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EDITORIAL

## IN NO NEED OF MEN.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**A**MONG the notable facts which appear from the few census returns for 1900 thus far published, may be mentioned the steady decline of the rate at which the population of the United States has been increasing during the past thirty years.

From the foundation of the Republic to 1860, this rate was substantially uniform, varying slightly from 33 to 36 per cent for every decennial period. From 1860 to 1870, owing to the Civil War, the rate fell below 23 per cent, but recovered somewhat in the following decade, when it rose to 30.

From 1880 to 1890, however, despite an enormous emigration which constituted nearly one-half of the total increase of population, the rate fell to 25 per cent. Lastly, in the last decade, it fell nearly to 20 per cent, also despite a large influx of immigrants.

Of this remarkable decline every explanation, except the correct one, has been given by capitalist economists, some going so far as to attribute it to the very immigration without which the decline would obviously have been considerably greater.

The true cause of it is to be found in the capitalist system, under which machinery is used not for the betterment of the human race but for the degradation of the workers.

Under that system, not only a reserve army of unemployed is created, which increases with the increase of production, but in many ways the family is sapped at its foundation.

Vast bodies of single men are gathered in mining districts, or scattered on bonanza farms, while single women in appalling numbers are imprisoned in mills or cast into domestic service. And this is called "division of labor."

With the general fact above stated appears another of hardly less significance. Leaving aside such new States and Territories as Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Oklahoma, etc., where a comparatively large rate represents an

actually small increase of population, we find that with a few exceptions the great manufacturing districts alone show an increase above or approximating the general average for the whole country.

This general average, as already stated, is a little above 20 per cent. In Massachusetts it is 25; in New York, 21; in New Jersey, 30; in Pennsylvania, 20; in Rhode Island, 24; in Illinois, 26; in Connecticut, 22.

But, singular as it may seem, some of the old States noted for their agricultural development, show a rate far below the average. Kansas, for instance, does not reach 3 per cent. Indiana does not attain 15. Ohio shows only 13; Iowa, less than 17; Missouri, 16.

Still more suggestive is the fact that the Southern States, which have no immigration and in which the development of manufactures, agriculture and commerce during the past ten years has been on a scale unprecedented in the annals of industry, show also a rate of population increase comparatively insignificant: Virginia, 12; Tennessee, 14; the two Carolinas, 16 and 17 respectively; Kentucky, 15, etc.

With dumb workers of iron and steel, consuming only 8 cents worth, per day, of oil and coal, and obtainable from machine shops on short notice in any quantity desired, why should the capitalist Minotaur trouble himself with such questions as the increase of population? There are now in the world, and there will still be for a number of years to come, many more men and women and children than he can devour.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.

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