

# DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 4, NO. 133.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 1903.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

## “JUST FOR A HANDFUL OF SILVER.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HE following is the language with which a certain paper—nameless for a moment—justly castigates the outrage perpetrated in Panama by the American Panama Canal inciters of sedition:

“And all for what? To aid a struggling people? To take a stand for freedom or republican institutions? To avert a danger? No: but just for a handful of silver.”

And what may this paper be? It is the New York *Evening Post*, an organ of the gold-standard, free-trade Democratic party. Leaving apart the peculiar blood-thirstiness of this paper against the working class, it is an uncompromising upholder of the capitalist or wage-slavery system of production. “And all for what?—

“To aid a struggling people?”—Can it be said that a social system under which the struggling working class has to submit to a lowering standard of wages and comforts, and under which the mortality in its ranks increases by leaps and bounds,—can it be said that such a system is in “aid of a struggling people?”

“To take a stand for freedom or Republican institutions?”—Freedom, least of all republican institutions, cannot thrive where increasing masses are pauperized and rendered dependent upon an increasingly wealth-gorged and plundering minority. Freedom is predicated upon economic independence. Where economic dependence increases in depth and breadth freedom flees. And as to republican institutions, the warning of Madison is of force: Economic dependence needs bayonets to keep the dependent masses down: bayonets are no fit seat for the Goddess of Liberty.

“To avert danger?”—An increasing majority loaded down with increasing burdens of toil, suffering and sorrows, never has been a source of safety. The only redeeming circumstance in a commonwealth thus circumstanced would be a parallel

amount of general knowledge to enable the masses intelligently and peacefully to pick their way out, and save the commonwealth the disastrous consequences of “Blindness Enraged.” Such a redeeming circumstance would to-day be totally absent, thanks to the deliberate falsification of truth and even forgery of literature practiced by the mouthpieces of capitalism, the *Evening Post* at the head of the falsifiers and forgers. Where to-day knowledge exists, and to the extent that it exists, it is due exclusively to the Socialists,—the much reviled Socialists, and reviled by the identical falsifiers and forgers.

Obviously, neither as aidful to a struggling people, nor as a promoter of freedom or republican institutions, nor yet as an averter of danger is capitalism upheld by the *Evening Post* and its congeners. What, then, is that done for?

“Just for a handful of silver!”

The Roman augers, so runs the well-known story, never met on the streets of Rome but they secretly laughed to one another. What must not the guffaw be with which the pro-Panama Canal high-priest of capitalist brigandage now greet the hypocritical strut of morality indulged in by their anti-Panama Canal fellow “generation of vipers?”

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