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EDITORIAL

TRUMPET BLAST NO. 2.

By DANIEL DE LEON

A CONVERSATION took place, shortly before the dissolution of the Duma, between a landlord and Aladin, the peasant leader of the Group of Toil. The landlord said that the Group of Toil meant to take land without paying for it. Aladin spurned the charge asking: "Are we robbers?" "Well then," replied the landlord, "how about that property of mine in Cherson, which Catherine II gave to my great-grandfather?" "Ah," rejoined Aladin, "for lands which your ancestors acquired without expense, the nation will pay nothing in resuming control of them. You will lose your property without indemnity. Justice wills it."

Elemental justice dictates that what is got for nothing deserves no indemnification. Doubly elemental justice commands that what is got by violence, whether the violence be committed directly or indirectly by a Catherine II, or any other class ruler, not only deserves no indemnification, but the holder, being a holder of stolen property and an abettor of crime, may thank his stars if he is not punished. What is true of land is true of all wealth, all wealth being the yield of land. What is true of land is, consequently, true of capital, capital being only a portion of wealth, that portion that is used for producing more wealth.

The capital of the country to-day partakes essentially of the ethic quality of land, seized by a Catherine II and bestowed upon the henchmen of her rule of rapine. Capital is the accumulated plunder levied upon the working class by the capitalist class. Even if the "original accumulation" with which the capitalist starts on his plundering career is not, as it is in 999,999 cases out of 1,000,000, the fruit of some act of fraud or violence, even then the capitalist has long consumed it with his wives and fellow debauches. What to-day he holds, whether for further consumption, or as capital for production, is held, in the language of the Russian leader of the Group of Toil, "without expense," and, again, in the language of this

spokesman of the disinherited class of Russia, for such property “the nation will pay nothing in resuming control. Justice wills it.”

The first trumpet blast from the Russian revolutionary camp announced: “Whose the sweat, his the property.” This second trumpet blast matches and supplements the first. These be trumpet blasts that will be heard the world round, and will raise a gale before which the walls of the capitalist Jericho will crumble like ashes.

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