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EDITORIAL

HYENAS AT PRAYER-MEETING.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE spokesmen and spokespapers of the plutocratic interests, whose instinct correctly told them that “around the corner” of the impossible Hearst Movement stands Socialism, and that THAT is not impossible, but an imminent calamity to the reign of debauchery and banditism; these spokesmen and spokespapers who, accordingly, aimed at giving Socialism a stunning blow by crushingly deflating Hearstism, who prepared the “blow” by a widespread conspiracy to count out Hearst, and who, despite the execution of the conspiracy, find so gigantic a vote to have been cast for him that he is “defeated” by an appallingly reduced Republican vote, while the rest of his ticket, which the conspirators had no time to count out quite as effectively, wins out; these spokesmen and spokespapers are now prayerfully turning to one another and preaching the “necessity of curing abuses.” During the campaign nothing was heard about “abuses” from those quarters. Now it is being admitted that “many men have grown fat and lazy, and have thought of nothing but their purses, automobiles and good dinners.” Now it is being admitted that “a lot of successful men have been pushing their success to a dangerous point.” Now it is being admitted that “railway corporations must be brought to their senses.” And more to this effect. In short the hyenas are at prayer meeting wondering how the hyena system may be so cloaked over and plastered over as to stem the progress of that which is “around the corner.”

And yet, all the preachings of the hyenas notwithstanding, what is the spectacle one sees? While still laboring under the fright of the Hearst campaign and dumbfounded by their “triumph,” the capitalist interests are proceeding in their headlong career. Since election four banks have busted, and one cashier has committed suicide; since election the Gas Trust in New York has obtained an injunction against itself not to receive 80 cents for gas, as the law orders, and

argued, in support of its contention to extort \$1 for gas from the consumers, that if it accepted less it would be “in contempt of court”! Since election the Pullman Company, with an accumulated surplus of \$35,000,000 threatens the sovereign State of Texas to withdraw its service if the State dare “interfere with its business.” Since election the Harriman railroad interests merged the Illinois Central, the anti-Trust law notwithstanding.

The capitalist State is a wonder-worker. It can dispense the capitalist class from the need of toil and thrift; it can guard the capitalist class against the consequences of idleness and vice. And what the capitalist State can do the capitalist class will see is done. Fortunately for civilization the job of “curing abuses” is impossible; fortunately for civilization the capitalist class can not choose but heap abuses upon abuses; like a malady it must run its course. Nevertheless, interesting is the sight of the hyena spokesmen and spokespapers preaching while the hyenas proceed hyenawise. The old revivalist hymn, addressing the remorseful sinners said: “Speaking will relieve you.” When capitalist spokesmen and spokespapers “speak” it is not for relief, but for a screen behind which to pile sin upon sin.

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

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