

EDITORIAL

SOLIDARITY, WITH WHOM?

By DANIEL DE LEON

VARIATION is the spice of life. There was a spicy variation at Toronto to the tune regularly sung at the A.F. of L. conventions by the dauntless set of "Socialists" who there regularly introduce a "Socialist Resolution."

The substance of the Resolution, the manner of the introduction, and the "debate" thereon, up to a certain point, were the regulation ones. The fanfare finale was a little different. The Resolution was withdrawn by the introducers themselves. They did so "for the sake of Solidarity." Solidarity with whom?

Gompers being wrongly threatened by his Brother Capitalist with imprisonment for contempt of court, the policy is sound that "Labor must present a united front." The policy is plausible that no resolution should be adopted, no action taken that would denote rupture, or the prospect of such, in the ranks of the A.F. of L., with regard to the court's decision. Was the "Socialist Resolution" of such a nature? Did it threaten schism on that head? Was there a line, or a word in the thing that could, even remotely, be construed as implying a conflict of opinion with regard to the Gompers sentence? No. The Resolution did not touch upon that. With regard to the objective, which required unity of views, the Resolution was silent. The dear old thing was nothing but a tame, mild, apologetic plea for the recognition of Labor Economics.

The withdrawal of such a resolution "for the sake of Solidarity" on the sentence against Gompers, raises the question, With whom did the introducers of the Resolution seek Solidarity? If a resolution in favor of Labor Economics is incompatible with the Solidarity requisite for the upholding of Gompers's rights, then it must be that Gompers's rights are incompatible with Labor Economics, and can be safeguarded only by a posture that safeguards Capitalist Economics. And that is exactly the posture of the introducers and withdrawers.

The rhetorical outburst of Delegate Hayes, “irrespective of the differences of opinion that organized labor may entertain on economic questions, we stand in one solid line in battle against these infamous court decisions which consign our brothers to prison,” was but a rhodomantade (rodomontade), in the flights of which to conceal actual cowardice, and flight from battle; actual surrender. The withdrawal of the Resolution was a plea for Solidarity with Brother Capitalist.

No wonder the labor-lieutenants of the capitalist class, at the convention assembled, and more than one of whom hastened away from Toronto to participate in the session of the Civic Federation in this city, received the declaration with “stormy applause.”

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