
Against All Interference:

Letter to the Editor of *The American Socialist*, April 22, 1916.

by Adolph Germer

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My attention has been directed to a translated letter issued by the National Committee of the German Federation bearing on the recent referendum for party officials and the *Milwaukee Leader's* comment thereon.

As I am one of the principals in question, I kindly ask for space to make my position entirely clear.

It was at the earnest solicitation of the comrades in different sections of the country that I at the very last moment accepted the nomination for Executive Secretary. I was in Chicago at the time and in person informed Comrade [Carl] Thompson of my decision. I told him that in my opinion he should not have accepted the nomination, and he was the central figure in the fight on Comrade [Walter] Lanfersiek and it looked too much as if he was trying to get Lanfersiek out of the way to make room for himself; that if he should be elected, the bitterness that grew out of his fight on Lanfersiek would reflect itself on his administration.

Comrade Thompson then told me that if I accepted he felt inclined to withdraw, for he feared that certain comrades (naming them, but they are not members of the German Federation), would make a bitter fight on him. I told Comrade Thompson that he should not withdraw on my account and promised to write to those comrades and ask them to desist from indulging in personalities. I did so and expressed the hope that the election would be clean and dignified.

Then came *The Leader* with the [A.W.] Ricker and other letters "whooping things up" for Comrade Thompson and delivering broadsides against Comrade Lanfersiek. These brought out letters against Comrade Thompson and I am advised by one author that his

was never published.

I did not inspire the circular out of the German Federation and would rather that it had not been sent out, as I am opposed to electioneering schemes of any kind. But the German Federation, or any other Federation, has as much right to do electioneering as the *Milwaukee Leader*.

Just today I received a letter from a State Secretary informing me that speakers on the road are busily engaged in urging the election of Comrade Thompson. I am not complaining about this, but citing it only to show that the electioneering is by no means one sided, and why should *The Leader* raise so much fuss about others when true to its name it was the leader in opening a partisan campaign?

I want it clearly understood that I did not solicit nominations and am not now bargaining for the office. If the members want Comrade Thompson as Executive Secretary I willingly yield to their choice and will do all that I can to further our cause and to make his administration a success.

I have consented to be a candidate, and if elected will render such service as my experience in the labor movement has made me capable of.

While I admire the good qualities and appreciate the good work of *The Leader*, let me express the hope that it will set a good example by refraining from playing Party Politics unless it is willing to extend that "pleasure" to others. As for me, I should rather see the election carried on without interference or influence from any source.

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