

# The People.

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EDITORIAL

## Canovas Reed—Tom Castillo

By DANIEL DE LEON

Cuba has for centuries been bleeding under the vindictive oppression of Spain. The island has been used for manure to fructify the decaying and seedy hidalgos of the motherland. Its people have been kept tied to the colonial strings in such way that the string cut deep into the flesh; the iron ball to the heels in the prison-fort of Cuenca, if not the garrote itself, was the speedy visitation that fell upon any Cuban foolhardy enough to even complain. A disgrace to Spain, a smutch on whatever glory attaches to her ancient name—Cuba has stood out on the canvass of Spanish-American history the impersonation of a prey to stupid, blood-thirsty greed.

Yet, notwithstanding, Senor Canovas del Castillo, the Spanish prime minister, announces his Cuban policy in the Cortes thus:

“The blessings of civilization bestowed by Spain upon the island entitle us to its possession. Our honor and our national glory demand that we retain it. Its people, happy and contented, thriving and protected by the shield of Spain, may not be given over to a lawless mob with whom rapine is the object, arson the tool, riot a natural element. For Cuba’s sake, if not for the sake of our own honor, the Spanish standard shall never be lowered over the battlements of the Morro Castle, nor shall its emblem of peace and happiness be withdrawn from a single inch of the Cuban territory.”

The United States, since the war ended, has been turned, as near as the thing could be done, into a Cuba, the masses of her people—the working class—into Cubans. Robbed of their patrimony, swindled out of the wealth they produced, imprisoned if they complained, clubbed if they spoke, bayoneted if they dared to refuse to work at the pittance of starvation, our people have been reduced to the level of plantation negroes, our country to a colonial satrapy.

All this has happened under the almost uninterrupted supervision of the

Republican party. Occasionally the Democratic party took a hand in the work of “supervising;” but, it was not allowed to “supervise” the people’s ruin for any length of time. To the Republican party, ably seconded by the Democratic, belongs the principal honor for the people’s present misery.

Yet, notwithstanding, Mr. Tom Reed, a leading member of the Republican party, opens in Maine the campaign of his party with these words:

“When in 1892 the Democratic party went into power it found a prosperous people. Thanks to Republican rule, wages were high, affluence rewarded the toil of the husbandman and the artisan; the song of happiness broke out of every American home; the oil of content shone on the faces of the workingmen, and confidence shone out of the eyes of businessmen. Now all this is changed. On all sides we see worry painted on the countenances of our people, care-worn visages that look doubtfully into the future and wonder whether the days they knew when the Republican party was at the helm will ever return again. My friends, they will, they will return with our victory. To bring them back let us insure Republican success.”

Mr. Tom Reed and Senor Canovas del Castillo may, like the two negro Dromios in the minstrel show, look at each other and mutually grinning, ask in chorus:

“Is we two, or am we one, or is we both the same?”

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

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