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EDITORIAL

## THE USES OF HEARST.

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**T**HE decision of Attorney General Jackson of this State—the Hearst Attorney General—to reopen the hearing on whether the ballots cast at the mayoralty election of 1905 in this city shall be recounted, re-opens nothing, to the Socialist. What the decision does to the Socialist is to help keep open a question that is assuming prime importance—the question of the requisite physical force attachment to a revolutionary political party; or, inverting the statement, the question of the function of political agitation in organizing the revolutionary economic organization which the revolutionary political agitation requires as the Might to enforce the Right which it proclaims. Again, stating the matter from another viewpoint, the re-hearing on the mayoralty election returns emphasizes by keeping “the public” nose to the grindstone of a question the settlement of which is tactically of first rank. That question is, What constitutes an effective revolutionary political party, what constitutes an effective revolutionary Union? This question—indeed, these several questions are but one—is engaging the attention of many serious men, all of whom, though earnestly at one as to the goal to be attained, the overthrow of capitalism, entertain honest differences of opinion as to tactics. In view of the fact that unity of aim is not enough for success but substantial unity in methods is also requisite, the Movement can not be too grateful to Attorney General Jackson for affording, by a re-hearing, one of the primest object lessons that should guide the dispassionate revolutionists in the land to a correct conclusion.

The essential facts in the Hearst case are, first, that his political movement, although fatuously imagining that it can save capitalism by “making it behave,” does, in fact, wound capitalism at its vitals by exposing the incorrigible tiger qualities of the tiger, and thereby tearing down the popular superstitious reverence

which that tiger needs for its shield; second, that Hearst was overwhelmingly elected not last year only for Governor, but the year before for Mayor; the third fact is, sticking to the mayoralty, that the elected candidate was not seated and his seat is taken by a candidate who was not elected; the fourth fact is, that all attempts for a recount have been hitherto balked by the capitalist agencies.

The question comes, How was this possible? The answer is obvious: "The Hearst movement was not equipped with an organization to furnish his movement with the physical power to enforce the principles which it proclaimed." The advantage to be derived from the action of Attorney General Jackson would, however, be lost by one half if this inquiry were to stop with the above answer. Important as is the fact revealed by the Hearst case to the fact that all political organization is in the air if not ballasted by the physical power to enforce its pronouncements—important though that fact is, it loses much, if not all, its practical value to the Socialist or Labor Movement if the companion fact to which it points is not also ascertained. That companion fact leaps forward through a question obviously suggested by the first fact itself. That question is this: "If a political party needs a physical power organization to enforce the principles which it proclaims, why not devote all energy to the physical power organization?" The answer to this question also should be obvious. The experience Russia is now making furnishes the facts from which to frame the answer:—"Political agitation enables the revolutionist to preach the Social Revolution in the open, where the masses can be reached; the revolution, that must be preached on the platform of physical force, is thus preachable only in lands such as Russia, where the social institutions are still those of barbarism; in lands where the bourgeois revolution has been perfected and where, as here in America, peaceful methods are, at least, theoretically possible, to adopt the Russian method of agitation is to invite capitalist terrorism. Powerful though capitalism is, and disregardful withal of human rights, nevertheless it can not wholly avoid showing some respect for the Genius of the Age, and keep hands off from the revolutionary agitation that adopts the methods of civilization. But let the revolutionary agitation place itself upon the level of Russia, and the American capitalist will be but too happy to resort to Russian methods of suppression. It will have been given in hand the excuse to do so. From that moment the revolutionary economic organization can

no longer recruit its forces, except athwart the conditions that Russia presents today, and that, there, are inevitable.

The long and short of it is—

The revolutionary political organization that does not drill the battalions of industrial organization is a flash in the pan.

The revolutionary economic organization that discards political agitation commits suicide.

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