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EDITORIAL

DOES SOCIALISM TAKE TOO LONG TO COME?

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Republican party has issued a broadside of statistics. It is several feet long by several feet wide. And what is more, altho' it is heralded by its headlines as an argument for the Republican party, it is in fact an argument for the Socialist Labor Party, being especially and above all a crack over the head of those who claim that Socialism is all very well, but too far away, while something now will step by step lead to deliverance.

Here are some of the figures:

In 1870, the workmen engaged in manufactures and mechanical occupations received \$775,584,343 in wages; in 1880 they received \$947,953,795; in 1890 they received \$1,891,228,321; and in 1900, \$2,330,578,010. Evidently a hugely increasing sum.

Now, how much did the individual workingman receive on an average? The question is answered by a very simple process: The process consists in ascertaining from the Census the number of the workmen in those industries during each of those dates and dividing that into the respective lump wages received. The process yields the following figures: In 1870, the average workingman received \$377 a year; in 1880, he received \$346, or \$31 less; in 1890 he received \$445, which was \$101 more than in 1880; and 1900 he received \$436, which again registered a decline, compared with the previous decade, of \$9. All told, from 1870 to 1900, the rise in the average workingman's yearly earnings was \$59—a increase of fifty-nine dollars in thirty years! Calculating 300 workdays to the year, the American workingman **PROGRESSED** during the last thirty years or 9,000 workdays at the magnificent pace {of} **LESS THAN SEVEN MILLS A DAY!**

If Socialism is slow, what is this? Surely it is no breakneck rapidity. A bird in

the hand is better than two in the bush. But then it is a bird you have in the hand and not a phantom. What are seven mills a day in thirty years? Is that any better than a phantom?

We have so far left out of consideration two items of importance—the number of unemployed in the working class and the increased price of the necessaries of life. As to the first of the two items, thanks to the manoeuvres of the Census bureau no figures are given on its rising numbers. As no figures are given, we shall drop the item, altho' every workingman knows how that drags down his available earnings. As to the second item, every workingman is a living statistical report in himself. He knows how, from rent down, everything that he needs has gone up. When allowance is made for that, when the declined purchasing power of his dollar is considered, owing to the rise in his necessaries of life, the seven mills increase is wiped out, leaving a big hole in even the original sum. Thus the “progress” made by Labor under capitalist and fakir guidance has been the crab's progress—backward!

Socialism cannot come over night. It needs agitation, education and organization to bring it about. None but dupes will fail to realize, from the above authentic figures and irrefutable argument, that he who says: “Socialism is all very well, only it is too far away!” and then tries to lead the workers on other than the Socialist path, leads them away from what he himself is forced to admit is “all very well,” and is but delaying the day of Labor's emancipation; aye, is doing his utmost to postpone the day to the utmost.

A vote under the Arm and Hammer of the Socialist Labor Party, a vote for Corregan and Cox and the S.L.P. ticket straight, is a vote that will help to clear the path of the capitalist and fakir vermin that now clogs Labor's progress and renders the progress backward.

All thanks to the Republican party for the statistical broadside that cracks the skull of all the defenders of capitalism—the hypocritical crew not excepted that says: “Socialism is all very well, but too far away!”

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

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