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EDITORIAL

A PARALLEL.

By DANIEL DE LEON

FEW will forget the memorable date of January 22, 1905. On that day the workmen of St. Petersburg, their rights long trampled under foot, rose against Czarism. The result was a brutal massacre, which aroused the whole of Russia, and kindled the flames of revolution. The Russian autocracy, quick to realize the damaging effects of their repressive acts, sought to offset them. To this end, they caused a committee of alleged workmen to appear before the Czar—the very head and front of the offending—and repudiate the revolt as the work of “designing agitators,” a “violation of law and order,” and an “act of treason.” The Russian workmen immediately denounced this committee. They were not to be taken in by any comedy. They showed the committee to be composed of GOVERNMENT OVERSEERS, selected for the purpose, and compelled to act their ignoble role. Needless to say, the Russian workmen refused to acknowledge this committee as their own—and the revolution went on undismayed.

Few will forget March 7. On that day five thousand “L” and Subway employes struck against the oppression due to the daily violation of all human and divine contracts by their masters, the capitalist Czar. The result was a virulent counter-attack, closely resembling that adopted by the Czar of Russia on January 22. Every capitalist pretense was dropped, and the ranks of Socialism received greater accessions and renewed zeal. The capitalists, quick to see the bad effects of this tactical blunder, set out to “rectify” it. Through the medium of the Central Federated Union, they also had a committee appointed. This committee has just appeared before Belmont, and, in the very language of the committee that appeared before Nicholas, assured the Czar of the Interborough system, that the strikers were “misled”; that they were “repentant”; that the strike was a “mistake,” and a “violation of agreement,” “which was wrong”; and opined that, the company, “having

broken the strike,” could afford to be magnanimous. The committee consisted of Herman Robinson, general organizer of the American Federation of Labor, who is dependent for his position upon Samuel Gompers, who, in turn, is the first vice-president of Belmont’s National Civic Federation, and associated with him in the promotion of capitalist interests via “arbitration”; James Daly, of the Dock Builders’ Union, and member of Tammany Hall, the political agency through which Belmont secured control of the city-built subway, with its enormous profits; James P. Archibald, of the alleged Paperhangers’ Union, ex-turnkey of the Ludlow street jail, and political handyman of the Citizens’ Union; A.J. Boulton, of the Stereotypers’ Union, another political handyman of the Citizens’ Union variety, and candidate for Governor of the State of New York on the Populist annex of the Republican party last election; and last, not least, the *Volkszeitung* Social Democrat, Morris Brown, one of the official beneficiaries of the international Cigarmakers’ Union, who make it their business to break strikes and furnish the capitalists with constables, as they did in the Tampa strike, and who, consequently, finds his level with the Robinsons, Dalys, Archibalds and Boultons.

Needless to say, the intelligent American strikers will refuse to acknowledge this capitalist counterpart of the Russian committee of government overseers as their own. They will denounce this committee, just as the Russian workmen did, for what it is: a capitalist committee, appointed, like its Russian prototype, by the plundering class, and acting, like its Russian prototype, in the interest of the class that lives upon the sweat of the brow of the workers.

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

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slpns@slp.org