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EDITORIAL

OUR APPROPRIATIONS FOR REPRESSION.

By DANIEL DE LEON

SOCIALISTS know that the wealth with which capitalist governments are run is taken, not from the pockets, but from the marrow of the working class. A vast difference! Labor being the sole producer of all wealth, and capitalist governments being run by wealth, it follows that these governments are run by the product of Labor. At the same time, seeing that Labor is plundered in the shop, where, in the shape of wages it gets but a small fraction of its product, and seeing, furthermore, that its wages depend upon its own market price, it follows that the wealth with which capitalist governments are run comes, not out of the pockets of the workingman—it never having got so far—but out of the pockets where the capitalist class keeps the plunder that it raises from Labor. It, consequently, is of no consequence how heavily the capitalists lay on the taxes for their government. Once we have a capitalist regime, taxes do not concern Labor, they concern the capitalists. This notwithstanding, it is interesting to watch and see the purposes to which capitalist government applies the taxes. An insight is thereby obtained into the nature of capitalist society.

There is in Congress a bill appropriating \$96,000,000 for the Navy, and in addition authorizing an increase in naval plans involving \$29,000,000—all told \$125,000,000. From a naval expenditure of \$55,953,078 in 1900—only four years ago—the government spent on the Navy \$82,613,034 last year, and now needs and will appropriate the above sum of \$125,000,000!

Nor is this all. More than two dollars, out of every five now raised by taxation, go to purposes of war—for the Army and Navy!

The rest of the computation is obvious. It proves that barring an insignificant fraction, the bulk of the taxes go to powers—OF REPRESSION. Not to the safekeeping of the citizen; not to his enlightenment; not to his comfort;—but to

REPRESSION. This conclusion leads to another, equally obvious, to wit, that the government is a capitalist class government, by the capitalist class and for the capitalist class—consequently and inevitably AGAINST Labor.

Our capitalists need not nor do they seek to repress themselves; our capitalists need and seek to repress just one class—the WORKING CLASS. As the plundered class, the working class has not even property to protect. The property protected and the class protected by our government are outside of the masses—the WORKING CLASS.

There is some little comfort in the thought that the capitalist class is by the very law of its existence compelled to spend such vast portions of its plunder in protecting it. But the comfort turns to gall when one further considers that just as soon as the capitalist class finds the taxation drain on its plunder to increase it tightens the screws upon the working class, lowers the wages, and lays men off to diet their minds into accepting lower wages. Thus plunder leads to heavy taxes; heavy taxes lead to increased plunder—whither?

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

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