

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 7, NO. 111.

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1906.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

CAUGHT IN THE MARXIAN CLEFT STICK.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE class-conscious capitalist press, both Republican and Democratic, presents an aspect of deep dismay. The evidences of the tidal wave for Hearst cannot be wholly misrepresented; the frosty Hughes meetings cannot be successfully heated up. Anguish is depicted on the countenance of every line that reports the trend of affairs.

Why this anxiety? Why this dismay? The aforesaid capitalist elements tire not to ring the changes on Hearst's unclean personality. That is the burden of their "arguments." One would judge these worthies are afraid of the attractive powers of Hearst's personal uncleanliness. Can that be the cause of their dumps? Of course not. The constituency of the State of New York is not a brothel constituency—despite all the lewd and immoral practices of the capitalists. Safe it is to say that no conspicuously unclean candidate could exercise any attractive power worth mentioning, least of all upon the strength of his uncleanliness. As far as Hearst's uncleanliness—or "personal rottenness," as some of them put it—is concerned, that should only make his chances for election null. Why, then, the dismay, the anxiety, the terror that is throwing class-conscious capitalism into a panic?

That is the rub!

Here, again, the genius of Marx throws light across the field.

The capitalist, said Marx, has everything to fear from the Working Class in their ignorance, and everything to dread from the Working Class in their enlightenment.

The Capitalist Class of the land know themselves a lawless class, a bandit class, a felon class. They know themselves the violators of every law, human and divine. Long have they sat upon the lid, and sought to keep down the stench of their

iniquities. The steam of the seething corruption often forced up the lid, enough to allow tell-tale puffs to dash themselves upon the public nostrils. Aided by their strumpet press, the putrid smell was, on all such occasions, smothered in the fumes of brazen denials, or sophistical refutations. But the chemistry of social economics has, like gunpowder and dynamite, explosive qualities. The explosion finally took place—scores of explosions. The lid was burst up and thrown off, and, with it, the class-conscious capitalist forces that held it down, have been hurled into the air heels-overhead. The “Captains of Industry,” long vaunted as superlative lumps of matchless wisdom, stand, without exception, convicted of the cleverness of the foot-pad and sneak-thief only; the “Pillars of Law and Order,” long held up as monuments of patriotic abnegation, stand, without exception, convicted as unconscionable Dick Turpins; the “Upholders of the Sanctity of the Family,” long preached about as paragons of morality, stand, without exception, convicted of all the filth of degeneracy. Trial upon trial, investigation upon investigation, explosive revelation upon explosive revelation has during the last twenty-four months placed upon the pillory the Depews and the Schiffs, the Whitneys and the Thaws, the Mortons and the Rogerses, the Alexanders and the Stenslands, etc., etc.,—down and up the whole row in the rogues’ gallery of the Capitalist Class. With these facts—too numerous to deny; too stenchful to deodorize;—an ominous question, a question with a big Q, raises its ominous head before the startled eye of the exposed class-conscious Capitalist Class. That Question accounts for their dismay, their anxiety, their terror—that Question is, WHAT WILL THE WORKING CLASS DO?

Marx has formulated the answer in advance. That Marx formulated the answer right; that the answer is planted upon a solid understanding of the economic-social facts, which alone can serve as the foundation for a correct answer, and that the answer takes in with deep penetration the psychology of the felon ruling class—THAT is proven by the panicky temper of our class-conscious capitalists in this campaign. The answer is—

In the measure that the Working Class is held fettered by the chains of ignorance, which capitalism has shackled the workingman’s mind with—in that measure the indignation of the Working Class will vent itself in undisciplined fury. In that measure the Working Class will troop to the standard of a Hearst. And

then?—then the Temple of Capitalism will be shaken fit to come down crashing upon the heads of the capitalists. The shake-up will do the Working Class not a particle of good. It can only satisfy a feeling of revenge—but it will throw the capitalists all of a heap; any stick, even a capitalist-Hearst stick, will be thought good enough to beat the class-conscious capitalist dog with.

In the measure, on the other hand, that the Socialist Labor Party and the Industrial Workers of the World will have succeeded in shattering the shackles of ignorance with which capitalism has sought to keep down the intellect of the Working Class—in that measure the indignation of the Working Class will be collected into trained blows. In that measure the Working Class will rally at this election around the standard of the Uplifted Arm and Hammer of the Socialist Labor Party, that is carried aloft by the stalwart proletarian Thomas H. Jackson. And then?—then the capitalist thieves' den, class-conscious and un-class-conscious alike, will be seized, the thieves turned out, and the first long step taken in the rearing of the Government of the Working Class.

What but fear can the class-conscious Capitalist Class entertain for the Working Class in their IGNORANCE, what but dread for the Working Class in their ENLIGHTENMENT?

In that cleft stick—long ago outlined by Marx—the organized felony of the land, known as the class-conscious Capitalist Class, find themselves in this campaign in New York.—ten short years after they escaped the dread dilemma of the first Bryan campaign; ten short years after they imagined themselves safe for all time; and now facing, in speedy, and ever speedier succession, a repetition of the agony, until the agony will be over with the final down-fall of Capitalism and the rise of the Socialist Republic.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded May 2009

slpns@slp.org