

# DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 4, NO. 161.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 1903.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

## ALL HAIL, S.T. & L.A. CONVENTION!

By DANIEL DE LEON

**I**T does not frequently happen that supplementary events occur simultaneously to enable the watcher to see the other by. If that is rare, still rarer is the coincidence of a third event to see both the others by, and, seeing, take warning.

The two mutually supplementary events that are now occurring is {are?} the mass emigration back home, or any-whither, from this country and from New South Wales. The movement which in this country has sporadically sought to gain headway and succeeded only here and there—the movement of pure and simple Trades Union politics—speedily ripened into fruit in New South Wales. There the absurd thing of a “Labor party” grounded on capitalist economics is a reality. The capitalist world being one city, the genesis of the New South Wales absurdity may be imagined from what goes on in this country.

The Trades Union is, knowingly or unknowingly, a breath of the class struggle. Knowingly or unknowingly, when the workers gather in such bodies their action is an afflatus of the irrepressible conflict that portends the complete overthrow of the social system grounded on the principle of the plunder of the workers by the idlers, of Labor by Capital. The peculiar disadvantage of Labor in this struggle—as elucidated in *Two Pages from Roman History*—renders it prone to be switched off the track. Unable to wholly repress the manifestation of the class struggle which consists in the rise of Trades Unions, the capitalist class seeks to switch it off, and is aided in that by the workers’ poverty and lack of information. The result of the two tendencies—the tendency on the one hand, to organize for the class struggle, and the tendency, on the other hand, to switch the Unions off the track—is generally a compromise. The first stage of the compromise is the pure and simple Trades Union, officered by the labor-lieutenants of the capitalist class. This stage is quickly

reached in the English-speaking world. The second stage depends upon the “genius” of each country. The genius of New South Wales produced a “Labor party” in Parliament, at all points the counterpart of the pure and simple Trades Union in the shop:—both are officered by the labor-lieutenants of the capitalist class; both seek to “harmonize the relations of Brother Labor with Brother Capital”; both recognize the “rights of capital”; and both strain to safeguard these rights of the plunderer, while feeling compelled to resist the goad of capitalist exploitation. The position is absurd. It is untenable in the long run. Either the principle of plunder is alone right, and then there is nothing for the wage-slave but to submit and become a coolie; or the principle is wrong, and there is nothing for the wage-slave but to so direct his conduct that every step he takes is but the deliberate precursor of a next and certain step toward the final overthrow of the plundering capitalist class. The genius of New South Wales brought the absurdity to its acme—that “Labor party” of capitalism. By the light of what that leads to—a vast emigration away from the country, and, as the Australian *Globe* asserts, with probable veracity, a marked “decline in the readiness of capital to invest”—may be read the meaning of the vast emigration homeward from this country also. Pure and simple Unionism is as barren as a mule.

The third event, enabling both the first two to be still better comprehended, and a sign of promise, withal, is the Eighth National Convention of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, now in session in Newark, N.J. Like the pure and simple Trades Union, the S.T. & L.A. is an afflatus of the irrepressible conflict between the capitalist class and the working class. Beyond the oneness of their starting point, the S.T. & L.A. and the pure and simple Unionism part company. Differently from pure and simple Unionism, the S.T. & L.A. preserves the direction of its revolutionary birth: it recognizes that the “rights of capital” means the un-righting of Labor; it knows that the two are irreconcilable; it knows that the supremacy of the capitalist class means to-day the steady degradation of the Nation; it seeks not for peace where there is no peace; it tolerates no labor-lieutenants of capitalism in its midst; it is up to the secret that the Labor Question is essentially a political one; it labors on the industrial field for the education of the toiler to enable him to overthrow the system that plunders him. In short, it moves in even step with the

Socialist Labor Party.

When this organization shall have acquired the body, bone and sinew of the pure and simple Union then, altho' capital will not be ready to "invest," yet Labor, that which produces the only element in capital that is worth saving, to wit, the machinery of production, will not take wings. Not self-throttled, as in New South Wales and in this country, Labor will then stay at home, and freed from the incubus of capitalist exploitation, start and remain free.

All hail, the S.T. & L.A. Convention at Newark!

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
Uploaded March 2007