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EDITORIAL

THAT INCORRIGIBLE WORKINGMAN!

By DANIEL DE LEON

COL. E.M. Weaver, chief of the division of militia, has tacked the latest count to the indictment that the class of the Plunderer has drawn up against the class of the Plundered. Nay, the Colonel has tacked two fresh counts.

In his report to the chief of staff Col. Weaver bemoans the “unfriendly attitude” of the Unions towards the militia; “even the teachings of patriotism,” he complains, “are of no effect; even when it is shown that the sole purpose of the militia is the maintenance of law and order,” the workingmen very generally decline to join the national guard.

Truly, the workingman is an unregenerate, and is unregeneratable. So spineless is his sense of patriotism that he declines to kneel down and, kneeling, hug the guns that have riddled the breasts of his brother workingmen at many a strike for a living wage; so obtuse is he that he fails to identify the “law and order,” which suits his exploiters, with the law and order that suits him and his exploited class, and he declines to shoulder a gun under the command of a political-military agent of the employing class. Hopeless workingman whose skull is so thick that all such preachments of “patriotism” and “law and order” leave him untouched, unallurable for the militia!

This should be a bad enough count in the capitalist indictment of the workman. Col. Weaver follows the first with a second. After having graphically depicted the hostility of the workers towards the militia, and having quite pointedly indicated the reason therefor, the Colonel expresses the opinion that the way to overcome the hostility of the Unions for the militia is to establish a State Constabulary upon which to devolve the duties of smashing strikes, or, in the Colonel’s own words, of “preserving law and order,” whereupon, the Colonel opines that the militia not

being for some time called upon to “shoot to kill” workers on strike, the workers change their opinion, will “look upon the militia as a force of national defence,” and will acquire love for and forthwith troop again into the old ranks of the National Guard. In other words, Col. Weaver takes the workingman for an idiot. Nothing short of idiocy would help along the trick of making the militia look innocent just long enough to entrap the workers under the military command of the selfsame political military agencies of the Class of the Plunderer.

And there you are:—the workingman is not only “unpatriotic,” he is also an “idiot”; you can not warm his heart with preachments of his duty to the Class that rides him, and he is idiotic enough to be cajoled back into the militia by a trick;—so reasons Col. E.M. Weaver, chief of the division of militia.

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