

EDITORIAL

## A TIMELY RECOMMENDATION.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**C**onsiderable adverse comment has appeared in the Labor Press on the subject of the “eight line” paragraph, i.e., forty words, with which President McKinley disposed of and dismissed “Labor” in a message of 20,000 words. These criticisms are not quite just.

The Labor paragraph in the President’s message refers simply to the alien contract law. On that subject the President “calls attention to the necessity of some amendment of the alien contract law.” If the President had bestowed all his 20,000 upon that subject alone, he could not have covered it more fully.

“The alien contract law” was one of the “Labor laws” intended to ease the home Labor market. The theory on which it was built was that, by preventing labor under contract to emigrate to America, a restriction would be placed upon the growing supply of Labor at home. It is unnecessary here to point out both the clumsiness and futility of the means to the end. Suffice it to state the purpose. Now, then, the expanded policy of the Government has since then dropped the purpose; indeed, the purpose is now reversed.

Since the expansion or colonial policy of the nation; since the conquest of the Philippine Islands and the consequent dumping into the American Labor market of millions of cheap Tagals, it is evident that, whatever the original purpose really was, a new purpose now sways the American Government, to wit, the purpose of swelling the Labor market at home to its utmost capacity. Can anything be plainer, under the circumstances, than the necessity for some amendment of the alien contract law? That law the “pestilential” Socialists always pronounced rubbish, and with bucketfuls of “billingsgate” they proved it such. Now, however, even the Doubting Thomases must admit that the law has become rubbish. What else but rubbish is a law on the statute book that, although not expressly repealed, has been scuttled by an avowed Governmental policy, backed up at that by 80,000 troops?

Let justice be done where justice is due. The fallen contract law must of

necessity be amended, that is to say, repealed. Brevity being the soul of wit, the President has approved himself a wit of first water.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
Uploaded October 2005