

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 10, NO. 157.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, DECEMBER 4, 1909.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

HOBBYISTS, BOTH.

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IN the same issue of *The Call*, last November 20, in which Mr. Algernon Lee, a pure and simple politicianist, declares “if we do not care for votes we would be fools to make nominations,” Mr. Louis Duchez, a pure and simple physical forcist, rushes forth with the complementary theory that “no political party can be a revolutionary movement of the working class”; and, reversely, in the same issue of *The Call* in which the pure and simple physical forcist Duchez denies revolutionary capabilities to a political party, the pure and simple politicianist Lee jumps up with, “Me too.” The performance is legitimate enough. However divergent, in seeming, the manifestations of pure and simpledom may be, in essence they are identical. They draw their sap from the identical source.

The starting point common to both pure and simple forcism, and pure and simple politicianism, is the incapacity to see in political action anything but the casting of a ballot.

Unable to see anything in political action but the ballot, the pure and simple politicianist naturally strains to get as many of these as possible. By the mental process well known to psychology, according to which means, excessively strained after, unavoidably become ends in themselves, and thereby defeat their own purpose, the pure and simple politicianist, in straining excessively after ballots, they being all he can see in political action, presently sacrifices everything to the ballot. The ballot becomes the end; to get that, principle gradually goes by the board. The final consequence is disastrous to a revolutionary Movement. When a revolutionary Movement mistakes the means for the goal it lands flat on its back, with neither goal attained, nor the means to console it—as the S.P. is experiencing, with its collapsed vote and its goal so wholly lost sight of that the party does not know where it is at.

Inversely it is the same with the pure and simple physical fordist. Unable to see anything in political action but the ballot, and realizing the weakness of that, the pure and simple physical fordist washes out the bath with the baby: he rejects political action altogether, and thereby strangles his own revolutionary capabilities.

The ballot is the least important feature of political action. THE feature of political action is that it and it alone can preach the revolution openly, over and above board; as a consequence, THE feature of political action is that it is indispensable for the agitation and education requisite for the recruiting of the revolutionary economic organization, without which the revolutionary act is impossible. That feature of political action being attended to, the ballot becomes of secondary importance.

Of this neither the pure and simple physical fordist nor the pure and simple politicianist has the remotest inkling. Nor can they. Hobbyists are lopsided lamelings.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded January 2011

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