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EDITORIAL

A BRILLIANT THRUST.

By DANIEL DE LEON

DURING the discussion on the Employers' Liability bill in the U.S. Senate last week a neat stroke was executed by Senator Gore, the blind Senator from Oklahoma. The stroke will, no doubt, pass as a mere incident of the proceedings of that chamber, yet it was one that causes a flash of light {as} when steel strikes steel. The momentary flash created by Senator Gore's thrust should serve as a beacon to the unsuspecting workingman.

It is well known that the new Liability bill is the outcome of the recent decision of the United States Supreme Court declaring a former Liability law unconstitutional. It is also well known that following the Court's decision a widespread clamor went up from the Gomperses condemning the Court and threatening divers things. It is further well known that President Roosevelt at once proclaimed and sent a special message to Congress suggesting a "Labor" measure—this was to offset the undesirable agitation which resulted. In this matter the President was ably seconded by the labor lieutenants of capital, the said Gomperses. The rising indignation of the workingman had to be run into the ground, and the new Employers' Liability bill was generated as the current; and the labor leaders were to serve as the conductors. Things were going smoothly until Senator Gore short-circuited the scheme and the blow-out occurred.

In the debate in question Senator Bacon of Georgia, Democrat, had the floor. He had made some pointed comment on the \$250,000 campaign fund raised by E.H. Harriman in 1904 at the solicitation of President Roosevelt. At this juncture Senator Gore quietly took a clipping from his pocket and had it passed to Bacon to read. The clipping was read, and proved to be Roosevelt's famous "You and I are practical men" letter to Harriman. Gore thus delivered a master stroke and helped clear up a situation. By it the empty pretense of "Labor" legislation is exposed to

view. It admirably presented the two positions of the President—now “strenuously” wielding the Big Stick for Labor; anon cap in hand soliciting election funds.

Need the question be asked whether or not that Liability bill is taken seriously by the corporations? The circumstances attending the adoption speak eloquently on this head. The measure was adopted in short order. At other times “Eight Hour” laws, etc., are strongly opposed. The corporations know what is in the wind. Then what about the safe, sane and conservative leaders of “legitimate” unions? They are hitching Labor’s car to a myth, and they know it.

It is not said that Senator Gore’s Democratic party would do otherwise were it in power. On the contrary, it would act exactly the same way. Government, the State, is not an institution that is of, by and for the people; it is a thing that is of, by and for the employing class. Therein lies the brilliancy of the flashlight touched off by the blind legislator. Though his act was aimed at the administration, it shed a glowing light upon Labor’s situation. Labor everywhere should take in the lesson, which is, that itself must resolve to capture the Government via the ballot of its own party, the Socialist Labor Party, and set up the Administration of the Industrial Commonwealth.

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

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