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EDITORIAL

THE SUCCESSORS OF ARTHUR AND YOUNGSON.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE capitalist press is very much concerned over the choice of successors for Chiefs Arthur and Youngson by the forthcoming convention of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers at Chicago. This deep concern reflects the traitorous services performed by these two worthies. It finds expression in such sentiments as the following:

“The death of Mr. Arthur at once brought to mind the attitude of the brotherhood on the subject of federation with other organized bodies of railroad employes for which his counsel and pronounced opinion were so largely responsible. The question again raised with the passing away of the man who, for so short a time, was its directing head, is: Will the engineers now sanction federation. . . .”

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“Unquestionably repeated attempts to effect a complete federation that would include the brotherhood have been prompted by the knowledge gained through experience that no great fight could be won, no demand enforced, nor even an important compromise brought about without undivided co-operation of the engineers. In preventing any coalition that would insure this, Mr. Arthur had to meet strong opposition to his views and to his position from the members of the brotherhood in the West, but it was not sufficient to overcome that of the support he commanded in the East.

“It was this strength that on several occasions insured his re-election as chief when an element in the West, and particularly the Northwest, strove to effect a combination designed to defeat him. It is recalled, too, that Mr. Youngson was in sympathy with his policy.

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“The evidence is clear that the chief object of federation is to make it sure that should a strike be begun by any one of the brotherhoods the others must support it and participate if certain conditions present themselves. Those who have made the plan propose a great central body to which all grievances shall be referred for final settlement.

“In this each organization is to have equal representation and it will be akin to a court of last record. Should it decide, after exhausting all means of adjustment, that a strike is proper, when ordered, practically every employe on the road affected would quit work.

“As the subject of federation comes up when the Brotherhood of Engineers meets in Los Angeles, next May, it is easy to appreciate how much is now at stake in the choice now of a grand chief and an assistant grand chief. Whoever is elected will be in a position to manipulate votes for or against federation and wield an influence and power of more than ordinary significance.

“There is danger of the advocates of the plan having been provided with material for their arguments in the knowledge of the fact that the railroads are doing for their protection the very thing for which federation is intended for the employes.”

From the foregoing it will be seen that Arthur and Youngson were appreciated, not for their abilities as organizers of labor, but for their abilities as disorganizers. They kept the working class divided, and by so doing protected and advanced the interests of Capital and not those of Labor.

This feature of Chiefs Arthur and Youngson’s activity is not unusual among the “labor leaders” of the pure and simple type. From Gompers down to the local satellite of bribing capitalists, they are more intent on what is beneficial to the capitalist class than they are on what is beneficial to the working class.

Out on such “labor leaders.” War to the knife against all friends of capital and the enemies of the working class!

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