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EDITORIAL

“THE MAN PRESTON.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE New York *Evening Post* of the 6th of this month publishes an interview with one Joshua Wanhope upon the subject of the nomination of Preston for President by the Socialist Labor Party. In the course of the interview, and among a string of slanderous statements about the S.L.P., Mr. Wanhope referred contemptuously to “the man Preston.”

The nomination of Preston by the Socialist Labor Party has justly aroused the “righteous indignation” of the press which speaks for the class that recently hailed Orchard as a deliverer, and that, upon the “confession” of the self-confessed multi-murderer, convicted offhand three utterly and obviously innocent workingmen—Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone—of the murder of ex-Gov. Steunenberg. In other words, the nomination of Preston justly aroused the “righteous indignation” of the press which speaks for the class in whose eyes the workingman has no rights; for the class in whose opinion, as expressed on a previous occasion by the *Evening Post*, the workingman should receive the “rifle diet” in answer to his demands for even human conditions; for the class that considers a Union of workingmen as an outrage against that class’s vested rights to live upon the back of the proletariat; for the class that looks upon a Union as a band of brigands, upon its members as fit only to be treated as such, and upon all its demands and acts as mere felony. Of course, that class is “indignant.” In its eyes, a workingman, especially if member of a Union, is “the man This,” or “the man That,” an unclean thing, fit only to be picked up with a pair of tongs. One Silva, a precious member of the capitalist class, having attempted to murder Preston, a workingman on picket duty against Silva’s establishment, and having been shot dead by Preston, on the spot, as every attempter of murder should be treated, what else can Preston be in the eyes of that Free-Trade-and-Protection, Gold-Bug-and-Silver-Bug class but “the man Preston”?

Nothing strange in that.

Of course, Mr. Wanhope, who designates the victimized Union picket-man Preston as "the man Preston," must be some active Republican or Democratic party capitalist. Is he? Bless your head, no. Mr. Wanhope is nothing less than the candidate for Governor in this State of the—hold your breath—of the Socialist party! What? Honest Injun, of a party that claims not only to be Socialist, but that lays particular claim to being the upholder of Unions, while, it claims, the Socialist Labor Party is a "Union Smasher."

There is no mystery in this—

It is not the capitalist class only that looks at the working class as food for cannon in the production of shekels and "grandeur." There is another set, a spawn of the capitalist class, that entertains the same sentiments.

That other set is the pure and simple Socialist politicians. The Socialist party is their burg; Mr. Wanhope their gubernatorial standard bearer in this State, in this campaign.

To the pure and simple Socialist politicians the workingman's wretchedness is only a commodity to traffic in. In that way they exploited Haywood and dumped him soon as squeezed out. In that way they would exploit Preston also. Just now, however, the pure and simple politician imagines there are more votes and consequent renown and shekels in ignoring Preston, and consequently they allow him to languish neglected in a dungeon, and heap upon the dauntless champion of his Union and his class the insult of "the man Preston."

Mr. Wanhope let his own and his party's convictions out of the bag when he used the language of the capitalist class in designating a victim of class "justice." His own and his party's convictions are:

"That man Workingman' is good only to reach political jobs by."

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

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