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EDITORIAL

PHENOMENAL WISDOM.

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IT can no longer be a matter of theory what the moving spring is of President Roosevelt's actions, and the cause of his hysterics. At the Lincoln Day banquet of the Hamilton Club in Chicago, Secretary Garfield, one of the President's spokesmen and most impassioned paladins, declared that the President regards the New York financiers as in about the same class with the French aristocrats who "headed off reasonable reforms" and thereby "hurried on the French Revolution." Secretary Garfield then sketched the President as intent upon saving the financiers from the "disagreeable" experience made by the French aristocrats.

That the "financiers" are purblind there can be no doubt. But what shall be said of a Roosevelt who prates about "reasonable reforms" as the means to stop a social revolution?

A social revolution brooks no crumbs. It can not be checked. Its motto is "whole hog or none." Like natural birth, the causes that precede it render it compulsory—with the alternative of a catastrophe. No "reforms" could have stopped the French Revolution. Feudalism was sapped; capitalism had risen. The Revolution consisted in snapping the feudal social bonds which hampered further progress. Was "wisdom" out of question? Not at all. But wisdom does not consist in imagining that the chick, ready to break through the shell, can be continued within the shell by a process of padding, or "reform." Wisdom would have consisted in understanding the law of social evolution, and AIDING IT. The purblindness of the French aristocrats did not consist in the opposition that they offered to oncoming capitalism, their purblindness consisted in their imagining that a social system, which had survived its usefulness, could be prolonged after that. Tested by that test, Roosevelt is not merely purblind; he is blind as a mole.

The only chance of an Old Order when the New Order should follow, is a

catastrophe. The motto “Rule or Ruin” applies here. Instinctively the French aristocrats conducted themselves along correct class lines. Their posture, whether they realized it or not, was “Rule or Ruin.” The Revolution was too strong to be ruined, hence feudal rule fell. So with our “financiers.” Their instinct is the correct class instinct. The “Rule or Ruin” motto is theirs—consciously or unconsciously. And that is the only motto that has any chance of success with those who stand upon the principle that the Old Order of Capitalism should continue. Roosevelt stands upon that principle. But his motto is—“Throw tubs to the whale.” The more tubs are thrown to the whale of a revolution, the more is the revolution encouraged. Whatever may be the result that may await the policy of the “financiers,” the result that awaits the President’s policies will be still more “disagreeable.” The crash that will follow resistance to Socialism, may be and is “disagreeable” to the resisters; but the “disagreeableness,” however sharp, would be short. The crash that inevitably follows upon a tubs-to-the-whale-throwing policy is not short but long-drawn.

Wisdom, to-day, on the part of the ruling class, lies in just one direction—the frank admission that the jig is up; the cheerful submission to the inevitable, by a prompt and unconditional surrender. Only such a course can spare the Ruling Class—both the “Financiers” and the “Roosevelt” wing thereof—the extremely “disagreeable” results that history otherwise has in store for them.

But such wisdom must not be expected. It would be phenomenal.

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

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