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EDITORIAL

HE REASONS SOUNDLY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

PREPARATORILY to the municipal election in San Francisco, a workingman who signs himself “Union Man and Socialist” publishes in the San Francisco *Organized Labor* a letter endorsing the Union Labor Party candidate for Mayor, P.H. McCarthy. In the course of the letter this passage and argument occurs:

“The Socialist party last election received about 4,000 votes. That number of votes can not elect a labor mayor for San Francisco, but as the Socialist party has time and again declared itself in favor of the American Federation of Labor, now it is the duty of the Socialist party to endorse the Union Labor candidate and elect a workingman for mayor.”

The facts in this passage are undeniable—the Socialist party can not elect its candidate for mayor; the Socialist party has time and again declared itself in favor of the A.F. of L.

Nor can the conclusions, drawn from these facts by “Union Man and Socialist,” be run away from—it is the duty of the Socialist party to endorse the Union Labor candidate.

“Union Man and Socialist” might have made his case even stronger. He might have added to the facts that constitute his premises, the additional facts that, not only does the Socialist party declare itself in favor of the A.F. of L. in a general way, but that the Socialist party expressly sets up as principles cardinal principles set up by the A.F. of L. long before the Socialist party existed—for instance the S.P. teaches that Labor pays the taxes: its journalistic and other literature are all in line with that; then also, the S.P. believes in restricting immigration and has expressed itself in no mistakable terms against Japanese immigration, exactly as the A.F. of L. has done, the San Francisco A.F. of L. in particular. To endorse in general, and

even to take up, espouse and advocate in particular the specific principles of an organization, and then not to endorse its political candidates who will be in a position, if elected, to enforce such principles would be an act suggestive of betrayal; to set up a political party in opposition to the political party of such an organization is an act that would justify the blackest conclusions of selling out to the “common enemy.”

A political party of Socialism has for its main function the promotion by agitation, education and organization of the economic battalions of the proletariat. When a political party of Socialism finds an economic battalion of the proletariat whose principles it endorses and which has ripened to the point of setting up its own bona fide and virile political party anywhere, then it is the bounden duty of such a political body of Socialism to merge with the political reflex of the economic organization which it has declared in favor of and whose tenets it agitates for. To do the opposite is to perform political scabbery.

The Socialist party can not fail to endorse the political expression of its A.F. of L. anywhere without proving itself a political scab.

“Union Man and Socialist” reasons soundly. The S.P. must endorse McCarthy. It has no further function to perform in California since the birth of the political expression of the A.F. of L. in that State.

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