

KEMPLIN & SMITH

DEALERS IN

New and Second Hand Furniture and General Household Goods

Uppholstering and Carpet-Laying

Santa Barbara, California, Sept 2 1896

My Dear Sir

I am editor of new Charter at San Jose Calif, until quite recently state paper of the Peoples Party. Probably you have heard of me. Two weeks ago I published the Socialist Labor Platform in my paper and asked my subscribers for opinions thereon. I have received a large number of letters and ~~post~~ Cards, and 14 out of 15 as they come are for the platform. I enclose you a list of names I have at hand, to send your Electoral petition to. I believe they will help you out. I suggest that you write a little in detail for many get the idea that signing the petition binds them to vote the ticket. I explain to them that in signing they simply are helping others to a chance to vote for their principles, a right which every man asks for himself and should be willing to grant others.

Now to a personal matter, which I ask you to consider carefully. I have been in the "reform"

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movement 12 years along the line of the Green
back and Poplar Party. At all times I have
been more radical than my party. When I have
seen clearly that my party was wrong, I have
opposed ~~them~~ it, even at a sacrifice to myself.
Three years ago I became heterodox on the
silver question while associated on a paper
at Fresno with Joe Harriman, and I have fought
silver since. During the past year I have been
advocating socialism and defending it from
its enemies. This incurred the displeasure of
the party leaders and cost me dearly. For some
time with a vast number of people I thought
that the Poplar Party was traveling toward the
Cooperative Commonwealth. Events sometimes
open our eyes wide and quick. At St
Louis convention to which I was a delegate
performed that office for me. I learned that
all the leaders, desired nothing more than to
"reform" (patch up) the present system. I at
once began casting about to get into more
harmonious political environment. As fortune
would have it, my constituents were Populists,
I was the partner of Mr Carl Gleeson, a La
bor Exchange organizer, and bitterly opposed
to socialism. I ~~was~~ am a L E organizer
myself. I have no property, no money, and
a wife and boys to support, and the Labor Ex -

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Change furnishing about 80 per cent of my living, (poor as it is) also the support of the paper. Here was my business relation to Mr. Gleeson, which could not be broken off, except in a legal and an honorable way. Here was the wife and baby to support, and nothing ahead. Now what was I to do? I felt when going in to the Exchange and and for a long time afterwards that it would solve the problem for the common people. I have changed my mind although where intelligently applied it is doing more for the people than many of the things pushed forward by our noble Statesmen (?). Besides I know that through the Labor Exchange many men are employing themselves and securing their necessities, and in these hard times I feel that a man is justified in doing almost anything not dishonour to keep his wife and babies from starving. I feel however that can do much more for the people

through Socialism than any other way.
Well I went before the S I P section
at San Jose, and bravely stated my
case and they treated me kindly and
reasonably. I had three or four talks
with a Mr. Himes who claims
to be a S I P organizer. He treated me
all right till the last conversation, then
he treated me worse than a dog. I never
talked with a man who was so cruel,
intolerant, abusive, unjust and un-
reasonable as he was. He set up his
standards and demanded that I should
agree myself to it without hesitation.
He demanded of me things that no man
could comply with in my circumstance.
He demanded that I give up the Labor Ex-
change and throw it out of the paper,
something I could not do unless I could
satisfactorily adjust things with Mr.
Gleeson - that I should give up my only
resource for a bare living and run the
risk of letting my wife and baby starve,
when there was not a chance in eight
to earn bread. He demanded that I violate
a promise to Santa Barbara people to come
down here and help them with their ex-
change if they would by my expenses. To ~~cost~~

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Comply with his demands I would have had to throw my partner out like a dog or else give him my half the paper, and then throw away the results of three years hard work of my wife and myself. I would have had to stand forth without a dollar or a resource and bring my wife and ~~my~~ baby face to face to want at once. I would have had to violate all social and business ethics. I would have had to play the senseless brute at the behest of a cruel brute who set himself up to be my judge.

For 12 years I have worked in reform face to face with want all the time, refusing offers and never allowing money to lead me into a betrayal of principle. Thousands know this. I have no property; not furniture enough to furnish one room decently. one suit of clothes which I have worn a year, and since Jan 12th, after paying newspaper expenses have had only \$14 a month to support three people.

including house rent. You know that a na-
tional campaign is the best time for a
speaker and paper, and yet in answer to
a letter from Populist State Central Com-
mittee I said "I cannot take your
money for any purpose, for I do not believe
in your policy"; since the St. L. conven-
tion ^{from} the stand I have taken I have
been compelled to get my paper out twice
a month instead of once a week. yet
in spite of all these things which Himes
had a chance to know he accused me
of being in reform for money because I
wouldn't give it up at once the only
resource I had to get a miserably poor
living for my wife and baby. And when I said
that good political sense would dictate that
I should not break off abruptly but leave
the party in a way that would bring the most
votes with me he charged me with being
a policy man. I cannot in a letter tell
you all that he said, but I have laid
it in detail before members of S. L. P. sections
and they have said that they could not
see how I could do differently, and they
have urged me to write out certain
statements make affidavit to them and
prefer charges against Himes to State Cen-

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Central Committee. If I can be a Socialist only by treating my partners like a dog; violating my promises, and throwing away my only resource for bread for my wife and baby before anything else is in sight then I will not be a Socialist. But I do not believe any of these things are true, for I do not believe there is a matter so cruel, so scorned in the whole Socialist Labor Party or Times. Will send you marked copy of my next Charter (copy). Please send me names of all your candidates for electors, Congressmen, etc. I will do the best I can under the circumstances that surround me. It begins to look as if Mr Gleeson and myself would be able to dissolve amicably soon. In this district the Republican Congressional Candidate Mr Lochlin is a weak wister and Fusion Candidate Barlow fully as weak. If our friend Harriman could

could make a thorough canvass he ought
to fill 10,000 votes. I have been talking
to lots of Populists who say they will vote
for him. I spoke on street the other night
for petition Chas Randall sent in
yesterday, and in a hall for a protest
we are getting up against Socialist
arrests in S.F. Himes will not keep
me from doing work though he says
I can't get into party in five
years

Write me at San Jose.

Fraternally

M W Wilkins

169 W San Fernando