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EDITORIAL

## SERVING THE DEVIL IN GOD'S LIVERY.

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**T**HE task would seem impossible of so framing a Presidential annual message to Congress—covering not less than forty-four different heads, and extending over almost twelve long and closely printed newspaper columns—that the performance can be summed up in one short sentence. President Roosevelt has accomplished the feat; and the sentence it can be summed up in is “Serving the devil in God’s livery.”

—Corruption in the Government is breaking out in such manner that the President, putting on God’s livery, feels constrained to admit its development “in the immediate past” to a degree in excess of the “whole preceding century.” Corruption is not indulged in for pleasure. Man is no more naturally corrupt than he is naturally a cannibal. Place him, however, where without corruption he runs the risk of sinking, he becomes corrupt on the same principle that he will slay and eat up his fellow man when the alternative is that, or starving. The privately owned Trust congests wealth in private hands. That implies the danger of the private hand losing it. Wealth is the creature of society, it is a creeping-vine. It must twine and cling on political institutions for support. Where wealth production is private in a democratic political framework, there is no choice but corruption, rampant—as rampant as the luxuriant vine twists around trees and trellis-work for support. Corruption in the official life, called government, and in the unofficial life, called the factory, etc., is unavoidable where both the machinery of production and of government are not democratically framed and conducted. This notwithstanding the President’s recommendations are literally a serving of the devil. He pretends to expect to stamp out corruption by larger appropriations, that is, larger corruption-promoting measures, to “prosecute the criminals.”

—The equality of Labor and Capital is a fiction. It is worse: it is a swindle. The

poor have not the means to raise themselves; the empty pockets and stomachs are no match for the capitalist. This notwithstanding, the President, again putting on God's livery, struts forward as the paladin of Labor; and then does the devil's service by demanding legislation that shall furnish more jobs for appointees of his plundering class to trample on the working class with injunctions.

—A Capitalist country is an aggregation of capitalists seeking to compete with similar aggregations in other countries. In the home competition acts of physical violence frequently are resorted to, like the burning down of competing concerns by the Standard Oil.

In the competition abroad physical violence is the rule. It is called war. This notwithstanding, the President, donning God's livery, prates of peace and "international arbitration," while in the same breath he recommends extensive extensions of what? Public concert halls, where "Home, Sweet Home" is to be permanently sung? No! Extensive extensions of the military and naval establishments.

—Capitalist governments are committees of the ruling wing of the capitalist class. Law is but the club that such bodies use only when it can be used against others; it is left alone, or thrown aside when it interferes with the ruling set's interests. This being thus, the President rigs himself out in the trappings of "obedience to law" and kicks the Spooner isthmian canal law into the gutter, by ignoring its orders, and, crowning the infamy, makes a canal treaty of his own, the only result of which will be the looting of {the} Federal Treasury to the tune of \$40,000,000, cash to a bogus company, and untold millions more in the pretence of building a canal in Panama, where the country will sink like a mastodon in the mire.

And thus, through the long list of subjects, the devil is served in God's livery—fully typifying the devil class of capitalism that the President is the strenuous type of.

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

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