

EDITORIAL

WELL FOR RUSSELL!

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Troy correspondent who reported an interview that he had with Charles Edward Russell, the gubernatorial candidate in this State of the Socialist party, did a good piece of work.¹ Incidentally, the report is of benefit to the Movement; above all the report is, or should be, of benefit to Mr. Russell.

His attention being called to the omission in his party's platform of the mission of the Union, or economic organization, and the necessity of the same for the Social Revolution, Mr. Russell said:

“We should not bother our heads about the workers' getting together. What do we want to bother our heads about something that has to happen a million years from now? Let us fight the capitalists.”

This is candid language.

Taft “fights capitalists.” So does Roosevelt. So does Wilson. Each is the standard-bearer of a separate set of capitalists, fighting the two other sets. It is capitalists fighting capitalists, in the interest of Capitalism. As the standard-bearer of a party of Socialism, Mr. Russell's words—“Let us fight the capitalists”—may not be given such a construction. Even if the official record of his party justifies the conclusion that the odor of the fleshpots of the capitalist Egypt hangs in the nostrils of the S.P.'s Officialdom, better things than deliberate treason does the character of Mr. Russell warrant. His words can not mean a suggestion to fight capitalists in the sense that Taft, Roosevelt and Wilson are in the field.

What, then, do Mr. Russell's words mean?

“Let us fight the capitalists”—with what?

The only material wherewith to fight Capitalism by fighting capitalists is the

¹ [See “Socialist Activities at Troy,” page 3, below.]

Working Class. Without them, as the infantry, cavalry and artillery of the fighting army, the fight is impossible, because without the Working Class there would be no army to fight capitalism with.

Again, an army is not a mob. An army is an organized body; and an organized body consists not of scattered and disconnected, let alone mutually warring, elements. An army is a mass of elements that have been “brought together,” and that are held together by organization.

Combining the two principles, and joining them with Mr. Russell’s suggestion of not “bothering our heads about the workers’ getting together,” a fair interpretation of the gentleman’s words is the proposition to “fight the capitalists” with spit-balls.

Indeed, such is the conception of the Socialist issue as entertained by the untainted element of the Socialist party.

Intelligent and honorable men not infrequently realize not the folly of their course. In such cases what is known as “sub-consciousness” lies torpid, at least inactive. In such cases, that is apt to happen at any moment that quickens a torpid sub-consciousness into life, an inactive sub-consciousness into activity. When that happens, then, without and before the individual being aware of it, he utters views that hold up the Mirror to his Error.

Mr. Russell is too intelligent a man to imagine that capitalism can be fought with air; and he is too honorable a man to continue to lead others into the blind-alley of a fight a million years before the army is there to do the fighting. Mr. Russell is too honorable and too intelligent a man to do either thing after the question which our correspondent put to him jogged his hitherto slumbering sub-consciousness into the wakefulness that enabled it to formulate his course in its own, its real image, form and pressure.

It is well for the Movement and for Mr. Russell:

For the Movement—because Mr. Russell’s words, however unintentionally, warn it against Utopia, a road upon which knaves and dupes abound.

For Mr. Russell—because his words are a timely warning unto himself to, either postpone his activities to a million years hence, or forthwith cast away the “million years delusion,” and, joining the ranks of the militants, help along the getting together of the army that IS assembling.

CORRESPONDENCE.

SOCIALIST ACTIVITIES AT TROY.

To the *Daily* and *Weekly People*:—

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On last Sunday, Charles Edward Russell, candidate for Governor on the Socialist party ticket made an address at the Lyceum Theatre. He treated the Progressives to a merry tune and made mention of the fact that they had “jimmied the back door and stolen some silver spoons,” and while they had taken immediate demands, these had nothing to do with the real issue. The issue was one between the classes, and there was no connection or interest in common with the other. But here again the failure to mention the necessity of economic organization to prepare for the control of the industrial commonwealth. In conversation with him afterwards he said, when this subject was proposed to him, that “we should not bother our heads with the workers’ getting together,” and, “What do we want to bother our heads about something that was to happen a million years from now? Let us fight the capitalists.” It certainly seems strange to think that people of intelligence who acknowledge that revolution is necessary in our present government should go about trying in the way of reform to do something beneficial to the working class, denouncing eve-

rything that is done by the capitalistic parties, but going out and talking to the workers with a great deal of logic and a greater portion of sentimentality, preying on the workers for their votes so as to obtain political office, when they know and realize that office would only serve the capitalist through the present system of government.

If Socialism stands for anything it is that the present fight is against the capitalist form of government, made so by our political form, which is not able to cope with industry, and which has allowed for the present power of our industrial and financial kings. If it is revolution that is necessary then it is for the workers to capture the powers of the control of industry, and this can be brought about only by the unification of the workers into an industrial organization, giving expression at the ballot-box of the desires of that organization, which may be attained only when such expression of the majority of the workers have voted to oust present capitalist control and our present political form of government; and for its supplanting by a government of the workers through an industrial republic.

Fred C. Phoenix.

Troy, N.Y., Sept. 14.

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