

EDITORIAL

RIGHT IS MANCE; OR, FATHER DIETZ'S DILEMMA.

By DANIEL DE LEON

ON the occasion of the recent gathering at Milwaukee of the American Federation of Catholic Societies (Ultramontane), A.W. Mance, a Victor L. Berger Socialist, entered the discussion which took place at a meeting of the Militia of Christ, one of the Ultramontane Societies, and declared that "Socialism," meaning thereby Berger Socialism, "and the Militia of Christ stand for practically the same principles," whereupon the Rev. Peter E. Dietz, the head of the Militia, indignantly repudiated Mr. Mance's assertion.

Mance was right; and he should not need any argument to prove his point. The point can be proved documentarily, by unimpeachable documents, documents that themselves are all the argument needed.

The first document is the Constitution of the Militia of Christ itself, a nicely printed 15-page little 6 by 4³/₄ pamphlet. On its first page the pamphlet has this as its 5th clause:

"Platform: The Doctrine of Industrial Society according to the Encyclical of Leo XIII. on Labor."

The second document is any one of the numerous declarations of Berger Socialism in favor of buying out the Capitalist Class.

The industrial society projected by the encyclical of Leo XIII. is one in which riches, including the necessaries for wealth-production, shall remain in private hands, but the holders thereof shall consider themselves entrusted by God with their holdings to use the same benignly towards the workers and the poor, the former of which, the workers, are to remain proletarians, and the latter of which, the poor, society is always to have with it, and preserve as a Scriptural commandment.

The industrial society projected by the buying out policy of Berger's Socialism is one in which the necessities for wealth-production shall have been transferred by purchase to the Political State, much the same as the Fire Department, and the Post Office, one-time privately owned and operated functions, have since been transferred from "private" to "public" ownership, and the present privately employed proletarians shall be transformed into public employes, patriotically toiling to raise the vast funds needed to pay the interest on the moneys borrowed from the capitalist class, wherewith the purchase of their plants was made.

The close similarity, if not identity of the principles of the Militia of Christ and Berger Socialism can not escape a man of the penetration of Father Dietz. The clear mind's eyes of such a man could not fail to perceive that, altho' the names with which they be christened be different, the social systems that would flow from the two principles would be essentially alike—a Servile State, as the Briton Hilaire Belloc denominated it, in which the property needed for production would be held by a small class, whose members would be wise enough to keep the masses in the cattle-like contentment of a secured sufficiency.

These be truths that do get on one's nerves. No wonder the Mance truth made Father Dietz hot under the collar. It was a truth that forced upon the Father the dread alternative—either pronounce yourself a Berger Socialist, or desert the pastures green (green while they last) of Ultramontane politics.

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