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BRYANISM SPELLS BRESCI-ISM.

By DANIEL DE LEON

From North Carolina comes a story of wholesale assassination and suppression of votes that should make glad the hearts of the Bourbon Democrats all over the Union. Organized thousands of “Red Shirts,”¹ armed with Winchester rifles meet every white speaker and either drive him from the State with blows and threats, or give him a royal reception, depending on whether he favors disfranchisement of the negro or not.

These “Red Shirts” are Bryanites and they are practicing the methods of Bresci; they are killing negroes who attempt to register; they are bulldozing white men who disagree with them; they are committing these crimes so as to insure the successful perpetration of another crime: robbing the negro workingman of the franchise.

None the less brutally, but more skillfully hidden behind a legal fiction, the Bryanites practiced Bresci’s tactics in Idaho. The double purpose to be accomplished there was to smash the labor unions and thus help the Standard Oil Co., and to disfranchise the miners who were breaking away from the old parties, and thus help the Bryanite politicians, Steunenberg, Sinclair, et al. To accomplish these ends a reign of terror was inaugurated; property was blown up with dynamite; the miners were shot, clubbed and imprisoned in the Bull Pen. Then they were driven by threats and the blacklist from the State.

What Bresci did by retail the Bryan Democracy does by wholesale. Its mouth filled with words of love for the workingmen, it savagely butchers them South and West. From North Carolina to Idaho, wherever it has the power, it imitates Bresci. It does not shoot down the workingmen in Pennsylvania simply because its Republican twin is there for that purpose.

¹ [The “Red Shirts” originated in South Carolina during the gubernatorial election campaign of 1876. They were primarily former Confederates who used armed force to prevent former slaves from voting, thereby ensuring the election of Wade Hampton, a former Confederate army general. Former Confederates organized similar groups to disfranchise African Americans in other Southern states when the federal government started to withdraw its occupying troops and end the post-Civil War Reconstruction era.]

With “Red Shirts” in North Carolina and Bull Pens in Idaho; anarchy rampant; murder and riot the order of the day, the Democratic party stands revealed in its true colors: to the working class, white and black, Bryanism spells Bresci-ism.

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