

# The People.

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EDITORIAL

## “Remember the Maine!”

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**he strike that broke out on the auxiliary cruiser *St. Louis*, that ran into this harbor last week for coaling and refitting, places in its true light the cry of “Remember the *Maine*!” when uttered by our ruling class, that started it.

On the *St. Louis*, 300 firemen and coal-heavers went on strike not only because of bad treatment in point of food, but on account of worse treatment, cruelty in fact, besides gross ingratitude. One of them, being sick and applying for medical aid, was kicked in the stomach by the officer; all of them had been made to sleep in exceptionally bad bunkers, without cover; and on a certain occasion were ordered to do the most dangerous part of a work for which they had not been engaged, and were then, the work being done, ordered like dogs under the hatches, where the atmosphere was stifling, and where they were kept for days in succession without fresh air.

Yes, “Remember the *Maine*!”

But there are in that cry as many meanings as the sources from which it proceeds.

In the mouth of the capitalist class that is sending its untrained, shiftless sons into staff positions on our Army of Invasion, the cry has no other object than to turn to their own benefit the humane feelings of our people. It means an attempt of that criminal ruling class to profit by its own wrong. It means an attempt to swell the sails of their pirate craft of state with the feeling of indignation raised in the great heart of the people by, what? by that criminal class’ own malfeasance.

In the mouth of the intelligent working class, it is a rallying cry, taken from a striking contemporaneous event, that may be said to sum up the inhumanity of the capitalist system of society. It is a cry that brings in close connection the brutal government of the ruling class of Spain and our own ruling class: the former capable of so dastardly an act as the blowing up, in time of peace, a ship laden with human

beings, the latter capable of huddling so many members of the “common people” around powder magazines where explosions are likely; both so reckless of life, of honor, of decency as to be willing to sacrifice untold thousands of their nominal “fellow citizens” in their rush for plunder.

The strike on the *St. Louis* against the barbarous treatment of workers by officers who represent and are animated by the feelings of our capitalist class is but an incident illustrative of all that there is and should be in the cry:

“Remember the *Maine!*”

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