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FIRST EDITORIAL

“BAD” SOCIALISTS—VERY BAD.

By DANIEL DE LEON

Under the heading of “Malicious Agitators” a pink-colored sheet in Seattle, Washington, delivers itself of a tirade against the Socialist Labor Party speakers who are carrying on a vigorous open-air campaign of education in that town.

It calls these brainy young workingmen, who work hard all day, and then, instead of loafing in the saloons, go out to teach and educate their class at night, “a detestable lot,” “corrupted and black-hearted traitors;” tells how “One can smell the fumes of sulphur when they start to spit out their hideous hatred,” etc., and all this in a few inches of its valuable space.

All this would entitle this refined sheet to the silence accorded the *Police Gazette*, *War Cry* and others of its kidney, but, sandwiched in between the choice billingsgate, occurs this very suggestive statement: “They have no word of praise for anyone or anybody.”

That is the mark which distinguishes the Socialist who understands the class struggle from the ignorant man—honest or otherwise—who calls himself a Socialist. The Socialist does not ascribe the evils he seeks to remove to any individual; he knows that men are moved by their material class interests; that it is to the interest of the capitalist class to continue the system of private ownership of capital and its attendant wage-slavery; he “has no word of praise” for anyone who does not fight that class and that system.

But there are people who pose as “Socialists” and who “have praise for anyone” whom they can dupe or who is duping them. According to these people, a Mr. W.R. Hearst, who says sweet things about “Socialism” while robbing newsboys and laborers; a Golden rule Jones who seeks to lead the wage-slaves into the shambles of Bryanism; a Carey who votes armories for the murderers of the workers are all entitled to praise. For this they are called “good” Socialists by the contemporaries of this Seattle mud-slinger.

The highest praise that can be given to the Socialist Labor Party is that it hews

to the line so closely, is so true to the class it battles for that its members are known to the enemy as “bad” Socialists.

No, we have blows galore for the robbers and their lackeys but “no praise.”

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

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