

EDITORIAL

THE “TACTICAL BASIS.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

VERY innocent sounds the “practically unanimous decision” arrived at by the general officers of the Army in consultation with the War Department “that there should be a reorganization on a tactical basis as soon as possible.”

Which is the “tactical basis” in contemplation?

Has the “basis” an eye to foreign invasion by water, or by land? Hardly. Europe thinks of no such move on our Atlantic shores. As to Japan, the conflict, that has for some time been confidently predicted by military and economic authorities in Europe, is not likely to choose our Pacific shores for its theater: that theater will lie a good deal further {sic.} West. No more does any danger threaten from Canada, still less from Mexico.

What then is the contemplated “basis”?

It is the centers of industry, and the large arteries of transportation.

Some time ago, upon the hint dropped in these columns by a “Boy in Blue” *People* reader, attention was called to the then movements in the Army. Headquarters were shifted with an eye to strikes; and forces were amassed with an eye to the number of wage earners in the locality. Things seem to have ripened. It is now no longer the case of shifting headquarters, or of amassing a few companies. All that seems inadequate to maturing exigencies. It is now a question of re-organization. Upon that the general Army officers and War Department are absolutely agreed. Differences of opinion there seem to be on minor features of the re-organization plan. What these features are the Washington despatch sayeth not. Nor is it necessary.

There probably is a difference of opinion upon how soon the trouble will break loose;—yet agreement is practically unanimous that preparations should not be delayed.

There is a difference of opinion regarding the relative tactical importance of Chicago, of St. Louis, of New York, of Denver, of Pittsburgh or of San Francisco, with Butte, Boston, Scranton, Detroit or Salt Lake City as secondary tactically. Then also there was probably found some differences of opinion regarding the relatively tactical importance of Mausers or Remingtons, of mountain artillery or field pieces, of Colt pistols or Derringers. Whatever these differences were, all revolved upon a central principle—the concentrations of wage earners who are to be goaded into acts of blind violence, their minds being sufficiently prepared thereto by the Haywoods in conjunction with the papers that boom the Haywoods, and which are thereupon to be crushed.

And that is the point of departure technically cloaked in the term “tactical basis.”

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