

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 10, NO. 351.

NEW YORK, THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 1910.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

\$20,000,000 FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THERE are, or should be, millions worth of food for thought to the “anti-cataclysmic” gentlemen and ladies who scheme to raise funds in order to buy out the capitalists, in the settlement just effected between the legal department of the State and the railroad and traction companies.

For upwards of ten years a large number of franchises in this State were derelict in the payment of their taxes. Called upon to fulfill their obligations, they offered so ridiculously small an amount that the State officials refused to accept, and cases were started. The companies hotly contested every possible point. In this way year after year passed. Finally a “settlement” was reached—not with all; the New York Central and the Manhattan Elevated are still out—and the upshot is that to this city alone the sum of \$20,000,000 was paid as due on the back and present taxes.

The sum of \$20,000,000 withheld taxes, and finally wrung from the traction companies in just one city, is a pretty fair medium with which to gauge the real indebtedness of the capitalist class to the government under whose shield they do business, and from which they receive protection through police, sheriffs, militia and courts.

Furthermore, the \$20,000,000 guilt of withheld taxes allows a peep into the fathomless depth of guilt reducible to dollars and cents in other directions. It is safe to say there is not a capitalist concern, of any real magnitude and standing, and which deals in something or other that the people require, which is not deeply in debt to the people, so deeply that, were the debt to be paid, then, even if the respective property were taken still the firm would be in debt.

Pay the capitalist class? buy it off? and that in the name of equity? He who demands equity must come into court with clean hands. Which of all these capitalist

concerns could do so? Which of them all, if it paid all the taxes it has cheated the government of including the interest thereon; if the watered stock with which it has swindled the law were wrung out; if it paid all the fines, which its fraudulent practices have earned for it, according to the law which it so loudly affects to worship;—which of all these capitalists would have as much as a nickel coming to him? The revelations, in figures and facts, made by Insurgentism in Congress, justify the answer: “The capitalist who would escape conviction and imprisonment would be a rare bird.”

“Cataclysm” sounds big and ominous—it scares the chicken-livered only. Tender-handed surgeons make malodorous wounds.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded June 2011

slpns@slp.org