

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 13, NO. 184.

NEW YORK, TUESDAY, DECEMBER 31, 1912.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

GLINT OF THE BAYONET.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THERE is a good deal in the proposition that is to come before the New Jersey Legislature for the appropriation of \$50,000 to defray the expenses of sending to the inauguration at Washington on March 4 the entire National Guard of New Jersey.

There is in the proposition matter for more than the contemplation of the contrast of starvation among New Jersey's working girl proletariat and the squanderous luxuriousness to be indulged in by that very State at the inauguration of her "favorite son" President of the United States. A good deal more.

In the first place, the \$50,000 is to be plumped into the pockets of the capitalist class, railroad stockholders especially and in particular. Perhaps there be some noodle, utterly besotted with the mystification that the more his exploiter makes all the more will he get, who may fancy that in some unexplained manner portions of that \$50,000 will leak through into proletarian pockets. Fact is, not a copper will. Proletarian acquisition of wealth is ruled by the market law of prices. Appropriation, or no appropriation, the wage earners' wage will depend wholly upon the supply of them in the labor-market. That \$50,000 appropriation is, to use the Wall Street phrase, a "melon" to the railroad stockholders—just so much grist to their dividends, not a penny more to the railway employes. On the contrary. The suddenly increased traffic will mean to them only intensified labor,—just so much more labor-tissue spent free, gratis and for nothing.

In the second place, the \$50,000 appropriation does not represent a mere outburst of wasteful display on the part of one set of capitalists towards another set. There is no wastefulness about it; at least, the appropriation is expected to be a good "investment"; not an "investment" in the ordinary sense of making more money, but an "investment" in the sense of protecting the present holders of wealth

in their holdings. It did not need the admission of the New Jersey Assemblyman Leon R. Taylor, who will be Speaker of the Assembly, that the sending of the entire guard would “stimulate interest in the body.” The investment is intended to help overawe the plundered class. It is meant as a demonstration, and a hint to other States to join the demonstration,—a demonstration of Force—a warning of what is in reserve for Discontent—the glint of the bayonet as a foretaste.

Finally the \$50,000 proposition comes, not from a Democrat, or other supporter of the President-elect. It comes from Assemblyman Nichols, a Republican. Having done their best to seize the reins of government in behalf of their own Republican wing of capitalists, the Republican exploiters of the working class are ready to do the next best thing—strengthen the arm of whatever capitalist faction succeeded in securing the reins of government—strengthen that arm against “the common enemy,” to wit, the Working Class, the majority of the nation’s citizen voters, the still larger majority of the nation’s citizens without a vote, and the overwhelming majority of the nation’s population. A good strong forest of bayonets, shining in the sun, is, at least is expected to be, a strengthener of the Arm of the Ruler against the insolence of the Ruled.

That \$50,000 appropriation, for a military display at next Inauguration Day, is a thing of “many-sided beauty”—the beauty of the Fools’ Paradise among the lot of other beauties.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded May 2014

slpns@slp.org