

EDITORIAL

INCAUTIOUS G.A.R. OFFICER.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WHAT with the increasing niggardliness with which appropriations for pensioning veterans are being made and then vetoed, and what with the increased difficulties for earning a living, an officer of the Grand Army of the Republic recently said: "I would not be surprised if the old soldiers should head a movement for pensions, and INSIST THAT THE MONEY BE FOUND."—This is an incautious remark. If a Haywood prosecution should hear that, it may make the statement the basis for an indictment and trial on the charge of "armed rebellion."

Incautious though the remark of the G.A.R. officer was, it nevertheless is testimony, valuable testimony.

The talk about "prosperity" has subsided considerably. The "prosperity" so much heard about in recent years was, to be sure, the condition of the sponging class, technically called capitalists. The sponging being fat, there was prosperity for the spongers. Such prosperity implies suffering on the part of the spongees, technically called working class. Nevertheless there is a certain illusion and delusion in work. A man at work, though he be sponged upon unmercifully, feels mentally happier than if he had to hit the road for a job. Such are the conditions created by capitalism that the workingman actually imagines he is sharing prosperity if he but have work, though his life-blood be expended thereat for a pittance that falls far behind his recuperative powers. So that so long as the spongers had a plentiful sponging the talk about "prosperity" was not wholly discounted by the workers. Now, however, the spongers are less "prosperous," that is, these spongings have declined. Under such circumstances even the illusion and delusion of "prosperity" to the spongees are about to suffer. That is testimony No. 1 given by the G.A.R. officer quoted above.

The veterans could formerly get along with a \$10 or \$5 alms as pension. They could get some other work. The delusion of “prosperity” being on the wane, they are becoming desperate. Their desperation is voiced by their officers. This is testimony No. 2.

The suggestion that “old soldiers” may “head a movement” whereby to “insist that the money be found” to pay them pensions suggests an armed “insistence.”

Incautious G.A.R. officer!

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