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FIRST EDITORIAL

IS IT ACCIDENT?

By DANIEL DE LEON

HE who believes the capitalist class feels as confident and comfortable as they affect lulls himself in dangerous security.

A class that has outlived its mission or historic purpose—which is equivalent to saying a doomed class—is proverbially blind. The capitalist class is no exception to the rule. But the rule implies only blindness to the best interests of the individual beings who go to make up such a class; blindness to the safety of its members; blindness to the social causes that bid it be gone. To all these considerations the capitalist class is as blind as any of the ruling classes that has preceded it, and that has been swallowed up in the course of time.

But blind as the capitalist class is in all such respects, it is wide-awake and alert to the fact that a storm is brewing over its head, and it is preparing at every point to meet it.

It is no accident that in New York State a multimillionaire succeeds another multimillionaire in the gubernatorial chair; it is no accident that he has gathered around him for his military family the flower of New York multimillionairedom; it is no accident that throughout the country there is a “non-partisan” movement to take control of the municipal governments on behalf of the “well-to-do,” under the guise of “reform;” it is no accident that West Point graduates are being recommended as the fittest individuals to superintend our trustified industries; it is no accident that the army is to be enlarged and remodeled to render it more effective; it is no accident that armory sites are studding the land; and last, but not least, it is no accident that goldbugdom has latterly been showing its claws, and its teeth, too, more brazenly than ever before. These are not accidents; but they are a series of

events that betray an organized and clearly determined purpose.

True enough, if closely looked into, all such signs of watchfulness are but the obverse of the same medal—blindness. They all go to confirm the principle that he whom the gods would destroy they first make blind. One and each of these precautions against the oncoming storm reveal the utter ignorance of our ruling class to the nature of what is coming, they demonstrate the blindness of capitalism. To put up an umbrella against an approaching cyclone, to brace up against a roaring flood heard drawing nigh, to build a mud hovel against a landslide seen descending, indicate as much blindness as they would indicate sight—they all betray profound ignorance of the nature of the danger that is impending, they all justify the prediction that he who resorts to them is doomed.

All this, notwithstanding the times, urge upon our people the greatest vigilance, the greatest promptness of action. The work of organization, conscious of its purpose, never was more imperative.

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