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EDITORIAL

DEMAGOGUE AND PLUTOGOGUE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

PRESIDENT Roosevelt, the High-Priest of Capitalist morality in the land, rose, so to speak, in the high canonical robes of his office before the people of the land; and, in the course of his this year's annual homiletics on the 4th of this month, uttered himself as follows against the "demagogue":

"To preach hatred of the rich man as such, to carry on a campaign of slander and invective against him, to seek to mislead and inflame to madness honest men whose lives are hard and who have not the kind of mental training which will permit them to appreciate the danger in the doctrines preached—all this is to commit a crime against the body politic and to be false to every worthy principle and tradition of American national life."



THEODORE ROOSEVELT
(1858–1919)

Fate so willed it that the deep-hypocrisy of the class for which the Presidential plutogogue spoke should be illustrated on the identical day when the above lecture was read. On that very day, the Supreme Court of the United States having decided against the habeas corpus proceedings instituted by Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone, the capitalist press announced the fact in language best typified by the headlines of the *New York Sun*—"Fair Trial for Assassins; Steunenberg Murderers Have Only the Law to Fear"!!!

It may be so, and it may not be so, that spokesmen for the Labor Movement of the land "preach hatred of the rich man as such." One thing, however, is certain—the Labor Movement is the result of the Capitalist System. Were there no Capitalist Class there would be no Labor Agitators. The latter are the legitimate offspring of the former. Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone are charged with murder. The "worthy principle and tradition of American national life" requires that the

accused be held innocent until proven guilty. This “principle and tradition” holds even when the accused is caught red-handed. In the case of the Idaho prisoners the only evidence upon which they were arrested is the evidence of a self-confessed murderer. When the Meat Packers’ atrocities were unveiled, how careful was not the capitalist, how solicitous of the civic rights of the exposed criminals. The language then was: “Even Government officials may err”; “the charges may be false”; “let’s keep a cool, judicial mind.” But now, when not simple cash fines, but the LIVES of men are at stake; now when the “witness” is not a “Government official,” one presumably trustworthy, but a self-confessed felon, a being presumably untrustworthy;—now, all “principle and tradition” notwithstanding, the evidence of the felon is taken in advance for gospel truth, the prisoners are libeled with the title of “Assassins,” and insult is added by the ribald jeer that “the murderers have only the law to fear”!

Nothing happens by accident. It is no accident that capitalist “professions” and capitalist “practice” were so glaringly contrasted on the identical day. It may be that there are labor agitators, or demagogues, who “preach hatred of the rich man as such”; but if such agitators there be, they are the legitimate offsprings of the capitalist agitators, or plutogogues, who “preach hatred of the wage slave as such”; it may be there are labor agitators, or demagogues, who “carry on a campaign of slander and invective against the rich man, to seek to mislead and inflame to madness” people who have no time to think; but, if such agitators there be, they are the legitimate offsprings of the capitalist agitators, or plutogogues, in and out of office, who “carry on a campaign of slander and invective against the workingman, to seek to mislead and inflame to madness” the unthinking against the worker.

The PLUTOGOGUE breeds the DEMAGOGUE. Granting the worst against the demagogue, by all rules of Ethics and of Sense he who begets him is the worser pest; and, being cause, the DEMAGOGUE but effect, it is the PLUTOGOGUE that commonsense and morality must first combine to exterminate—AND WILL.

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