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EDITORIAL

ALL HONOR TO VIRGINIA!

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Constitutional Convention of Virginia, now sitting in Richmond, struck the words “freedom of speech” from the Bill of Rights; in other words it abolished free speech in the State.—All honor to Virginia!

“All honor?” Is not such conduct barbarism, bold and brazen? Yes; and for that very reason, All honor to the Virginia buccaneers!

The conduct of the labor-fleecing class and its political parasites in Virginia is, like all other acts of man or bodies of men, not to be judged singly. It must be judged in connection with current events, that serve as its setting. What, then, are the events that serve as a setting, by which to judge the convention?

The shot fired by Czolgosz was taken as a signal by the labor-fleecing class of the North and its parasites to act. Press, pulpiteers, professors, politicians and podsnaps generally rushed into the arena. Upon the isolated act of one Anarchist they sought to enthrone Anarchy as a social institution, and establish a reign of terror. Nor was this the worst feature thereof. Its worst feature was the cloak in which they wrapped themselves, the colors that they flew. These were: “Free Press,” “Free Speech,” “Liberty,” “Americanism.” There was to be a free press, but woe to him who should print anything derogatory to the reign of the labor-fleecing capitalist system; there was to be free speech, but woe to him who would dare give utterance to economic principles that went against the grain of the robber class; there was to be liberty, but only the liberty to choose between supporting the present rule of rapine or “shutting up;” there was to be Americanism,—as interpreted by the class that is raising heiresses for foreign Princes to bestow titles upon. In other words, Hypocrisy base, sneaking, and perverse are the colors under which the Northern capitalists set to work.

That, under such circumstances, a branch of the modern exploiters of Labor should anywhere be found possessed of sufficient fibre to scorn, to grovel and to lie, to scorn to sail under false pretences, to dare stand erect, bold and brazen, and

brazenly bold fly the colors of barbarism is cause for admiration. For that much, they are entitled to honor.

The barbarism is raw material: raw material is purifiable. The hypocrite is ash-barrel refuse. At crises, such as the country is now traversing, and in sight of spectacles such as are presented by Virginia, on the one hand, and the Northern spokesmen for capitalism on the other, the civilized man, conscious always of the virtues inherent in moral bravery, can not but pause long enough in his work of education to express admiration for the frankness and boldness of the Virginia buccaneer class.

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

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