

# DAILY PEOPLE

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EDITORIAL

## DISGRACEFUL!

By DANIEL DE LEON

**F**ROM the beginning of the strike on the Interborough Company down to today, the capitalist press of this city covered itself with infamy. Their headlines bespoke the nervousness of ravenous stockholders whose food is the marrow of the working class; and their editorial arguments were but a mass of sophistry of the sort that prisoners in the dock usually resort to. All this may be said to be, though heinous, still so common on the occasion of every strike of magnitude, that it should not call for special comment. But there was one thing on the occasion of this strike that was never seen before in the capitalist press. Never before was the illiteracy of workingmen made a joke of and a reproach to them, or an argument against them. That happened this time. Strikers' conversations, probably wholly fictitious, were reproduced in the capitalist press, and their lack of schooling, their using "is" for "are," "them" for "those," "nothing" or "anything" and more such grammatical slips, were held up against them, and they were sought thereby to be brought into contempt.

Why did not these papers reproduce the wan faces of these workers' and other workers' children and contrast them with the full cheeks of the children of the capitalists? Why did not these papers reproduce the pictures of innumerable workingmen who are more or less mutilated at work, and contrast them with the full-limbed capitalists? Why did not these papers reproduce the pictures of the workingmen's wives worn out and ill clad, and contrast them with the pictures of the capitalists' wives well-fed and well attired? As well may they have done so: the reasoning would have been identical.

The workingmen are illiterate? Why? For the same reason that their children are wan, their limbs mutilated, their wives overburdened and ill-clad. They are all this because the product of their toil is confiscated under the system of legalized

robbery called capitalism. They are all that because they have to work for a pittance, while the capitalist plunderer lives in idleness or gambles with the product of their toil in the gambling dens called stock exchanges. They are all this because they have to risk their lives or die, while the capitalist lulls in security. They are all this because they can afford no schooling to their children and are themselves taken early out of school to grind out profits for the idle capitalist!

The capitalist press denies the hardships of the workers. But now, when that same press feels the dividends of its masters endangered by the strike, when the valiant stand of the strikers endangers even the charter of the Corporation, that press becomes so villainously violent that it lets the cat out of the bag; it mocks the workers for their illiteracy; it thereby makes an admission that goes to condemn it out of its own mouth.

Infamous capitalism that would mock its own victims!

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

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