

SECOND EDITORIAL

MILITARISM AND WAGE SLAVERY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

A good example of the practical working of militarism is furnished by the conduct of an army officer in San Francisco who became angry at a workingman for not working fast enough, and cursed him. When the worker answered that he knew what he was doing, the officer swelled up and said: "Do you know you are talking to an officer of the army?" Then he proceeded to beat the worker. The workingman was a civilian.

In the army when a private "talks back" to one of those superior creatures whom the Government feeds and trains for the man-killing profession, he meets with swift punishment. The army officer is trained to be a brute and never cheats his teacher. He looks on all civilians as a lower order of beings and has no respect for any of them except the rich and powerful who have the bestowing of shoulder straps and sinecures; to these he truckles like the innate cur that he is. But he evens up matters by arrogant brutality to the weaker man whom he meets; and the wage-worker is the weakest.

The spectre of militarism frightens the small property owners, not so much because of the swaggering insolence and high-handed outrages of the epauletted swashbucklers, but because of the good dollars taxed from his pockets to support the army. The great capitalists desire a big army and are not worrying over the taxes. They have neither the high-tax reason of the middle class nor the hard-blow reason of the wage worker to dread militarism.

The workingman who does not hate and dread militarism is indeed thick-headed. Insults and outrages galore has he to endure to-day, from the unofficial slave drivers whom the capitalist class employ; but these insults and outrages will increase as militarism spreads until every man who dares to assert his manhood when goaded by jibes of his petty tyrant will be met with "Do you know you are talking to an officer of the army?"—and a beating!

No matter how much the decaying middle class may protest, they cannot stem the current setting towards militarism. They have lost economic and political power

and are helpless. Militarism is only the natural accompaniment of capitalism fully developed. It can be ended but not mended. And it can be ended only by ending its cause: CAPITALISM.

Only the working class can do this by united action at the ballot box. The downfall of the capitalist means the downfall of the uniformed brute and militarism.

A vote for Malloney and Remmel is a vote to abolish militarism and flogging of wage slaves.

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

Uploaded June 2005