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EDITORIAL

SIXTH EPISTLE AT THE LAMBERTIANS.

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FATHER L.A. Lambert's article against Socialism in the *Freeman's Journal and Catholic Register* of last April 16 makes the assertion that the "number of officials" would be "increased tenfold" in the Socialist State. The assertion is a brick in the second structure or fortification of the Father's position; and this structure or fortification aims at showing that if the working people cannot now protect themselves from the coercive intrigues of capital, they could not under Socialism. Every brick in this structure is either a false statement, or a sin against logical reasoning, or a combination of both. We shall take up brick by brick, and knock them out in successive epistles.

Whether the term "official" be taken technically, or whether it be taken broadly, the assertion is false that the officials would be increased tenfold, or anyfold under the Socialist State.

Let anyone look down the list of what may technically be termed "officials" in modern government. He will find that ninety-nine per cent. of them are strictly the result of capitalism. It has been estimated in Congress that ninety per cent. of the taxes are expended in "protecting property," and only ten per cent. in "protecting persons." The estimate is small for the "protection of property," and large for the "protection of persons." But let it go at that. It follows that the officials engaged in what is sweetly called protection of "property" exceed tremendously those engaged in the protection of "persons." Under "protection of property" only a very small percentage are of the nature of fire and such departments that protect property and persons from accident. The bulk are of the nature of police and the like who are intended to protect property from persons. In other words, these officials are there to protect PROPERTY from PERSONS—a state of things purely capitalistic. Only in a social system where robbery is legalized, and where property is mainly stolen

goods, does it need any protection from persons—the producers, the working class, those to whom it rightfully belongs. The “officials” to-day are essentially, from President down, the paid constables and watchmen to keep the plundered workers from access to the goods plundered from them. Consequently, under Socialism what is technically called “officials” would virtually vanish, at least ninety per cent. thereof. Reason does not deal in mystifications. Ninety per cent. less from a whole leaves that whole not tenfold larger but ninety per cent. smaller.

Taking, however, the word “official” in a broad sense, Father Lambert’s brick is found still hollower. Capitalism is run not by its technical officials only but also by its industrial officials, that is to say, employees who render services needed in conducting production, but not itself directly producible {productive?}. For instance, the clerks, the drummers, etc., of a shoe factory are to-day needed in running the factory but they are only indirectly serviceable, they are not directly producible; the direct producers are the shoemakers. These clerks of all degrees, drummers, etc., are officials in capitalist society, and capitalist society itself, exemplifying Socialist teachings and wickedly giving the lie to its Lambertian supporters, seeks by concentration, or elimination of death dealing competition to REDUCE not to INCREASE this number of idle mouths or officials. Now, then, everybody who knows anything on the subject knows that Socialism means the carrying of this concentration, the reduction of this horde of idle mouths, to its highest perfection, with this difference that, capitalism, in the measure that makes the reduction increases the volume of popular suffering by throwing these idle mouths upon the labor market, and thereby reducing wages, and thereby compelling an increase in the number of the technical or strictly governmental officials, whereas Socialism alone can turn these idle mouths to use. The access to natural (land) and social (capital) opportunities, that Socialism alone guarantees to man and which capitalism cannot choose but restrict, enables the idle mouths who are displaced by concentration to join the army, not of wage slaves, but of freemen, and, as a result, the number of technical officials need not be increased. There being no plunder or plunderers to protect spiked-club police, etc., are useless.

Accordingly, in whatever sense “officials” be taken, Socialism reduces their numbers. Father Lambert’s argumentation correctly implies that a reduction rather

than increase of officialdom is a desirable thing. This brick of his, accordingly, drops upon his own head.

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

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