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EDITORIAL

HUGHES' RECOMMENDATIONS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THERE is great joy among the leading Democratic and Republican “Pillars of Law and Order” at the recommendations made by Governor Hughes of this State to the Legislature.

It long has been a favorite theme with the capitalist class that the Courts are their haven of refuge. Governors are good things, State Legislators are good things, Congressmen are better things, still better things are Presidents; these, 'tis true, can all be manipulated in a score of ways; nevertheless they are rather inconvenient good things. They have frequently to be re-elected. As a consequence they are apt to “smile at the populace.” From Roosevelt up or down, such is the experience, and it is an inconvenient experience. But the Courts—that's something else. Their elections are far between; the terms of the Judges are long, where they are not for life. Upon such posts, not reeds, the capitalists feel they can generally lean with greater safety. Hence the capitalists have tried to invest the Courts with even greater sanctity than their Presidents, and have tried to hush up the unpleasant fact that these lumps of sacredness can at any time be impeached by the shorter termed legislators. As a further consequence of all this the trend of capitalist political effort has been for some time to clip the powers of the “short termers” and increase those of the “long termers,” or Judges.

In line with this capitalist tendency Gov. Hughes' leading recommendations are, first, to legislate away from the Attorney General the power he now has to bring an action to try a title to office, and confer it upon the Supreme Court; and, second, to empower the Courts to review the acts of political State conventions. The two propositions, if enacted into law, will operate as buttresses to capitalist political safety. If the actions of a political State convention do not suit the capitalist class; if, for instance, a candidate whom they fear as a “nuisance” is nominated; aye, if a

Socialist convention sets up a ticket that may “draw away votes” from that political wing of the capitalist class which happens to be in power, and thereby give an added chance to the opposite party;—in all such cases the Courts are empowered to “review the acts” of the political convention. What that amounts to need not be gone into. It is obvious.

No wonder the leading “Pillars of Law and Order” applaud. The applause, however, is of the nature of the music that accompanies funeral marches—the funeral march of capitalist rule.

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