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EDITORIAL

AT THE BIER OF THE CHICAGO “WORLD.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

DESPATCHES and correspondence from Chicago have so amply reported the facts connected with the death of the *Chicago World* that the lessons preached by the deceased are now preached as loudly as the deceased is mute.

Long had all element in Chicago who were of the opinion that Socialism was to be brought on by ignoring the teachings—economic, political and tactical—of Karl Marx, and in no other way, endeavored to establish an organ. They started with a weekly; re-christened it several times; at first the *Socialist*, then the *Call*; failed; the started a daily, the *Chicago Socialist*; went on the rocks; re-floated the stranded hulk with a change of name; the *Chicago Socialist* became the *Chicago World*; in keeping with the changed name, threw overboard what little Socialism the paper had; and, finally, suffered shipwreck.

—It a profound Marxian generalization, on the field of sociologic tactics. that “you can not revolutionize society behind its back.” Peoples, in large as well as small numbers, may be played upon for a while. In the homely words of Lincoln: “You may deceive some people all the time; and you may deceive all the people for a time; but you can not deceive all the people all the time.” The material foundation of men’s action stands in the way of the attempt. Least of all is the attempt possible when mass class interests, that is, when revolution is involved. When revolution is involved, then, on the one hand, the class interests that are adverse can not be lastingly hoodwinked; and, on the other, the class interests that make for the revolution can not be lastingly enlisted without education and precept. Precept and education can be none too clear, none too pointed, none too over and above board. Revolutions are honorable. It is so preeminently with the Social Revolution, a revolution that depends upon the mass. It carries its colors at the foremast. Any other colors

are treated by the Constabulary of the Social Sea as piratical, and the craft that flies such colors is sent as a pirate craft to the bottom—whither the Chicago *Socialist-Call-World* has been sent.

Again—

In line with its non-Socialism—and be it noted in passing: nothing that at all claims to be Socialist can be NON-Socialist without being practically ANTI-Socialist—in line with its non-Socialism, the Chicago *World* attempted to ride several horses, horses of different mettle, at that,—the autonomous, hence, scabbing Union; at peace with the employer; the equally autonomous, hence, potentially equally scabby Union, which, however, being for the moment at war with the employer, denounced scabbery; and thirdly, the investing-for-profits capitalist, in this instance, investing in journalism. The circus trick came to grief. The hostile horses snorted, reared, bit and kicked one another, with the ultimate and to-be-foreseen consequences of throwing the charioteer, and smashing the chariot.

—It is likewise a Marxian generalization, made from historic events, that coalitions, things of short and precarious life even among conservative forces, are not merely short-lived on the field of revolution, they are disastrous and tragic—tragic in their finale; disastrous in the baneful confusion of thought that they breed and that long outlives them. The coalition with forces that were inherently divergent, seeing that they were builded by the rule and square of capitalism, foretold the tragedy of the ignominy of the *Chicago World's* landing in the bankruptcy courts; and the trail of the coalition has been marked by the disastrous confusion of thought which the coalition immediately spread, and which will not wear away in a hurry.

To those who have ears to hear the silence of the *Chicago World* in its grave speaks more loudly than did even the loudness of the paper during its loud life.

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