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EDITORIAL

An Earnest Word to the Maryland Proletariat

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The political field in the State presents just now a dangerous aspect.

The Populist Federalburg, Md., *Peninsula Farmer* is delirious with joy over a State ticket which it claims was recently nominated by the Populist convention in Baltimore; it publishes in full the platform there adopted, and it is “whooping it up” for the “People’s Party State ticket of Maryland.” Indeed, the platform is well worth all the joy a Populist can bestow upon it; the dishonest silver mine barons’ demand for free coinage of silver at the ratio of 16 to 1, the silly gabble about “non-interest-paying bonds;” bucketfulls of sloppish love for the people, and a palpable attempt to dodge the issue, in short, all the Populist earmarks are there. The delight thereat of a Populist paper is not surprising, nor would its enthusiasm therefor be a matter of any consequence, let alone danger. The seriousness of the situation lies in the following circumstances:

1. There is, in fact, no “People’s party” ticket in the field in Maryland. Look as one may over the political field in the State, and even with the aid of a Lick telescope, no such thing as a “People’s party ticket” is discoverable. There is a Republican, a Democratic, a Prohibition and a “SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY” ticket, for the latter of which signatures are now being collected; but neither on official or other certificates of nomination is the legend “People’s Party” visible. Stick a pin there.
2. The nominees on the ticket which the *Peninsula Farmer* is huckstering about as the “People’s party candidates,” appear on the nomination certificates that bear the name “SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY.”

A rat is here sensible to feeling as to sight. Whence came it, whither tendeth it? To answer this question the following narrative is requisite, and we earnestly call thereto the attention of all serious and intelligent Marylanders:

Some time last April, a convention of reform forces was called in Baltimore. Socialist organizations, trades unions, K. of L. Assemblies and Populists met. The Populists, under the lead of Mr. Walter Vrooman, sought to capture the convention for middle-class Populism; they failed; were overwhelmingly defeated; and Mr. Walter Vrooman, who claims he is trying to “educate the Populists up to Socialism,” instead of being glad to see the convention so far advanced, showed his true instincts by bolting with his baker’s dozen of Populists and angrily denouncing the convention as a “sect.”

Undeterred, the convention proceeded on its work; it adopted the clean cut Socialist platform; took, after a full debate, the name of “Socialist Labor Party,” and nominated a full local ticket, each of the candidates being outspoken Socialists, in whose letters of acceptance the whole Populist program of 16 to 1, etc., was torn to shreds.

Unable immediately to fill up a State ticket, the convention postponed action upon that head until a few weeks ago, when it made its nomination{s} for Governor, Comptroller and Attorney-General. Most of the men who engaged in the convention were not connected with the official body known in this country as the Socialist Labor Party; they adopted its platform because they knew it was sound, and took the name, “looking,” as one of the speakers said on the occasion, “to the time when all the genuinely radical forces of the land would be united in one party under the international name of ‘Socialist Labor.’” Accordingly this new Socialist body settled upon three gentlemen as its State nominees, who neither were connected with the party, but whom it believed to be Socialists upon their statements and declarations.

At this stage of the proceedings Mr. Walter Vrooman bobbed up anew upon the scene in his favorite role. He called a fake “Populist convention,” had it adopt the staple Populist demands, the Omaha platform included, and—ENDORSED THE STATE TICKET WHICH HAD BEEN NOMINATED BY THE BODY THAT TOOK THE FIELD AS SOCIALIST LABOR PARTY!

As the National Socialist Labor Party, whose headquarters are in New York, has not at any previous election in Maryland polled the requisite vote to entitle it to official recognition there, it can ill prevent another body, not affiliated with itself and for whose acts it is not responsible, from appropriating the name. Nor would such appropriation be necessarily ill; it may be even a good and cheering sign. In so far as the April convention dumped Populism, and set up a sound Socialist platform, its action deserved all the applause we bestowed upon it at the time, and its taking our party name was no cause for sorrow with us, on the contrary. The question is not that, or one of technicalities. The question now is what is the wise course to adopt in view of the situation brought on by the Maryland Populist schemers and intriguers.

As things now stand, the Populists are soliciting signatures for the State ticket on the ground that the nominees are Populists, who stand on a Populist platform; and the Socialists are soliciting signatures for the same nominees on the ground of their being Socialists, sailing under the true colors of Socialism and standing on the Socialist platform. Such a state of things is preposterous; if allowed to continue unrepudiated, so far from promoting, it will seriously retard the organization of the Maryland division of the army of emancipation.

True enough, the letters of acceptance by the State nominees to the Maryland Socialist Labor Party imply flat denials of the Populist platform which the fake Populist convention sought to shove under their feet, and furthermore, no schemers can be enjoined from “endorsing” a ticket or announcing it as theirs. Nevertheless, candidates that are truly Socialist, that have the knowledge and the manhood of such, together with a proper respect for the name of American, will not allow themselves {to} be trafficked on by a pack of adventurers; the Maryland Socialist candidates may not simply ignore the heavy clouds of deception raised by the Populists of their State over their names.

The course that these circumstances dictate to the Socialist State nominees is self-evident: They are bound to state their position.

If their repudiation of the trick to shove the Omaha platform and other Populist vagaries under them, together with the Populist jugglery now going on is distinct and unqualified, then every decent and enlightened toiler in Maryland should sign their nomination blanks, speak for them, work for them and vote for them.

If, however, they ignore and by their silence imply approval of the political trickery that is being committed under their name{s} by the Populists, then their nomination blanks should be left unsigned, and the Baltimoreans should devote their efforts during the campaign to their own local ticket only.

These views, we are informed by letters from Baltimore comrades, prevail there among our organized members. Cause them to prevail everywhere.

The straightforward course is the only wise one in the end. Political trickery and double-facedness are weapons that can bring on no lasting results.

[Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the Official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.](#)

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