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EDITORIAL

TWO NARROW ESCAPES.

By DANIEL DE LEON

NOW that the Spokane I'm-a-bummery is down and out, now that it has caved in so completely that the "treaty" is registered by which it surrenders unconditionally to the Police, yielding every point for which it "fought"—at this time it is seasonable for the proletariat of the land to draw two distinct sighs of relief, each sigh of relief in behalf of an escape, a narrow escape.

While the *Daily People's* admirably accurate Spokane correspondents correctly characterized the leaders in the so-called "Free Speech" and "Anti-Employment Agencies" fights as cold-blooded "grafters," they also more than once referred to many of the rank-and-file as "fanatics." What with the tension that capitalist conditions place upon the nerves of the proletariat, what with the goading practiced upon them by speculators on their misery, and what with the ignorance that capitalism so sedulously trains large masses of them in, the mental and physical state in which not a few find themselves is one that may at any time cause individuals among these specially wretched ones to rush, as a matter of desperation, to the actual dynamite bomb, or some other act of insanity, fruitful of naught but harm to the working class and its Movement. Whatever the vicious methods of the Spokane I'm-a-bum grafters, whatever the condition of their dupes, physical and mental, none took that desperate step.—That was one narrow escape. The danger existed from the start; it grew as the fight grew hotter and more profitable for the grafters; it was not over until the final surrender of the leaders, and its ratification by quiet and order.

In the measure as this danger grew and failed to materialize another arose. Whenever the bourgeois grows impatient for some hot-headed act on the part of its victims, itself commits the act. The manoeuvre is well known in the mining camps of the West. It is not unknown here in the East. Only the other day two meekly-

mysterious bombs exploded mysteriously-meek in Philadelphia. The affair smelled of “bourgeois” all over. Railroad cars have been set on fire by the Companies themselves, during railroad strikes. The “outrage against Law and Order” is no sooner committed than it is charged upon the whole working class. Everywhere the incident is utilized in some way or other to the injury of the wage slave; while, in the immediate vicinity, it gives a handle for some sort or other of butchery. In even step with the bomb explosion’s failing to materialize from among the dupes of I’m-a-bummery, it became due from the secret agents of the Spokane ruling class. It did not materialize from that quarter either.—That was the second narrow escape.

For both these narrow escapes, the Labor Movement, which already has its head sufficiently between the jaws of the Beast Bourgeois, may be thankful to Providence—and, next to Providence, the Labor Movement of the land may be thankful to the Socialist Labor Party’s press, which, alone among all the organs of the Revolution, struck a note, loud, consistent and persistent, that, had either of the aforementioned dangers materialized, stripped the bourgeois of the pretext of claiming that acts of barbarism are the badge of the Proletariat and of Socialism, and, consequently, stripped the bourgeois of any excuse for acting in keeping with the false pretence

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