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THIRD EDITORIAL

WAGES OF SIN.

By DANIEL DE LEON

United States soldiers in Chicago engaging in riot and assaulting Chinese waiters in restaurants are only giving us a slight taste of what can be expected for the future.

A democratic Republic is the one form of Government in which a large standing army is a greater curse than in all others. In a monarchy the army can be subjected to discipline and the excesses of soldiers rigorously punished and restrained. There the soldier is a mere fighting machine. But here he is a voter with power to seat and unseat the very men from whom his orders come. To the natural and acquired brutality of the hired killer, he adds the insolence of the underling who can depose his superior officer.

“As ye sow, so also shall ye reap.” The conquest of foreign markets necessitates a large standing army at home, a powerful navy and war establishments, in short: militarism. This inevitably leads to brigandage on the part of the soldiers, both at home and abroad. The experience of those towns, unfortunate enough to have an encampment near them in the Yanko-Spanko war,¹ proves this, and every man who has observed the conduct of the soldier realizes the truth.

How, then, can this brigandage be suppressed or avoided? How can this militarism which means anarchy in uniform be abolished? There is but one way, and that is to remove the cause.

The wars for foreign markets occur because the capitalist must dispose of the surplus value he has wrung from the working class. In the final analysis, foreign wars, brigandage at home, militarism, are caused by the working class being robbed of the wealth it produces. The capitalist is able to rob the worker because the capitalist and not the worker owns the machinery for producing this wealth. Hence, the cure for this evil is to abolish capitalist ownership of the machinery and establish collective ownership by the people.

¹ [Slang for the Spanish-American War of 1898.]

This is the only cure for the evil, and Mr. Bryan and the others who prate about “militarism” and how much opposed to it they are, either regard their hearers as a lot of ignorant fools, or else their own ignorance is massive.

Capitalism is the father of militarism. The Socialist Labor Party will destroy Capitalism. A vote for Malloney and Rimmel is a vote against militarism.

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

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