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EDITORIAL

VOTE IT DOWN!

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE State Senate passed on the 15th of this month the Assembly bill proposing to amend the State Constitution so as to increase the salaries of State Senators from \$1,500 to \$3,500 and of Assemblymen from \$1,500 to \$3,000, and allowing legislators weekly mileage from Albany to and from their homes, instead of annual mileage as at present. The proposed amendment having passed both the last and the present Legislature, it will be submitted to a vote of the people at the election next November.

Upon what plea can this 100 per cent raise, and more, be justified?

The cost of living has gone up. That's true. But it has gone up no 100 per cent. Moreover, the salaries previously paid were a generous remuneration for the few months spent at Albany by gentlemen, all of whom are left with time enough to attend to their private business, and to most of whom incumbency as legislator is a money-fetching advertisement.

Has, perchance, the quality of our legislators' work improved, thereby, deserving a higher price? Emphatically, no. Not a measure has the Legislature passed calculated even remotely to ease the ever heavier burden borne by the State's proletariat.

With an increased cost of living, which amounts to a decreased wage, the life of the workers of this State has sunk in the scale. Have the legislators attempted even to pour balm upon the ache?—Not in the slightest.

What labor laws are on the statute book safeguarding the worker's life and limb have been repeatedly repealed by our Courts, non-suiting the workingman or workingwoman plaintiff, or setting aside a jury's verdict as "excessive." Only yesterday, on the 24th of this month, the Court of Appeals declared "unconstitutional" the Compulsory Workmen's Compensation law. Have our

Legislators, or anyone of them, ever risen in their seat and demanded the impeachment of the Judge who arrogated to himself legislative function?—Never once. Indeed, these legislators relied upon the Courts to do for them what they, fearing the workers' resentment at the polls, did not dare to do themselves.

Just now, with the country at the verge of war, driven there by the mad law of Capital's existence to buttress every million with four others, and each of these with eight more; just now, when the displaced in industry, who have been forced to hire themselves as soldiers, are threatened to be hurled against their Mexican brothers to bleed and die; just now, which one of all our legislators has raised his voice demanding the impeachment of the President for playing fast and loose with our people's lives like so many dice shaken and thrown for gamblers' stakes?—Not a mother's son of the whole batch.

Raise the salaries of this crew? Spend time to amend the State's Constitution on such a trifle when more important defects in that charter call for amendment? It is a case of adding insult to injury.

Vote down the proffered insult!

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