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EDITORIAL

“NATIONALIZATION” AGAIN.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE demagogic nationalization of the anthracite fields plank of the demagogic Democratic party has again opened wide the flood gates of the ranting that frequently passes for “Socialism.” Ownership by the Government having so much the appearance of ownership by the people, the politicians of the Democratic persuasion are going around to the voters whom they suspect of Socialism, with the query, What more do you want?

No Socialist can be caught with clap-trap. The “nationalization” that the Democracy proposes is clap-trap, it is the identical clap-trap that their name-sakes the Social Democracy indulges in when it demands municipal ownership with capitalist conditions. “National ownership” is not the same as ownership by the people.

The Government at Washington is a nationally owned concern. And yet that Government has been seen to fling Federal troops into Chicago and Idaho for the avowed purpose of breaking a strike, and dragoon the workers into submission to the employing class.

The Post Office is owned nationally. And yet, what do we see? We see that while the railroad capitalists receive exorbitant pay for the transportation of the mails, the girls employed in the “bagging” department are treated to starvation wages, while the letter carriers themselves receive salaries that are ridiculously small compared with the salaries of their official superiors who do nothing and are appointed by virtue of their capitalist connections.

The Navy Yards are nationally owned. And yet, what happens there? The workingmen’s wages are regulated by the economic laws of the wages system of slavery.

And so forth, and so on.

Nationalization of industries is not in itself Socialism. It becomes Socialism only

when the capitalist system of production has been driven from government and the Socialist system introduced. And this substitution of social systems can be accomplished only upon a platform that so declares its purpose, and is backed up by the working class.

That the day for this substitution or revolution is approaching, the demagogic nationalization plank of the Democratic party shows quite clearly. Capitalist interests at first thought the approaching Socialist tidal wave could be stemmed by setting up a party that they would boom as “Socialist,” and that would hold out the bait of “nationalization” to catch the gudgeons. But the people turned out not to be gudgeons, and the conduct of that stool-pigeon “Socialist” party, the Social Democratic party, helped to enlighten the masses on what the concern was there for. The conduct of the Social Democrats in office—their voting away franchises as they did in Brockton; their voting large appropriations for Armories as they did in Haverhill; their running upon the tickets of the old parties, whom they affected to abhor—told the tale. As the stool-pigeon wouldn’t do, the Democratic party itself steps forward in that capacity.

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