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EDITORIAL

GREAT EVENTS AHEAD IN GERMANY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

AT last events in Germany begin to “look like business.” If this is so, then the feudal-bourgeois Empire is on the eve a social revolution—a revolution in which the bourgeois, powerfully aided by the Social Democracy, will take a long step towards, if it does not actually complete the revolution of its class—the revolution that finishes with feudalism and enthrones capitalism.

For several weeks there has been great excitement in Germany over the Kaiser’s “personal rule,” such as was manifested by the late indiscreet interview with a British paper. Fiery speeches were held in the Reichstag by radicals and Socialists, and language not at all “parliamentary” went up from the masses. All this was of little weight in itself. It might be a purely sentimental ebullition. Like all sentimental ebullitions, it would be hardly more than a straw fire. Like powder in a gun, effective only when loaded with ball, sentiment is only fury and noise when not loaded with material or class interests. Only two classes can furnish the ball, so to speak, to the powder of the sentiment that has been boiling in Germany. Those two classes are the bourgeois and the proletariat. How little weight the class interests of the proletariat furnish to sentiment in face of still enthroned feudalism, the situation in Germany has long been a proof of. The only class that could furnish the ball is the bourgeoisie. Up to the 19th instant there was no evidence of this. The evidence is now in court. Openly do now such bourgeois newspapers as the *Rhenish Westphalian Zeitung*, together with many others, not only denounce the Emperor’s conduct, not only indicate they do not trust his promises of good behavior, not only call upon the Reichstag “to take up the contest” and “drive it to a victorious end,” but proclaim that their “ECONOMIC INTERESTS” are involved.

Such language sounds like “business.” It is a decisive symptom of great events at hand. Germany, a country that has made such rapid progress in capitalism

during the last generation as to vie with England, could not long continue in feudal shackles. The “economic interests” of German capitalism are endangered by a feudal ruler. That German capitalism has reached the end of its patience now seems clear. The martial tone of the bourgeois press portends the end of the feudal regime in the Kaiser’s realm.

Such a consummation is of vastly deeper moment and consequence in this generation than it would have been a generation ago. Triumphant capitalism, unhampered by feudal mannerism, clears the way for the Social Democracy to organize itself and move in the manner that its stout heart has long been panting after.

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

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