

EDITORIAL

THE SULZER BILL.

By DANIEL DE LEON

REPRESENTATIVE William Sulzer of New York has now before the Senate a bill demanding the creation of a new Federal Department, that is a cabinet office.

The bill recalls the mold in which was cast the Representative's speech delivered about two years ago, and at the time commented upon in these columns.

The gist of the speech was that Congress is the servant of and should execute the will of the people in "all the people's legitimate demands." Representative Sulzer left unexplained what right a body that he recognizes as "the servant of the people," to determine what is a "just demand" and what is not, and to grant the one and refuse the other. The mold in which the speech was cast was the mold of class-rule.

Now to Representative Sulzer's bill—

The bill provides for a Department of Labor, and explains its purpose in these words:

"The purpose of the Department shall be to foster and promote the welfare of wage earners, to improve their working conditions and advance their opportunities [now, mark!—opportunities for what?—for emancipating themselves from the wage slave status of the wage earner? 'No!'] for profitable employment."

He who says "wage earners" refers to members of a class that is a slave class. Individuals thereof may lift themselves, exceptionally out of that into the master class; some other individuals, as, for instance, the officialdom of the Civic-Federationized A.F. of L. may succeed in reaching comfort as the price of acting as bell-wethers against their own and in the interest of the capitalist class;—nevertheless, as a class, the wage earner is a slave, and as such, economic law dooms him, under capitalism, to ever worse conditions of economic dependence.

Such being the undeniable status of the wage earner, bills, the purpose of which is to advance the wage earner's opportunities for profitable EMPLOYMENT are bills that proceed from the premises that a wage slave class is a permanency, and that the best that the circumstances allow is to pad the yoke of "employment" with the padding of "profitable"—a back-number idea.

Representative Sulzer surely means well. But to "mean well" is not enough. A Representative of the people should also "know well." Our New York Representative not only knows not well, he has learned nothing since his speech above referred to.

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