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EDITORIAL

PUT HIM UNDER OATH!

By DANIEL DE LEON

IN the course of his “The Man with the Muck Rake” speech, delivered on the 14th instant, President Roosevelt referred to Moyer, Haywood, Pettibone and St. John as “labor leaders implicated in murder”. If a hod-carrier uses such language his lack of schooling might disable him from appreciating the meaning of the words “implicated in murder”; if the term is used by a child it is discounted on the same principle. It is not so with President Roosevelt. Making all necessary allowance for the superficiality of the gentleman’s acquirements on any of the multitudinous subjects, which, in the flippancy of his make-up, he is ever ready to tackle, it can not be denied that he knows English. He is a writer of books—such as they are, in point of substance; their diction, however, is correct. Such a man understands, at least he must be held responsible for the words he uses. To say that a man is “implicated in murder” is to pronounce the man guilty of murder; it is to bear witness against him. The laws, that the experience of the race has established on the subject of witnesses, require them to be sworn in. The oath, under which a witness is put, renders him amenable. If from the facts in the case and the facts drawn from him on cross examination it transpires that he testified falsely, civilized society demands that the witness change seats—that, from the witness stand, he be transferred to the prisoner’s dock, under indictment for perjury. Without a witness is put under oath, his testimony is worthless. Put Roosevelt under oath—and then? Why, then, a first class case of perjury will be on against that pace-setter of capitalist lawlessness.

There are those who have prophesied that Mr. Roosevelt, ably assisted by the swarm of hungry flatterers who surround him, will yet break his own neck. He has disgraced humanity by applauding the murder of women, children and wounded foes in the Philippines; he has outraged human conscience by condoning the brutal

treatment of a lady in his ante-chamber and, like a Tartar tyrant, proceeding to promote the menial who superintended the outrage by appointing him Post Master of Washington; he has debauched the public service by appointing a crony on the Panama Canal to create “public sentiment”, to the tune of \$10,000 a year, in favor of his crazy scheme; he has promoted crime by appointing at least two convicts, one of them a murderer, to federal offices in the West; he has scandalized the public conscience by dismembering the territory of a sister Republic, the integrity of whose territory was guaranteed by treaty with the United States; and now he caps the climax by placing himself outside of the pale of organized society in that he has violated that commandment that forbids the bearing of false witness against one’s neighbor, and thereby has broken them all.

Let Roosevelt be put under oath, and then repeat the lie that Moyer, Haywood, Pettibone and St. John—all four honorable men, men the latchets of whose shoes he is not worthy to untie—are “implicated in murder”!

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

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