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EDITORIAL

THE LATEST “BACKWARD” RACE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

A PETITION, signed by 12,000 workingmen, has recently been presented to a certain Government demanding a high tariff for the protection of the Labor of that country. The petition sets forth that, without such protection, the country’s high standard of living will be lost to its workingmen, and they would be lowered to the standard of the pauper labor of the country with whom they would have to compete. Whose country’s workingmen is it that are holding such language? Hitherto, fanned by the Civic Federation A.F. of L. fan, the spark of nativistic conceit used to be set aflame in America. Is it 12,000 workingmen of the United States who have just been holding this language? No! It is 12,000 workingmen of New Zealand. And against the workingmen of what country were they asking for protection? With whose country’s workingmen were they contrasting their own “high standard of living”? What country’s Labor is it that they are referring to as “pauper Labor”? Is it the Chinese? Is it the Negroes? Is it the Japanese? Is it the working class of any of the lands whom the A.F. of L. employes of the Volkszeitung Corporation at Amsterdam disgraced Socialism and this country by referring to as “backwards”? No! The Labor thus referred to by the 12,000 New Zealand workingmen petitioners was—AMERICAN LABOR!!!

Thus the capitalist-bred chickens come home to roost. Each capitalist class sees to it, in the interest of the international Capitalist, that the particular subdivision of the international proletariat whom he exploits acquire rancorous hatred for the other subdivisions of their class. A divided proletariat spells the salvation of the capitalist class; a united proletariat spells the irretrievable downfall of the capitalist class. Hence the labor lieutenants of the capitalist class in each country ever are intent upon filling up their own rank and file with the hot-air of superiority, inducing them to look upon all other workingmen as “pauper labor,” hence, also, the

political reflex of the labor-lieutenants' organizations, the Volkszeitung Corporation's party, has its Schleuter, Lee and Hilquit employes at Amsterdam echo the A.F. of L. ribaldry of "backward races"; hence, finally, the curious spectacle of the Gompers-Mitchell-Volkszeitung would-be "aristocrats of Labor" being dubbed "pauper Labor" by the workers of New Zealand!

The cycle is complete. American Labor comes in turn for its place in the procession of "backward races" and "pauper Labor." Do announce it in Gaz; be sure not to keep it secret in Ascalon, lest the daughters of the Philistines mourn, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised droop!

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