

# DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 9, NO. 360.

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, JUNE 25, 1909.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

## “PROPERTY IS ROBBERY.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

**A**MONG the papers that most violently assault Socialism for pronouncing capitalist property robbery the New York *Evening Post*, free-trade organ, occupies front rank. The Socialist contention—advanced with mathematical precision, and presented in language that is marked with the self-restrained emphasis and emphatic self-restraint of an indictment presented by a Grand Jury—the *Post* has stigmatized as “false” in the matter, and “blackguard” in the manner.

It is from this identical paper, from the head of its editorial column in its issue of June 23d, that this article is taken:

“Gentlemen, your tariff on coal and wool and lumber and iron ore is simple robbery, but my constituents must have protection on their sugar industry or be ruined,” says Senator A, from the South.

“It is plain thieving to put a duty on wool, lumber, iron ore and sugar,” says Senator B, “but any reduction on coal is wholly out of the question.”

“Lumber, iron ore, sugar and coal should all go on the free list, unless the people are to be burglarized,” chimes in Senator C, “but in justice to farmers of Ohio, the duty on wool should be increased, not diminished.”

“It is unadulterated stealing to keep a tariff on iron ore, sugar, coal and wool,” Senator D admits, “but it would be ruinous to my constituents to let Canadian lumber in free.”

“If we are not to go before the people as supporters of mere robbery, we must reduce the rates on sugar, coal, wool and lumber,” says Senator E, “but my constituents must have protection against the admission of foreign iron ore.”

“And so the five agree together to put a high tariff on sugar, lumber, iron ore, wool and coal, escaping the odium of simple robbery by compounding it.

The “Protected Interests” unquestionably are the most powerful in the land; they made even Roosevelt knuckle under. They are arch-representatives of

Capitalism. They are the dictators of Law—the Law upon which Capitalism stands planted and which Capitalism buttresses itself with. All other “Interests” outside of the “Protected Interests” are but buds unblown. The “Protected Interests” typify the Beast (to use the language of the Apocalypse); they denote whither all other “Interests” tend, and where they will arrive soon as they have the chance. The conduct of these “Interests” the *Post* characterizes as “robbery,” as “thieving,” as “burglarizing,” as “stealing.”

Correct!

The property found in the possession of “robbers,” “thieves,” “burglars” and “stealers” is robbery. Hence Capitalist property IS robbery—as Socialism has proven with the scientific accuracy that leaves a “blackguard” taste in the mouth of the Robber Class.

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

Uploaded September 2010

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