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EDITORIAL

THE “EXCITEMENT” IN ’FRISCO.

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IT is not murder only that will out. All other things, good, bad and indifferent, have a way of coming to the surface. The San Francisco *Argonaut* is the gate through which certain facts, long known by the Socialists to exist, but positively denied by both capitalists and their fellow criminals, the craft union leaders, are rushing out into the light of day, like rabbits, smoked out of the trunks of old trees by that most pungent of smokes, the steady on-march of social evolution.

In San Francisco, so the *Argonaut* declares, a committee of seventy-five influential businessmen has been organized as “a rallying point for the decent, conservative element in the community, which wishes to see law and order preserved and business confidence restored.” That is the overture to the dance. Thereupon come the specifications. Among these, the evils to be suppressed for the “restoration of business confidence” is the “existence of factions in that PROPERTY-HOLDING class who help to foment the labor union troubles.” No slight murder that is that comes out by the admission.

Only a visionary Socialist fit to be used as catspaw to the labor fakir catspaw of the capitalist, will honestly believe, and only a shyster lawyer Socialist anxious for fees, will affect to pronounce any strike by workingmen as a workingman’s strike. Such is the structure of the craft union that it can and is habitually readily used as a tool by one capitalist concern against a competing concern. And such is the care that the labor fakir takes to keep out education from the rank and file, that these do not perceive the scurvy uses they are frequently put to. The fomenting of the “labor union troubles” is one of the thousand and one methods by which the capitalist illustrates his devotion to his maxim: “Competition is the life of trade.” Competition kills. No capitalist but knows that. In pursuit of his efforts to increase his gains he reduces wages, introduces improved machinery and—seeks to monopolize the

market, at least weed it out of all the competitors he can. In the weeding out effort the craft union, manipulated by the capitalist’s labor lieutenant, is a valuable tool. In what capitalist establishment is not there cause for complaint? The flower bed of wage slavery can breed complaints only. Nothing easier than to arouse the wage slaves of one shop to strike; nothing looks more “labor-loving.” The capitalist pulls the wires; the labor fakir swings his arms and plays his jaws—and there is your “labor union trouble” in full blast in the competing establishment. It necessarily happens that what one competitor can do, others can do likewise—and they do it—and there you have “labor union troubles.”

The committee of seventy-five “influential businessmen” who denounce “factions in the property-holding class” for fomenting union labor troubles are kettles calling the pot black. The “business confidence” they seek to restore is confidence in themselves, and against their competitors in business and in the trick of “union labor troubles.” Of course, the element that constitutes the “committee” is the “decent element in the community”: to such worthies whatever interferes with their schemes is “indecent,” as indecent as workers are “undesirable citizens.” Capitalist troubles breed “union labor troubles.” The excitement in San Francisco is a quaint episode in the crunching process of social evolution, in the progress of which labor fakirs and capitalists alike grind one another to dust.

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

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