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EDITORIAL

SALVE, ROOSEVELT, CANDIDATE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

FROM Porto Maurizio the despatch came at the time that Roosevelt is to be a Presidential candidate in 1912; subsequent events tend to confirm the Porto Maurizio despatch.

Very likely; and proper, too.

Socialism roughly divides the classes into three—the capitalist: he who holds sufficient property to defy competition; the middle class: he whose holdings are so small that they are ground down in the competitive strife; the proletariat: he whose only holdings consist in his labor-power, in other words, his own hide, which he is forced to take to market for “a tanning,” as Marx puts it.

Of course, the line of demarcation between these classes is not, can not, be hard and fast. The one shades imperceptibly into the other next to it. All this notwithstanding, there are pretty clearly marked subdivisions within these classes, especially the highest and the lowest—subdivisions, that, at times, require special consideration. It is so with regard to the subdivisions of the capitalist class, without which distinction Roosevelt, rather than Rooseveltism, may fail to be understood.

The Capitalist Class, as a whole, is to-day traversing a period much like that which the feudal class traversed in England at the time of the War of the Roses, or, in France, at the time of the conflict between the Burgundians and the Armagnacs. The feature of the conflict in both instances was the desperate effort, on the part of the Barons, that is, of the powerful feudality below the Crown, to assert themselves against the upper feudality vested in the Crown itself. In two such camps is the modern capitalist class of America now divided—the Plutocracy, on the one side, corresponding to the Crown, and on the other, powerful capitalist forces corresponding to the Baronial feudality. In order to facilitate the understanding of the picture, and summarize the situation,—the “Stalwarts” are the retainers, with

Aldrich and Cannon as the chieftains, of the Crown, or modern Plutocratic Interests; the “Insurgents” are the men-at-arms, with Theodore Roosevelt as the Warwick, or Burgundy, of the modern Baronial Capitalism.

As in the instance of the feud of the Roses and of the Burgundians and Armagnacs, the Crown Feudality ultimately prevailed—in England, by setting up the “New Monarchy” that started with Edward IV; in France, by setting up the “New Monarchy” that started with Louis XI;—so with us ultimate triumph is bound to remain with the Plutocracy. In the meantime and until then, just as in France and England, the fortunes of the battle royal in America may be expected to swing hither and thither; and, so long as undecided,—just as in England and France the center of the stage was then held by some portentous figure in the Baronial camp that eclipsed the Crown: Burgundy in France, Warwick in England—so may a corresponding figure in the camp of Baronial Capitalism, adapted and modified to our own days, be looked for here to hold the centre of the stage to the eclipsing, until the final triumph of Plutocracy. Such a figure is Theodore Roosevelt.

From the time Roosevelt rose above the horizon, as Police Commissioner in this city, the man betrayed the physical, mental and moral features which have since developed into fullness in the course of his career as Rough Rider, San Juan Hill braggart, Governor of this State, Vice-President and finally President. These features are marked by an internal contradiction—refined spurts and coarse habits; mental flashes and brutish practices. Roosevelt is a social mongrel—hind quarters, so to speak, beast; fore quarters, so to speak, domestic animal; neither all Galba or Domitian, nor all Theodosius or Constantine. And that is just the man to typify the baronial interests of to-day, or Insurgentism.

What may be called the modern Baronial Capitalist is a mongrel. Although like the petty bourgeois, he wants capitalism but objects to be pricked by its thorns, wide and deep is the chasm that separates him from the petty bourgeois, or Middle Class, generally. The class of the petty bourgeois is a stunted, undeveloped class. The Baronial Capitalist has developed beyond the petty bourgeois stage: he has capacities for Crown-Capitalism: might crow into fitness to fill the throne himself. But so fully developed is Crown Capitalism by this time that it blocks the Baronial Capitalist’s path, and would even subjugate him. Hence the abnormality of

Insurgentism: hence its mongrel posture: hence also its Idol.

Insurgentism reflects Roosevelt as its incarnation: Roosevelt typifies Insurgentism. Well may Insurgentism hail him its candidate.

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