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EDITORIAL

SOCIALISM NOT DESIRED?

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IN an address delivered before the Union League of Chicago on Saturday, Washington's Birthday, Governor Hughes of New York uttered himself in the following words:

“The people of this country do not desire Socialism even as an experiment.”

These words again serve as a flashlight illuminating the position occupied by the Hughes class under our Government. That position is one of class ruling class.

The employing class has so long been used to the privilege of legislating in its own interests that it almost believes that only itself has the power of making the laws. In line with this belief it has in the many campaigns decided what legislative measures are of “public concern.” It has decided that Tariffs or Anti-Tariff are the particular issues of the day; or that Silver and Gold, Trust and Anti-Trust, or Imperialism, were the questions for the country to consider. And with the aid of its press, professors, and politicians, it has so far handed out the “paramount” issues to voters. Thinking that what has worked so far will work forever, it seeks to determine itself whether or not Socialism shall be presented to the people for a decision. And Mr. Hughes has already decided that the country does not want Socialism.

But this position will avail the Hugheses nothing. No more than the determining of the question of the “Rights of Man” lay with Louis XVI and his courtiers; no more than the question of “these States are of right free and independent” lay with George III; no more than the overthrow of the Russian autocracy lies with the Czar—so much and no more does the question of granting Socialism lie with the capitalists.

And well must the workingman learn this lesson. The words and acts of Mr. Hughes and other public men, be they Republican or Democratic, are spoken and

exerted in behalf of a social and economic order which creates abundance of wealth on one side, and hunger and want on the other. The legislative deeds of those men reflect activities in behalf of measures which leave unlegislated the needs of the workingman. Observe but the present state of the country. The working class gets nothing from the hands of the master class and it never will because the material interests of that class are directly opposed to the interests of labor. The political fight is the reflection of the economic fight, a fight for the product of labor. And therefore the working class dare not look to the Hugheses for salvation. It is not by looking to the powers that be that something will be gotten for us, but it is by looking to ourselves and taking ourselves the public powers that we can get anything.

The Socialist Movement is a historic movement; it is a revolutionary movement, the same as was that of the rising of the small traders and shopkeepers in the days of the titled aristocrats. Not with the governing class rests the decision that the “country does not desire Socialism,” but with the governed class lies that word, and the increasing recognition of Socialism by those “higher up” is the best evidence of the desire of the country for the Socialist regime. Socialism is the growing desire of the working class of the land and no amount of saying nay can hide the fact.

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

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