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EDITORIAL

FORESHADOWINGS AND WARNINGS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

TO the milk-and-water Socialist who believes that the ultimate conquest of capitalism will be one long march along a highway strewn with roses, the tone which has lately been assumed by certain capitalist newspapers in this country may well give pause. The vindictive stand taken by some of these journalistic high priests of established society indicates without doubt that the present ruling class will stand by its guns, and, pressed to the last extreme, will not hesitate to employ those bloody means to sustain itself which other societies have used in the past when they found themselves in peril.

That the Socialist in America to-day is tolerated by the spokesmen and upholders of the existing order is not due to any kindness of heart inherent in American capitalism. Rather is it because of the fact that Socialism in this country has been so insignificant a factor that its full significance has not yet obtruded itself to any marked extent into the industrial or intellectual life of the nation.

Now, however, that the international movement toward working class emancipation has assumed some degree of importance in America, certain capitalist journals, more keen in insight and daring in scope than others, have begun to sound a note of alarm, which is intended to arouse the whole of capitalism to the imminence of the "red peril." The cold tone of murderous hostility which these newspapers assume toward Socialists is enough to strike a chill of terror to the hearts of those who have entered the movement without taking into consideration all the possible consequences of their breach with established society.

Perhaps the most clearly class-conscious, most scientific and murderous upholder of capitalism in the United States to-day is the *Chicago Chronicle*. In the course of a recent diatribe against Socialism, under the caption of "Nip Revolution in the Bud," in which the usual reference is made to the Chicago anarchist riot of

1886, that paper uses the following language:

“There is not a journalistic, clerical, sociological or educational Socialist in the country to-day who does not hold that the Chicago murderers were unjustly punished.

“If men who in Chicago preached assassination and arson and pillage and revolution for years, and who finally saw their doctrines bear fruit, were unjustly punished then, of course, it must be unjust now to interfere with men similarly actuated.

“The only way to discourage the practices of anarchy in this country is to discourage the fine people who are preaching and practicing the rudiments of anarchy.

“American Socialists are revolutionists. They know that they are revolutionists. It is high time that other people should appreciate the fact.”

The above four paragraphs constitute a prophesy, couched in unmistakable language, of the attitude the capitalist class is drifting toward, and that it will assume when at last it finds itself confronted with the historic movement of the working class. It means that the master class, once aroused to the danger of the situation, will exterminate first, if it dares, and cogitate on the morality of the act afterward. It means that the class war, in its ultimate aspect, will be war to the death, in which—strange anomaly—the assailed side will cry “No quarter!”

If they dare, when the time comes, the upholders of old society will blot out with a dab of crimson the revolution against wage slavery. If the *Chicago Chronicle*, even now, could have its way every Socialist writer and soap-box orator in the land would, between the setting and the rising of a sun, have their lips sealed forever against further protestation.

If they dare, in a not far distant future, the capitalist class will, by the inauguration of an era of terrorism, attempt to check the growing movement of Socialism and “nip the revolution in the bud.”

Whether the capitalist class dares to bury its talons in the growing child of the Socialist movement in the manner desired by the *Chicago Chronicle* entirely depends upon the power and scope of the movement itself. If the movement is too big to be vulnerable by such vicious policy, or so menacing that such acts might precipitate a crisis which would overwhelm the capitalist class, then the masters will retreat from their position.

And in this connection a warning, which is a necessary corollary of the above, must be again sounded to Socialists. Undoubtedly, the capitalist class will seek to goad the Socialists to acts of anger and hastiness. The success or the failure of the scheme depends upon the unsoundness or the soundness of Socialist propaganda. The number of Paris Communes which remain to be enacted before the working class conquers political power depends on how well the masses have been drilled in the knowledge of the issue before them.

This to every comrade in the class war throughout the land: Agitate, educate, organize, until you have made the Socialist movement so firm, so large and so self-contained in knowledge that all efforts to nip, stultify, corrupt or intimidate it with terrorism will be in vain.

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