

EDITORIAL

CAULKING UP THE CIVIC FEDERATION.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE bill of the New Jersey Representative in Congress, William Hughes, to establish a commission on Industrial Relations is a cheerful sign of the times—not because the bill, or the idea at the bottom of the bill, is good—both the bill and the idea that gives it birth are bad, as bad as can be—but because the bill is an indication that the Civic Federation finds it needs caulking.

The bill provides for the appointment of nine members. Not less than three of these shall be employers; and three shall be “representatives of organized labor.” What about the other three? Why, of course, they shall be—not because the bill expressly says so, but because, outside of Capitalists and Workers, there is nothing left but—“intellectuals,” “clericals,” “politicians,” etc.

The Hughes panel for his proposed Commission on Industrial Relations follows exactly the architectural structure of the Civic Federation. The Civic Federation has on its board the “Employer,” the “Employed” and the “Intellectuals”—the last set being styled the “Public.”

The Civic Federation was the result, partly, of the correct reasoning that mystic hocus-pocus would no longer stand to keep the Working Class “peaceful”; and partly, the incorrect reasoning that the trick could be done by means hocus-pocus which discards mysticism and affects rationality. Thus arose the Civic Federation. More than ten years the crazy, but mischievous, derelict has been floating upon the waters of the American Social Question. And now comes a bill in Congress that proposes a thing that is patterned exactly after the crazy craft of the Civic Federation.

When the Political Government begins to talk about taking over the private plants of the capitalist class, the move is a sign that economic evolution has loosened the ribs of the craft of the respective plants, and that the same need politico-governmental caulking. That is a cheerful sign. It is the first distinct death-rattle of

capitalism.

Similarly with the crazy craft of the Civic Federation. Started originally as a privateer, the storm of the Labor Movement must have pounded its hull so hard that the political government now finds itself called upon to do some caulking, and it tries to do so by means of the Hughes bill for a Commission on Industrial Relations.

P.S.—The next thing that will need politico-governmental caulking is the Militia of Christ—and President Taft is now at it.

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Uploaded October 2013

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