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EDITORIAL

## HOOK MOUNTAIN, AND OTHERS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**A** CORRESPONDENT to the *Evening Post* of March 31, cries out: "Is there no way in which the people can be heard in regard to the saving of Hook Mountain? Is there no way in which their will can prevail against the wanton destruction of the beautiful Palisades North of Nyack? . . . Why should these three wealthy quarry companies (employing less than a thousand men altogether) and a few politicians at Albany be allowed cynically to defy the plainly expressed will of the people?"

These questions are timely. They suggest a whole raft of others just as appropriate; for instance, is there no way in which the people can be heard in regard to the saving of child labor? Is there no way in which their will can prevail against the death and injury in factory, mill and mine of 75,000 workers annually? Why should the Mine Owners' Association and the allied corporations of Colorado and Idaho be allowed cynically to kidnap and judicially murder three Denver workingmen? In brief, the questions raised by the *Post* correspondent suggest the whole social question. On all sides, one sees not only nature, but childhood, life and law sacrificed in the interests of wealthy corporations.

The reason is not far to seek. In an editorial paragraph in the same issue of the *Evening Post*, on French critics of America, we read the following: "There is Mr. Paul Ghio, for example, who, while regarding American institutions as ideally the most democratic that have ever been established, believes that they do not guarantee, but rather threaten, personal liberty. The State is controlled 'by a minority, whose chief care is to monopolize political power, even as it has already monopolized economical power.'" Had M. Ghio said that this minority monopolizes political power because it monopolizes economic power, that the former follows as a logical result of the latter, he would have hit the nail on the head; as it is, his

deflection is quite helpful. The capitalists can do all the pernicious things that they do do, because they control the economic power. They own the land and machinery—the means—on and with which society must live; and owning these means they own society. Does Society evince a determination to throw off this slavery politically, they threaten it, as did Hanna in 1896, with a general shutdown; in a word, with unemployment and starvation. Thus it comes that the people are powerless against the wanton destruction of life and liberty under the present—the capitalist—system. Thus also is there but one remedy for the people—the working class—society. And that is the social ownership and operation of land and capital. Society, if it would live amid natural and social beauty, must take and hold the fruits of its labor, for itself alone, deposing the capitalist class for the vicious and wanton outlaw and despoiler that it is. To balk at this is to bay at the moon and invite a continuance of the hideous system from which all true men and women are endeavoring to escape. Nothing else will stand: Capitalism must make way for Socialism, or retrogression is the penalty.

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