

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 9, NO. 275.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 1909.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

SAPPERS FOR THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC.

By DANIEL DE LEON

NO one will suspect the New York Gov. Hughes of an intent to demonstrate the Socialist Labor Party doctrine that the Capitalist or Political State is fast becoming an impossibility. Nor can anyone suspect the Louisville, Ky., *Post* of an intent to illustrate by supplementing the point with a cartoon. Nevertheless, that is precisely what these two mouthpieces of capitalism are doing—the former with his lucid speeches on the evils of boss rule, the latter with its even more lucid recent cartoon on Congress and the Tariff.

In his great Buffalo speech recommending “direct nominations”—the speech was great only for the admissions it makes—the Governor said: “In this business [the controlling of delegates] the bulk of the party voters who are necessarily engrossed in the work of life—in providing by their own efforts without aid from the State for the support of their families—cannot hope to compete. So that a few, by the use of present machinery conveniently adapted to their purposes, are able, to a large degree, virtually to appoint public officers, and by exercising this power they fortify themselves for its further use.”

This is true. But this was not always thus. Time was when the “business” of providing for his family did not incapacitate the citizen from the “business” of controlling his political agencies. The original New England town meeting is eloquent upon that head. That time is no more. What is it happened in the interval? The Louisville *Post’s* cartoon answers the question. A robustious dame, wide of girth, heavy of hand, and arms a-kimbo, stands squarely planted in the center of a kitchen. Her apron bears the label “The Tariff.” She frowns browbeatingly upon an apparition at the door. What may the apparition be? A puny, knock-kneed, rickety, frightened and worn-out old man, labeled “Congress,” whom Taft tries to push inside.

The capitalist economic power has out-grown the political, and overtops it. The Political State has shriveled. The capitalist economic power, that grew under the shadow of its political machine, now finds that machine a hindrance. The “business” of the Political State is becoming incompatible with the “business” of the Economic Power. The latter is seeking to crowd out the former—to dethrone it from the throne upon which itself had raised it.

The unquestionable evils that Gov. Hughes points out in political bossism are not to be remedied by the clumsy contrivances or patchwork proposed by the Governor. The harmful “competition,” as he properly calls the thing, between what, to his purblind eyes, are the “political bosses” and the “family providers,” but which, in reality, is a conflict between the superannuated Political and the mightily growing Economic Power—that is a conflict bound to continue so long as the Political State continues. On what side power is gravitating the Louisville *Post’s* cartoon illustrates. And the one and the other combine to demonstrate Socialist doctrine.

Social evolution is rendering incompatible the capitalist, or private ownership system of the plants of production, with the collective system of their operation; hand in hand therewith social evolution is proving the incompatibility of a Political State with the developed or economic powers of society.

The Louisville *Posts* portray in their cartoons a fact, the full bearing of which they grasp no more than a photographic apparatus grasps what it reproduces. The Hugheses are engaged in a work of demolition, the full bearing of which they have as little inkling of as the dullest of “wreckers” realize the architectural beauties of the edifice they are making room for. The one and the other—they little know it—are the sappers, that Social Evolution is providing for the approaching Army of the Socialist Republic.

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

Uploaded August 2010

slpns@slp.org