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EDITORIAL

NOW 'TIS JOHNSON.

By DANIEL DE LEON

EVEN the most despicable criminal is given the benefit of the law, and is protected in all that he is entitled to. Pursuant to this elevated principle of civilization we shall protest against the wrong done to, and shall afford the protection that civilization guarantees, even to William Johnson, the so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic Alderman of Chicago, who has just been expelled by his party in that city for “graft” and corrupt conduct in office.

That Johnson would indulge in such practices we knew in advance, and said so when his party was rending the welkin with shouts of a “Socialist Victory.” We knew it could not be otherwise. And just because we knew it, and the very reasons that pointed to the result, strip Johnson’s organization of the right of now hounding him. In fact, Johnson is a victim and he it is who should hurl upon his would-be expellers the defamatory terms that they now seek to bury him under—not they upon him.

Johnson is but the product of the Chicago combine that calls itself “Socialist Party.” He was “raised” into “Socialism” by them. From the turpitudinous “A.M. Simons, Editor,” down, or up, the Chicago “Socialist” party organization has lived on falsehood and swindle and graft and personal vanity and the enviousness characteristic of whippersnapper souls. Their “principles” were a congeries of false pretences making common cause with the labor fakir, calling his treason to labor a “noble waging of the class struggle,” and they are so many resounding boards for the defamation of the Socialist Labor Party, whose every putrid and expelled member they welcome as a sweet-scented flower. Breathing that atmosphere of swindle, what else was Johnson to become in office but what he did become?

By convicting Johnson the Chicago so-called Socialist party convicted itself. Theirs the blame, not his. The poor man deserves pity. He is lost forever, but he is

lost not wholly through his own fault. Graft, corruption in office, fraud, in short—that is what he was taught by a rabble rout—whom in the innocence of his unsophisticated soul he took for Socialists—to consider as Socialism. He but practiced what in one way or other what his masters are habitually practicing.

If these bogus Socialists begin to expel where will they stop—where can they stop? It will be a case of cutting off the dog's tail right under his ears.

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

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