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EDITORIAL

ETERNAL VIGILANCE!

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NOTHING is lost, everything gained, even if the latest plot of Idaho's Gooding and his detectives, narrated in to-day's Boise dispatch, should succeed in strangling information from Boise concerning the scenes behind the scenes of the great Class Struggle drama now enacting in the Court House of Ada County, Ida. The "arrest" of Carl Duncan; the obvious and overdone comedy of the "arrest," with Duncan, obviously, as the star performer, and Gooding's Pinkertons as fit "supes," stage-fitters, and stage wardrobe managers, all this comes as a providential climax to a series of events that now clearly show and prove the warning—ETERNAL VIGILANCE IS THE PRICE OF FREEDOM!

As correctly stated in the Boise dispatch, Duncan has long been an object of suspicion in I.W.W. and S.L.P. quarters. The poisonous viper was all the more dangerous because, as is usual with his kind, he appeared with the external allurements of devotion to the Working Class, and of friendship. The rattle of the rattle-snake did not escape experienced ears; it, however, for a time escaped the ears of the inexperienced. Duncan was a mischief maker at the last Chicago convention of the I.W.W. He was there found out and scotched. He then wrote to *The People* a series of questions intended to throw discredit upon the conduct of the Editor of *The People* at that convention: the letter was published in these columns in full, with the following heading as sufficient answer—"Refutes and Confutes Itself." Since then, Duncan's further acts discredited him more and more, and he had to resort to firing at long range. He carried with him a roll of resolutions in which the removal of the Editor of *The People* was demanded for "treason" by reason of his having favored, at a general vote of the Party, the nomination of Haywood for Governor of Colorado; other resolutions demanded the removal of the National Executive Committee for having voted down a motion to censure the Editor of *The*

People for the aforesaid “treason”; yet other resolutions, couched in similarly lurid language demanded the removal of the National Secretary and of Section Hudson County, N.J., likewise for “treason.” As ever happens with such folks, Duncan appointed himself the guardian-paladin of the revolutionary spirit of the Socialist Labor Party and of the I.W.W. Discredited in both organizations, he dared not offer his resolutions in person. He went about looking for whatever member was unguarded and inexperienced enough to listen and then to father his stuff. The time arrived when even that he could no longer do. The climax to that career is the comedy of his now appearing in Boise ostensibly connected with the S.L.P. and he, he the traducer of Haywood, armed like an arsenal to initiate a physical force attempt in Haywood’s behalf!

Suspicion is dangerous; credulity no less. The man fit for the ranks of the militants in the Labor Movement must cultivate that even poise that at once preserves him from “suspicion” and guards him against being duped by credulity. Duncan’s career must not be allowed to be lost. It warns eloquently that where the ears of a rat are seen wiggling and the tail of a rat is seen wriggling, not a cow or a dove, but a RAT lies in between,—AND MUST BE SUMMARILY TREATED AS SUCH. Long before Duncan was found out in S.L.P. and I.W.W. quarters he was a gravel in the shoe of those who had noticed the rat’s tail and ears, and drawn the only conclusion drawable from such premises. The blindness of the unvigilant was a source of no end of trouble to the vigilant—and improved, by prolonging, the rat’s opportunities.

If, true enough, none but those who will strike the blow deserve freedom, it is equally true that none but the vigilant will achieve freedom.

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