

# DAILY PEOPLE

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TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

## A NARROW ESCAPE; OR, ANOTHER SHOT THAT FAILED.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HE below letter arrived with the mail of the 15th instant:

Editor *The People*.—It is not generally known that my editorship of the *Voice of Labor* ceased with the February edition thereof. The publication of Mr. Untermann's article against the S.T. & L.A. in the May edition must not, therefore, be construed as representing my editorial policy in such matters.

Apart from the merits of the subject, Mr. Untermann's dragging in by the ears of so wholly irrelevant a thing as the Latin parentage of Mr. De Leon and the lack throughout his article of that calm, scientific temperament which is presumed to be the especial heritage of Teutonic blood as distinguished from "the fatal Latin quality of intrigue" render it, in my judgment, altogether unfit for publication.

Speaking as a member of the conference which issued the Chicago Manifesto, I desire to guard against any wrong interpretation which may be given to Mr. Untermann's article as well as to the similar writings of Mr. A.M. Simons. These gentlemen have no warrant to voice the sentiments of the conference. Whatever they have to say against the S.T. & L.A. is the expression of their individual judgment or prejudice, as the case may be, and must in no wise be taken as summing up the sense of the signers of the Manifesto. That document maps out a wide sweep of common ground upon which all may meet in unity of purpose who are willing to fight for a revolutionary economic organization of the Working Class.

Thos. J. Hagerty.

Chicago, Ill., May 13.

Until the above letter was received we were in the belief that the publication of the Untermann article in this month's issue of the *Voice of Labor* was a bit of "Keltic wickedness and humor", intended to have Untermann pillory himself in plain view of the American Labor Movement, and himself furnish conclusive documentary evidence of the charges that *The People* has these many years been

bringing, and the warnings that *The People* has been uttering against the gentleman's ilk. The harmfulness to the Socialist Movement, to say nothing of the repulsiveness, of these caricatures of the German race, represented in this city by the New Yorker Volkszeitung corporation and in Chicago by Mr. Untermann; their offensive conceit in deeming their own palpable ignorance the equivalent of knowledge, simply because they are Germans, and, as such, can (presumably) read the posthumous and untranslated works of Marx, which, as a matter of fact, they neither read nor could understand, if they did; their laughable, if it were not so harmful, presumption of strutting as the elect of the Lord on the strength of their being Germans; their arrogant readiness to insult all other races and nationalities—as Mr. Untermann does the Latin race, of which, evidently, what he knows is not worth knowing, and as the Volkszeitung corporation clique habitually do when they, sink of corruption and ash-barrel of ignorance, pronounce the Irish “corrupt to the marrow”, the American people “hopelessly ignorant and corrupt”, the English language “absurd and dishonest”, etc., etc.; their underbred recklessness in scattering their falsehoods against men and bodies of men; their utter disregard of the interests of the Movement and readiness to sacrifice it to their own bloated, nativistic vanity;—all these ulcerations come together and run out of Mr. Untermann's article, like pus out of a fester that is burst open. And so we applauded the publication of the screech, and have laid it by as a useful document, confident that it can have but one effect with the thoughtful (and who else is worth regarding?)—to serve as a documentary corroboration of the justice of a serious note of warning that *The People* has long sounded.

As we read the article, we felt that our document must have had a narrow escape. No longer ago than in its March issue, the *Voice of Labor* felt induced by a sense of duty to itself and to the Movement to retract and to apologize for a false charge which it had been cheated into publishing against the General Executive Board of the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance, and which it pronounced false in the said March issue. Great, accordingly, must have been the danger of the *Voice of Labor's* detecting in the proffered Untermann article (and, therefore, rejecting it) the identity of the source of information with the worthless source of information that had imposed upon itself—Mr. Thomas Aloysius Hickey, an unreliable being,

who was discharged from this office for shirking work, lying, and habitual drunkenness, and who, ever since seeking the stuffable to stuff and duly appreciated by them as a bird of their feather, found the ear of Hermon Titus, then in Seattle, and now the ear of Ernest Untermann the ready-willing sink to dump his boozy stuff into. Narrow was our document's escape. It was a piece of good luck that it did escape.

For the rest, there is nothing that the Untermanns and Simonses, or any number of such vicious clowns, can do that will accomplish its purpose, and goad the Editor of *The People* into a posture harmful to the prospects of the approaching Chicago Convention. Whether in his capacity of Editor of *The People*, or—if elected by next month's national convention of the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance at Lynn—in the capacity of a delegate to the said Chicago Convention, having no private axe to grind and no personal malice to gratify, he will pursue his ideal—his present, immediate ideal—of doing all in his power to render the Chicago Convention successful; and thus, as set forth in full in his statement to the members of the Socialist Trade & Labor Alliance, recently published in these columns, help set up that national Union that American conditions demand as a condition precedent for the reaching of the ultimate ideal—the leaving to our children a patrimony worthy of human beings—THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC.

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

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