

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 2, NO. 183.

NEW YORK, MONDAY, DECEMBER 30, 1901.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

DUE PRAISE TO CAPITALISTS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE telephone and telegraph companies of the land are contributing a big chunk of evidence in justification of the uncompromising stand taken by the Socialist Labor Party on the subject of "Nationalization," and, correspondingly, these companies are contributing a big club to cudgel the hollow pates of the "Reformers" with.

In presenting the Socialist argument, the final point reached is "public ownership." Seeing, moreover, that what is to be owned publicly is the mammoth modern machinery of production, whose very nature precludes public ownership by partition, the public ownership meant is collective ownership, that is, ownership through the Government. The top-heavy "Reformer" loses sight of all the preceding links of the Socialist argument. He catches on to the last link only, and he sets up the cry of "Nationalization," or be it Government ownership, and is satisfied with ownership by "Government," whatever that Government may be. "Hold on!" calls out the Socialist, "not so fast! Ownership by the capitalist Government is not Socialism. Such ownership is only intensified capitalism; and what is more one set of capitalists may themselves set up the cry so as to dump upon the people and make the people pay for plants that have become useless. Socialist Government ownership must, therefore, be preceded by the victory of the Working Class, which means the overthrow of the wage-slavery system of production, that throws on one class the burden of toil and vests in another the privilege to enjoy." Of course, the "Reformers" forthwith begin to call the Socialists names and they are joined by the schemers, who perceive that the Socialists are onto them. It is a common experience that rats trapped show their teeth. The present movements of the telephone and telegraph companies prove all this.

An inventor, Marconi, by name, has been making experiments in message-

sending upon a system that would turn all the telegraph and telephone plants into so much junk. He claims his invention is on the point of perfection. Inventors are apt to be sanguine folks. The conduct of the telegraph and telephone companies, however, justifies the belief that Marconi is not dreaming. Threatened with absolute ruin—that is to say, with the club of exploitation that they now hold shriveling in their hands—what do these companies propose? They propose that the Government purchase the prospective junk, and they propose to compass their aim to the tune of “Nationalization.” In other words, they propose to exploit the growing Socialist sentiment with the aid of the fool “Reformers” together with the train of schemers who are always attracted by “Reform.”

This instance of capitalist “Nationalization” is the most glowing and, therefore, the most valuable. Wags have said that Jay Gould alone had done more for Socialism than all the Socialists combined. Stripped of its nonsense, the saying has much truth in it. No Socialist, nor all of them put together, can furnish the facts upon which Socialism rests. That work must be performed by the Capitalist Class. That class IS performing its work to perfection in America. Not only does it furnish the facts upon which Socialist economics rest, not only does it furnish the facts upon which Socialist sociology rests, but it is furnishing the facts upon which Socialist tactics are banked and with which to rout the “Reformers” and the “Imitators.” It is furnishing the facts that dictate an unswerving adherence to the Class Struggle as the only means for the Socialist Movement to escape being ditched and plucked, as the only means by which to triumph.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded August 2006