

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 7, NO. 143.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1906.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

GOOD FOR THE JAP!

By DANIEL DE LEON

OUT, at last, is the secret of the opposition that is rising on the Pacific Slope to the “Yellow Peril” of the Japanese. In coming out the secret covers the capitalist class, including its A.F. of L. lieutenants, with disgrace as a hypocrite class; wreathes the temples of the Jap workingman with laurels; and holds him up to the American workingman as an example worthy of emulation.

The California State Bureau of Labor {report}, recently published, and not intended to flatter the Japs but to furnish justification for maltreating them, contains this passage:

“It is generally conceded that the Jap is merciless when he has his employer at a disadvantage; that he will work cheaply until all competition is eliminated, and then strike for higher wages, totally disregarding any agreement or contract.”

These words should be graven in letters of gold. Being the testimony of a foe, its weight as evidence is prime.

Hitherto the myth was that the Jap was “cheap Labor,” and that it was “in the interest of Labor” to keep out the Jap. It is not wine alone that brings the truth from the bottom of the heart to the surface of the lips. Distress does as much, witness the damaging confession made by the California Labor Bureau. Upon no less an authority than that capitalist department of the Government of California, its Labor Bureau, the fact is now patentized that the Jap is the champion of higher wages, still higher and higher still, aye, that he, of all races, is the champion of the Social Revolution in America. It were silly to reason that the Jap would keep down the wages of others and raise his own only. If the only way for him to receive more

than the pittance that his fellow wage slaves of other nationalities seem willing to abide by, is first to undersell them, and then “mercilessly” to demand higher and higher wages from the employer, he certainly can not be blamed for first rendering his fellow wage slaves impotent for harm to their own class. Obvious, however, is the fact that if the wage slaves of other nationalities were willing to look upon the employer in the light that the Jap workingman does, and also be “merciless,” “contract” or no “contract,” there would be no need of first underselling these. Obviously, the Jap is not humbugged by the swindle of “contracts.” He knows that there is no contract binding upon the capitalist; he knows that “contracts” are but shifts to cheat the workingman; he has no reverence for the cheat; he simply submits to force, temporarily, and when he has the force his working class instincts assert themselves. Obviously, the conduct of the Jap is an example which the Capitalist Class alone need dread. The successfully “merciless” Jap can not choose but set the pace to his fellow wage slaves of other nationalities—emancipate them from the thrall of superstitious awe to the capitalist cheat of “contracts,” and render them as “merciless” towards the capitalist as the capitalist is towards them. At the further end of that line looms the Social Revolution. It is the Capitalist Class that dreads the Jap; the cry of “cheap Labor,” raised by the capitalist, is of a piece with his cry against taxation—cries to enable him to swindle the Working Class into fighting his battles.

The question comes, Who spoke through the tube of the A.F. of L. Convention, held in San Francisco in 1904, when the Japs were resolute against? The obvious answer to the question suggests this other, Can there be any doubt that the A.F. of L. is a spokesman of and the bulwark for capitalism?

It was the Jap that heralded the Revolution in Russia. If not heralding the Revolution in America also, the Industrial Workers of the World is doing that, the Jap in America approves himself a veteran for the ranks of the I.W.W.

Good for the Jap!

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

slpns@slp.org