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EDITORIAL

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH THE "SOCIALIST PARADISE"?

By DANIEL DE LEON

ADMIRAL SPERRY, together with the officers of the American fleet, now in New Zealand waters, are being shown the Islands by Sir J.G. Ward, the Prime Minister. We read of their being taken to the races, to Botorua, to the hot baths, to the inauguration ceremonies of new baths, where the rich refresh themselves; to the garrison quarters, etc., etc. There is one thing no mention if made of as being pointed out for the admiration, or scorn, as the case may be, of the visiting marines. That thing is the Socialist Paradise.

Outside of New Zealand the papers are full of the said Paradise. Enterprising Editors have raised collections to send reporters to New Zealand, to bestow through their pen upon the rest of the world a knowledge of the detailed beauties of the Paradise. Whenever things that should not happen afflict our people, forthwith we are informed by enthusiastic reformers that such things never happen in the Paradise of Socialism—New Zealand. Do wages go down here?—that happens never in the Paradise. Do workingmen go on strike here and are then shot in the back by Sheriffs?—never in the Paradise. Are our streets crowded with starving unemployed—the thoroughfares of the Paradise are crowded only with affluent, well fed, well groomed workers on whose faces shines the oil of contentment. In short, the Paradise is in New Zealand and New Zealand is the Paradise of Socialism.

With the impression upon our minds, created by such glowing descriptions of the New Zealand Paradise, we have felt sure the New Zealand authorities would tote our marines to the Paradise, and exhibit its beauty spots. Nothing of the sort happened. The Paradise is not mentioned—any more than it would be in the instance of foreign visitors to America. Indeed, there is a painful omission of any allusion to the Paradise. There is worse. The only things mentioned are utterly un-

paradisaical, at least un-Socialist paradisaical.

John Swinton once told a story of his experience with the Single Tax. When he left New York for a trip to England, he was told here: "There is no Single Tax in New York, but the Movement is strong in London." Arrived in London he inquired after the Single Tax. "None here," was the answer, "but it is powerful in Glasgow." Arrived in Glasgow and again inquiring after the elusive Single Tax, the answer was: "None here, but mighty strong in Brooklyn." Swinton returned to New York, crossed over to Brooklyn, inquired, only to learn: "No Single Tax here, but in Australia—there the Single Tax is carrying everything before it."

Can it be that the New Zealand Socialist Paradise likewise vanishes with the approach of a visitor?

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

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