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EDITORIAL

CAN THE CAPITALISTS BE BLAMED?

By DANIEL DE LEON

Le *Socialiste* of Paris, organ of the bona fide Socialists of France, prophesied that the Millerands and the Jaures would spring up in America, overnight, like the mushroom. In a way, the prophecy was belated: the gentlemen in question, that is to say, their American imitations, had already made their appearance; in a way, as matters are now turning out, the prophecy was fractional: the corrupt element in question is turning up here with a rotundity not dreamed of in France.

The position of the bona fide French Socialists on the matter of public office under capitalism is that Socialists may take any office which they conquer themselves, but never an office bestowed upon them by a capitalist official. The principle was grounded upon the experience made with Millerand, who accepted a cabinet position at the hand of a capitalist President. As that was as far as the French Socialists had any experience, their principle went no further.

That the prophecy with regard to America was belated, appears from the numerous bogus Socialist party men in office at the time by the grace of capitalist politicians,—the Kings and Everetts of San Francisco; the Woolbridges of Cleveland; the Seth Tabors of Peekskill; etc., etc., a serial that has its latest manifestation in Genosse J. Frankenpohl of Essex County, N.J., just appointed Justice of the Peace by the capitalist Governor of that State.

But the prophecy was fractional also. That appears from the news items that are coming in from Indiana. In the towns of Clay, Vigo, Sullivan, Vermillion, Martin and others no tickets were nominated by the old capitalist parties, and, as the despatches put it, THE SOCIALISTS [so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic party candidates] RECEIVED THE OFFICES BY DEFAULT!!!!

Here we have a decided enlargement, broadening, widening and deepening of

Millerandism. Individual corruptible Socialists are corrupted, not merely by a public job being bestowed upon them by a capitalist public official, but by the political organizations of capitalism doing the thing, through abstaining from entering the field where office is conquered!

The so-called Socialist, alias Social Democratic party, is nothing but a political “employment office.” As such it is known by the capitalist class; as such it is used, as such it is liked by them. Can they be blamed?

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