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EDITORIAL

“THE LABOR COMBINE” AS A MENACE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

EX-MAYOR Hewitt has been heard from again. Replying to the critics of his recent utterances on the right to labor, Hewitt again attacks labor unions. He says: “The public seems not to be aware that there is growing up a vast labor combine fraught with a far greater menace to industrial conditions than many of the so-called monopolies that are now occupying the attention of the entire country.”

If there is such a labor combine in existence, its purpose is certainly not to advance the interests of labor. Such scenes as were witnessed on Labor Day when the labor unions were paraded before, and addressed by, capitalists in the interests of capitalism, certainly do not reflect an activity of benefit to labor. What then can Hewitt mean when he refers to the menace of the labor combine?

Every one has noticed with what admirable precision of purpose Mark Hanna utilized the labor unions in the conquest of the world’s markets; how, by means of his Civic Federation he kept them in line while American capitalism swept the earth in its industrial expansion. Every one has also noticed with what admirable precision of purpose Mark Hanna is using the labor unions in his race for the presidency and the promotion of his soft coal interests. In the first use of the labor “trusts,” Mark earned the approval of the capitalist class; in the second he has met with opposition. It is beginning to be feared by the capitalists who are not on Mark’s side of the house that the labor combine, which Mark has promoted as the necessary accompaniment of the capitalist combine, is something of a club with which to hit competition on the head. They are beginning to realize that just as labor unions have secured franchises for corporations whose chief object was to be bought out by established companies, so are they being used to force opponents to terms.

In this, we believe, lies “the menace of the labor combine to industrial conditions,”

as viewed by Hewitt.

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