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EDITORIAL

MUCH ADO ABOUT NOTHING.

By DANIEL DE LEON

DATING only a week or so since, the *New Yorker Volkszeitung* began to bear unmistakable symptoms of hysterics. The issue of the 16th of this month has symptoms no more. It has the disease in full crisis.

What is it all about?

It is about Haywood and the Socialist party's Pittsburgh paper *Justice*. The two are spouting "Anarcho-Syndicalism" and urging on "Sabotage" in loud language. And editorially and reportorially the *Volkszeitung* is throwing fits.

Why should this be?

What but Anarcho-Syndicalic was the conduct of the folks that luridly conducted the "Free Speech Fight" in Spokane a little over three years ago? What but sabotage was their practice when they called for funds to support the martyrs, and themselves stuck to the funds, and left the martyrs to rot in jail, according to the testimony of one of their leading members, James Wilson, who, becoming untrue to the principle of sabotage, gave away the secret of the saboteurs, and surely would have given away a good many more secrets had not death suddenly silenced him, on a lonely road, by a hole through his head;—what if not sabotage was all that?

Nevertheless, at the time, the columns of the *Volkszeitung* reeled with exuberant "revolutionary ecstasies" over the Spokane Anarcho-Syndicalists and Saboteurs. The paper was so intoxicated with their "great deeds" that—to use the wicked language of a very wicked paper, the *Daily People*,—the "*Volkszeitung* turned its pages into a rogues' gallery" by publishing the pictures, garlanded with praises, of the Anarcho-Syndicalists and Saboteurs above referred to?

Why this sudden face-about? Why have the hysterics of joy and approval suddenly changed into hysterics of rage and condemnation?

Can it be that what moves the *Volkszeitung* is a preference for the criminalities

of Anarch PRACTICE over Anarch SPEECH? Can it be that the *Volkszeitung* likes the THING but dislikes the ADMISSION of the thing? In other words, and in short, is the explanation of the *Volkszeitung's* change not a change of heart, but the consequence of its own peculiar ethics according to which a man may commit any rascality, but must preach virtue?

Of course, neither Haywood nor any paper that preaches or practices, or preaches and practices sabotage, or any other peculiarly Anarch tactics, has a place in a Socialist organization; and, if these insinuated themselves inside, then the Socialist organization upon which the infliction fell can cleanse itself thereof none too quickly, and bounce it.

But—but—is not that “head-hunting” and S.L.P. intolerance?

From whatever angle the *Volkszeitung's* present hysterics are diagnosed, they are much ado about nothing.

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