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EDITORIAL

ALACK, MAYOR DILLING!

By DANIEL DE LEON

“**T**HIS winter on the Pacific Coast is turning out to be the dullest experienced in twelve years—and during that time great progress and advancements have been made by all the cities of Washington”—with these words the *Seattle Sunday Times* of last February 26 starts its reasoning in defense of the newly elected Dilling administration of the city against the imputation that the appalling increase of hold-ups and murders is attributable to it.

The average mind, when coming across such an introduction to such a theme, is sure to receive a slight jolt that will cause it to stop reading and to wonder: In what way can the “great progress and advancement” that all the cities of the State of Washington have made during the winter parry the charge that the new Dilling administration is responsible for the sudden outburst of crime in Seattle?

The average mind, having recovered from the jolt will fall to reading on with keen curiosity. It is then informed that “when, then, 75 per cent of the laboring classes who worked in forests, mills and mines are deprived of all work, they most naturally seek the cities [it seems that the mills of the State of Washington are located in the rural districts], and Seattle to-day has an extraordinary number of that class.” Upon this the average minds divide in two sets—one set made up of non-Socialists, the other of Socialists.

As to the former set they are jolted clean out of their seats. The explanation given why Seattle is now experiencing a “carnival of crime,” despite its goody-good municipal administration, knocks to pieces the theory about municipal elections having no concern with State and National elections. The explanation turns inside-out the plan of starting the Nation’s house-cleaning “at home,” in the city we live in. Like a prick to a soap-bubble the explanation causes the assumption to collapse that the ills of the present system are local not national, accidental not structural. With

all these glittering theories, plans and assumption{s}, that once constituted this first set's intellectual pride, knocked into a heap, small wonder this set should be jolted out of its equilibrium.

As to the second, the Socialist set, being denizens of no fool's paradise; having reasoned themselves up from facts and learned to adjust theory to fact, instead of facts to theory;—as to this set, it knows that the existing evils in municipalities are like pimples that an impure blood pushes through the skin. So knowing, this set chases no will-o'-the-wisps of “municipal reform.” This set understands that not if all the angels and archangels were to descend upon the city of Seattle and take charge of the administration could they brace themselves against the tidal wave of ills that Capitalism, whose citadel is the Nation's capital, raises and causes to dash itself into every nook and corner of the land. This set, accordingly, is not jolted. Far otherwise. This set is confirmed, and says:

“Alack, the visionaries and their Mayors Dilling!”

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