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## Hazleton—New York.

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**L**et not external appearances conceal behind different external forms the identity of purpose that underlies the conduct of the capitalists in the Hazleton Sheriff's posse revelation, and in the New York Seth Low movement for "good government."

Sheriff's posses, intended to brow-beat the workers, have proverbially been recruited from the lowest of the lowest ranks of society; noted ruffians and toughians, dissolute, reckless characters were uniformly picked out for service; the more tainted the man the better chance he had for the job. But they cost money. These "unwashed" men, with the instinct of all menials, knew that they were chosen to do a dirty work, needed by their "washed" paymasters, a work that these would not like to do themselves, for the sake of appearances. They, accordingly, demanded big pay, and frequently became insolent, thereby inflicting upon their paymasters additional expenses. Like all mercenaries, they were ugly birds to deal with; they were a double-edged tool: one edge turned in the direction wanted, the other a source of perpetual danger to their own capitalist employers. The old style Sheriff's posse{s} were expensive affairs. The composition of the Hazleton Sheriff's posse reveals the fact that the capitalist of that region realized the difficulty, that they determined to remove it, and how they put their determination through:—the Hazleton Sheriff's posse was made up, not as formerly, from the toughian class, but from their own, the capitalist class. The Hazleton capitalists, rather than stand the expense of hiring assassins, and the trouble thereof, now did the work themselves—they saved just so much money.

Turning to New York, what does the Seth Low Citizens' Union mean? New York capitalists, as capitalists everywhere else, need the legislative, executive and other public powers. Through those channels they secure the legislation they need for themselves, and, furthermore, prevent being brought to account for the crimes and wholesale violations of law that they are continually committing in the interest of their class. Hitherto they left this dirty work, the work of politics—the seeing to it that laws, suitable to themselves be passed, and that their crimes be pigeonhanded—

to the professional politicians. Thus the Tom Platt Republican machine and the Tammany Hall Democratic machine answered, in politics, to the work of the roughs in the Sheriff's posses. The parallel is exact. Just as the roughs knew their value to their real employers and made these pay for them, the Tom Platt Republican and the Tammany Hall Democratic politicians, found out THEIR value to the criminal capitalist class and made this class pay through the nose for the services they rendered to them. If the capitalist needed legislation, it had to be bought from the machines; and, worse yet, the machines would initiate the extortion of money from the capitalists by introducing unfavorable legislation, that had to be bought off, or threatening prosecutions that had to be hushed up with good round sums. We know of no New York capitalist who, but for these machines, would not be in the penitentiary. Now, then, a goodly number of these "washed" worthies have got tired of being bled in this way—just as their Hazleton pals got tired of being bled by posses. They want to secure all the rascal legislation they need, and to continue their career of crime without having to pay blood money to the crew of political mercenaries of the Platt and Tammany Hall machines. This is all there is at the bottom of their "good government" cry. And they have banded themselves into a party to enforce their programme.

Thus the New York class-conscious political organization of capitalists—the Seth Low Citizens' Union—, and the Hazleton Sheriff's posse throw valuable light upon each other. The two mark a development in capitalist methods: the overthrow of the bribe-taking mercenary and the advent to power of the former bribe-giving capitalist, who henceforth would save the funds formerly expended upon his hired men and do his dirty work himself.

The class-conscious proletariat takes note, and with emphasis declares:

"Down with both the bribe-taking heelers of Capital and the bribe-giving Capitalist himself. Smash them both with the 'Arm and Hammer' of the S.L.P. ballot."

[Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.](#)

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