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EDITORIAL

FORCES THAT MAKE FOR PROGRESS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE dust of the late election being now laid, an inventory of its practical results may be taken—first as to the significance, merits and effect of what may be broadly called the Hearst Movement.

The Hearst Movement is a Movement that makes for progress. It does not follow that the Socialist Labor Party should disband, lest it interfere with the effectiveness of the Hearst Movement. On the contrary. The fruit that the Hearst Movement will shake from the social tree would be lost but for the existence of the S.L.P. That fruit the S.L.P. can not shake off the tree, the Hearst Movement can; that fruit the Hearst Movement can not utilize, the S.L.P. can. What fruit is that? Freedom from superstitious reverence for the Capitalist rulers.



WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST
(1863–1951)

Economic needs are iconoclasts. They throw down ruthlessly the idols raised by previous economic needs. That is true; but this other is true also: Habits of thought, especially inherited ones, are themselves a force; it is a force that retards perception; it is a force that enables belief to survive facts. Hollow as the shell is of reverence for the capitalist ruler, the shell is able to hold together, and be a point of departure for concrete action. That shell must be smashed. While the S.L.P. fulfills the mission of drilling the revolution, the Hearst Movement is smashing the shell, and thereby disarming, or laming, opposition.

The “abuses of the Crown” can not be exposed without the crownship itself being undermined. Crusades against the “abuses of the Crown” must end in the

downfall of the Crown. Moreover, open Crusades against the Crown would be resisted by all the pillars of the Crown, whereas Crusades against its “abuses,” can be and are undertaken by its pillars themselves—to its final inevitable undoing. It is so with the Crusade of the Hearst Movement against the “abuses of capitalism.” Every shot—and they are numerous, telling and unerring—that the Hearst Movement fires at the “abuses” makes Capitalism itself reel. The shots fired from that camp go home, as straight as the acts of spies. Those shots are not constructively destructive as the shots fired from the Socialist camp, but they strike where Socialist shots could not—they are blows under the belt.

The Hearst Movement is, accordingly, a Movement that makes for progress. It is, however, of that sort of beneficial Movements whose victory rings the knell of their own doom. As a “nobility” can not continue to exist in power after the Crown, whose “abuses” they have assailed has gone down, neither can the Hearst stamp of Capitalists, or their Movement, survive that which their assaults have overthrown.

The Hearst Movement is fruitful, but its fruit can be gathered only by a bona fide political party of Labor.

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