

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 9, NO. 155.

NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1908.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

THE IN-CLASS STRUGGLE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THOUGH the class struggle is getting to pretty well admitted on all hands, except by pulpiteers, who have, for appearance's sake, to keep up a pretence, there is another struggle that eludes general observation. For lack of a better name it may be designated as the "in-class struggle."

The workmen at present engaged on the two sides of the glass workers conflict at Perth Amboy are illustrating this significant struggle, and by illustrating it they are shedding a light upon the tactics that the Socialist Movement demands.

The in-class struggle is the struggle within the proletarian class. Superficial observers tire not of pointing out that "Labor is always quarreling"; and sentimentalists take up the whine, and unconsciously utter a great truth—"If labor were but united!" Unfortunately the truth in this case, being but a lamentation, is barren.

The Movement has already given birth to the observation that The Issue is no longer one between Labor and Capital. For all practical purposes that issue is settled. Only, the fruit-bearing settlement of it awaits the settlement of another issue—the issue of the in-class struggle.

It is not Capital and Labor who are in conflict at Perth Amboy. The conflict rages among the proletariat. One set holds one view; another set another. The former rally to the banner that none shall live but those who are organized; the latter's banner bears the legend that he shall live who can, Union or no Union. The two principles seem irreconcilable. The clash between them will triturate the false that is in both. It will cost life, it will consume years, but out of the struggle will arise wisdom—that wisdom that will enable the proletariat to realize—

First—That the Union is a sacred body only when it is true to its CLASS;

Second—That the Union is not true to its class so long as it is constructed upon

principles that exclude and necessarily must exclude the majority of its class from the benefits it is intended to bestow;

Third—That no Craft Union can be true to its class. Craft Unionism being constructed upon a plan that ignores the fact, long learned by capitalism, that no industry is independent from, but all are interdependent upon one another, Craft Unionism excludes from one organized craft even the other organized ones, hence includes only a trifling number of the proletariat;

Fourth—That only the integrally organized Industrial Union can be true to the proletariat, seeing that that being ONE Union embraces them all in the various subdivisions which the tool they use mark out.

These four cardinal principles are the fine flour that is being ground in the mill of the all-important in-class struggle. In the measure that the flour is ground, the proletariat will grow immune to the practices of the police spy and intriguer; it will grow immune to the ranters, the wind-bags of little knowledge who now, like gad-flies, buzz about it; it will grow immune to the lures of “short cuts.” In the ripeness of time, the flour being all ground, the in-class struggle will cease, and the proletariat will find itself united on the political as on the industrial field—a solid organization.

Will then the battle royal take place between Capitalism and Socialism? Ah, no! The battle will be behind, no longer in front of the united proletariat: it will be over. There will be no battle left to fight.

The real battle, the only battle—that is being fought out now. It is the in-class battle.

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

Uploaded April 2010

slpns@slp.org