

The People.

VOL. V, NO. 40

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29, 1895

PRICE 3 CENTS

EDITORIAL

Well Contrasted

By DANIEL DE LEON

The contrasts between the posture of New Trade Unionism and “Pure and Simplism” are numerous. One of the most salient points of contrast between the two is that the “Pure and Simpler” has no confidence in his own feet, and seeks to lean on the boss; the New Trade Unionist, on the contrary, is class-conscious, and, filled with the dignity of his class as well as being well informed on its self-sufficient powers, stands fully upon his own bottom and spurns all proppage from his exploiters. As a result of this, the “Pure and Simpler” is constantly drawn into the vortex of capitalist whirlwinds, while the New Trade Unionist moves steadily and exclusively along the tracks of his own class interests; and a further result of this is that, while the New Trade Unionist preserves his forces for the solution of his own class problems, the “Pure and Simpler” will as regularly be found fulfilling the ignoble role of “food for cannon” or “beast of burden” for the capitalist class, doing the voting for this class, the shouting for it, the blackguarding for it, and, when occasion offers, doing the fighting, bleeding and dying for it.

This particular contrast between the two elements is just now well illustrated. A war with England suits the convenience of one set of our bosses. The fighting, shouting, bleeding will have to be done by the proletariat; the capitalists will keep beyond shooting distance. At this time we find the “Pure and Simple” decoy-ducks sharply distinguished from the straight-forward unionists. While Schoenfeld, Harry White and others of that ilk forthwith tumble over one another in their anxiety to protest their “patriotisms,” their “loyalty,” and their readiness to “fight for the country,” D.A. 49 takes a manful stand and uttered itself last Sunday in these well-tempered resolutions:

“WHEREAS, The ruling class, not content to enrich itself at home by the system of refined murder known as capitalism, now contemplates increasing its stolen hoard at home and abroad by the savage system of murder know as war;

“WHEREAS, The patriotism now invoked on the subject of the Venezuela boundary is but a pharisaical pretense to cover up the ruffianly purposes of a class that knows no patriotism or flag, and whose sole object is to live upon the blood of the workers spilt in factories, mills, mines, yards and battle-fields;

“WHEREAS, One of the purposes of this Venezuelan crisis on the part of both the United States and the British capitalists is to avert the doom that pends over their own heads by mutually turning attention away to foreign questions;

“WHEREAS, the foe of the American proletariat is not England, but the capitalist class, composed of American as well as English and other exploiters; and the foe of the British proletariat is not America, but the capitalist class composed of British as well as American and other exploiters; therefore,

RESOLVED, That D.A. 49 join its sister bodies affiliated with the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance in an invitation to the Socialist Labor party to take steps to cause indignation mass meetings to be held simultaneously in this country and England by the workers of both countries to protest against the conduct of the class that in both countries now usurps the government, and for the satisfaction of whose own mischievous purposes it is sought to hurl the workers of the two nations at each others’ throats.”

New Trades Unionists are not there to be played for gulls; they recognize the solidarity of their class, irrespective of race, creed and nationality; and they are there to fight their own class’s battles, not those of the class of their oppressors.

[Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.](#)

[Uploaded March 24, 2003](#)