

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 10, NO. 109.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 17, 1909.

TWO CENTS.

FIRST EDITORIAL

TO THE WORKING CLASS OF NEW YORK.

By DANIEL DE LEON

“UNLAWFUL and annoying interference, oppression, lawless force and violence, lawless arrests and imprisonment without any charge of criminal offense, lawless trespass and extortion, dishonesty, and corruption”,—these are literally the charges brought against the government of our city, by whom? By “discontented Socialists”? No! They are brought by the Democratic mayoralty candidate, Judge Gaynor, and they are almost exactly repeated by his Republican opponent Bannard.

The language held both by the Democratic candidate why he should be elected, and echoed back by the Republican candidate as the reason why he should be given the preference, is rather a confession of their own and their respective parties' crimes. It is language that no intelligent man, if he is honorable, can hear without approving, and can not approve without concluding that it is ample reason for defeating both.

Our city government has been off and on in the hands of a Democratic Mayor, and then in the hands of a Republican; and all the time both parties have had a hand in the pie; and all the time the identical class, the Capitalist Class, has been in the saddle. The net results we see are so shocking that they themselves dare not deny, and they themselves are announcing from the housetops—unlawful interference, oppression, lawless force and violence, corruption, extortion.

Let no blind anger carry the voter off his base. The crimes of which the standard-bearers of the two leading parties plead guilty for their respective sets are not the consequence of inherent criminality. These men can do no otherwise. The lawlessness and extortion of which they are self-confessedly guilty they have no choice but to uphold, to continue and to promote. They are but the instruments of their class; the underlying law of their class compels crime.

The fatality of fate that pursues the capitalist class has caused the nomination by its two political divisions of two candidates whose special pursuits betray the miseries that their class breeds and the follies that it upholds.

Bannard, the Republican, is noted as a trustee of the “Philanthropic Pawnshop” in the city.—Why pawnshops, philanthropic or otherwise, in a country of untold wealth produced, and producible in still larger volume? The pawnshop is a badge of distress. Its motto is: “Other people’s sorrows are my opportunity.” The philanthropic mask only renders the thing all the more hideous. As well have “Philanthropic Cholera Microbes.”

Gaynor, the Democrat, announced that he was bound to postpone his resignation from the bench because “there are over 300 cases” in his Court that demand previous attention. The huge number of 300 cases in one single court suggests the many thousand more in the other Courts. What an exhibition of strife! It is a picture of the jungle.

It is not Bannard or Gaynor that the people are confronted with. It is the Gaynor-Bannard class, illustrated by the two—the capitalist class.

Capitalism breeds pawnshops for the masses, and it breeds strife for all.

Under possibilities of welfare for all the Bannard-Gaynor class wastes the workers’ substance. It wastes the wealth that the workers produce and which it plunders from them, and it wastes their lives.—The unhygienic workshops, the nauseous tenements, the “lung blocks” where consumption is bred, the dives of low and high degree by which “respectables” profit as much as their lackeys of the slums, and a system of plunder that leaves the proletariat, always underfed and underclothed, ever at the ragged edge of poverty—these are flowers of the Gaynor-Bannard class, a class, that at the same time crowds the Courts with its innumerable litigations, and that with its embezzlements, forgeries, false returns to government, family immorality and suicides pollutes the social atmosphere.

The Gaynor wing of this class would make it appear that the issue is anti-Hamiltonianism and pro-Jeffersonianism. The Bannard wing of the same class would make it appear that the issue is Tammany. Neither is the issue. The issue is unspeakable Capitalism, in all its unspeakable vileness.

In other ages, when people looked to the skies for help against terrestrial

malefactors, they would, under these hard conditions, imagine that naught short of a flaming sword, wielded by Providence, could bring redress; and a Halley's Comet, now in sight, would be adored as the deliverer. The deliverer lies in ourselves, here on earth.

The Capitalist System of production{,} now nothing but a cancerous sore, must be cut out and cauterized. A social System now is due that will afford to our people the well-being that our advanced stage of production makes possible, and end the era of strife for a living. The Socialist, or Industrial Republic is that for which enlightened men and women of our generation strive.

The party that makes for that goal is the Socialist Labor Party, headed by James T. Hunter for Mayor, and surmounted by the Uplifted Arm and Hammer. The S.L.P. alone deserves support because it alone looks to the right goal and it alone organizes the forces wherewith to reach the goal.

As to the double-headed hydra of the Gaynor-Bannard Republican and Democratic outfit, it seeks to perpetuate capitalism.

As to the Bogus Socialist party, it flies the colors of Socialism, but seeing that, instead of concentrating its propaganda towards organizing the useful labor of the land so as to take possession of the reins of government and overthrow the political State, it only seeks votes for another set of politicians, who, as happened this very year in St. Louis, habitually fuse with capitalist politicians; seeing that it does not drill for the fray; seeing that, being out for votes, any kind of votes, it is all things to all men—except to Socialists, one thing in California, another in Wisconsin, still another in New York; seeing that, in its ignorance and cowardice, it echoes the racial superstitions of the Civic Federationized craft unions;—seeing all this, the so-called Socialist party flies in the face of the International Socialist Movement; it does not, in fact, aim at the Socialist, or Industrial Republic; it is a disturber of the revolutionary forces of the city and land, and, as such, it is an appendage of the capitalist parties, with whom as is natural, it is seen to fuse, and whose methods of corrupt get-rich-quick advertisements its press emulates.

Whatever forces in this city are at all clear on the issue that is before the voters recognize that a vote for Bannard or Gaynor must be a vote of desperation, if cast by any but the plutocracy and its pursuivants; while out-side of politicians who are

fishing in troubled waters, a vote for the so-called Socialist party can be cast only by men whom sound and noise have lured away from their former into the snares of but another set of political dupers.

A vote for the Socialist Labor Party is a vote that promotes that agitation, education and organization, which alone can, and which is bound to put an end to the rule of lawlessness, corruption and extortion which, with fatal candor, the Republican and Democratic candidates admit to be the rule in their own government.

Vote for Socialist Labor Party. Greater New York ticket:

For Mayor—James T. Hunter.

For Comptroller—Henry Kuhn.

For President Board of Aldermen—John Hall.

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Uploaded December 2010

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