such language. They are the Republican or the Democratic party. The words “the decision” would inevitably narrow down the question to those two. “Decided” nothing can be properly said to be but as to those two. One or the other will be elected. The word “decision” can accordingly, apply only to election—it would so seem. But “seem” as it may, it is not so in this case. And herein lies the deep significance of the use of the term “decision” by the party that uses it.

The sentence above quoted is used by the *New Yorker Volkszeitung*, the organ of the Social Democratic party and is, of course, addressed to its incubatees, the Social Democrats. In other words the term “decision” is applied by that paper to a party that it knows cannot be elected, or come anywhere near being elected. Is it, then, a mere piece of political buncombe that causes the Social Democratic organ to talk about “decision” concerning itself on election day? Is it a bit of political lying to keep its crew in fighting trim? Let the truth be ever told. For once, the Social Democratic organ is not lying. It means what it says; it means it keenly; it means it with a nervous anxiety comparable only with the anxiety that storms through the breast of the criminal, who expects to hear his doom, and knows he deserves it. Fact is the term “decision” fits the Social Democratic case like “de bapper on de vall.” Seeing “decision” cannot mean to it election

or failure to elect, what does the term mean to it?

The Social Democratic party—as is proven by its official record—is a party led by political corruptionists; it is there for what its leaders can make; its only mission is to create such confusion among and split up the ranks of the working class so completely that the voice of the Socialist Labor Party may be drowned. In order to do this and thereby continue in the enjoyment of the funds it pilfers from deluded workingmen, the Social Democratic *Volkszeitung* needs votes. It knows it cannot get many; but if it can corral enough of them for its party to stay on the official ballot, it would have a new lease of two years' life during which to continue plying its harlot trade in the sacred Temple of Labor. It knows, accordingly, that if it fails in securing that necessary number of votes it is dead. Without votes enough to keep its official standing what would it be? A jackal with fangs and claws pulled out. In others words, an assured carcass. Without principles to enthuse it; without character to buoy it up; without convictions to enable it to resist adversity, should its party drop off the official list, it would collapse like a dirty dish clout, and, with its ruin, interfere with that paper's "peesiness." Accordingly, the Social Democratic *Volkszeitung* justly looks to the election returns of next November 4 as fraught with a "decision," a mighty "decision" for it.

Not so feels and speaks a truly revolutionary party of the working class; not those are the sentiments of a bona fide Socialist. The Socialist does not bank upon votes. He knows the nature of the conflict he is engaged in. He knows that the enemy has the counting. He knows that a thousand and one perturbing influences affect elections. The Socialist feels confident of the future, regardless of election returns. This confidence is in the righteousness of his cause, in the soundness of his attitude. To him, present election returns "decide" nothing. Whatever the vote, he proceeds neither exultant nor terrified. If the vote be high, he knows that will merely be notice given to the capitalist politicians to count more "carefully" next time; if the vote be low he remains undismayed, his principle never lowers. A bona fide Socialist party looks at votes merely as an incident in the fray. The bogus Socialist cannot live without votes: he needs them to attract the silly and to cheat with.

While the Socialist Labor Party looks towards election day with serenity as a mere landmark from which, as ever before, to proceed, imperturbed, upon its career of

educating and drilling the working class for the revolution—while such is the posture of the Socialist Labor Party, it is no wonder that the scabby Social Democratic *Volkszeitung* awaits “the decision” with bated breath.

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