

# DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 4, NO. 6.

NEW YORK, MONDAY, JULY 6, 1903.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

## NONSENSE ON THE LABOR QUESTION.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HERE is a book being circulated that is so full of bad logic, contradictions, half-truths and whole lies, as to earn for it the title, “Nonsense on the Labor Question.”<sup>1</sup> For instance, Politicians are denounced as frauds who make promises so that no sensible man will trust them. They are purchaseable and corrupt. Then it is shown that, with regard to the trust magnates, or “monopolists” that “Courts, Legislatures and Congresses are afraid of them.”

Now, one who is not a crook himself, would conclude that since politicians are untrustworthy and corrupt, and courts, legislatures and congresses are dominated by trust magnates that the working class cannot obtain any legislative or other aid to advance its interests from those same politicians, courts, legislatures and congresses. Does the author of “Nonsense on the Labor Question” so conclude, and so concluding, does he advise the working class to form a political party of its own, and elect honest men to office, in order that it may dominate those courts, legislatures and congresses in the interest of the working class? “Not on your life!”—to borrow an inelegant but expressive phrase from the slang of the day. On the contrary, the hypocritical author of “Nonsense on the Labor Question,” true to his clerical antecedents, with eyes filled with crocodile tears for the sufferings of the working class, advises its members to entrust their interests to those very politicians, courts, legislatures and congresses!

All that labor has to do is not to act directly and openly, but indirectly and secretly. All that labor has to do is to influence these politicians—the men who make promises that no sensible man will trust, and are bought by the corporations—with their votes, and, presto! all the bounties of the political paradise

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<sup>1</sup> [Efforts to identify this book and its author have not been successful.—R.B]

belong to it! All that labor has to do is to elect “legislative” and other committees, made up of these politicians and their cronies, station them at Washington and other places to lobby and to dicker, i.e., intensify political corruption, and capitalist domination, and, quicker than you can say “Jack Rabbit!” the courts, legislatures and congresses will cease to be dominated by the trust magnates, and the triumph of labor will be secured! In fewer words, the way to do a thing is to promote those things that will prevent you from doing it, i.e., if labor wishes to succeed politically all it has to do is to promote the very means by which it is defeated!

Who says “Nonsense on the Labor Question” isn’t well named? Out on such nonsense! Oppose to it the teachings of the class-conscious press and literature of the Socialist Labor Party—teachings which point out that the working class must emancipate itself and that in order to do so it must organize to capture the powers of state and utilize them in overthrowing capitalism and instituting Socialism.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
Uploaded January 2007