

# DAILY PEOPLE

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## PROLETARIAN JANISSARIES.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**he followers of Mahomet took the Christian children, whose parents they had killed, and raised them renegades to the faith of their parents and trained killers of Christians. They called these renegades janissaries and formed them into companies to police and protect the palaces. Fierce and brutal, the excesses of this body were forgiven as long as the men were loyal to their masters. And this is how the capitalist class regards the police force to-day. Indeed, “janissaries” is the conception that the Republican and Democratic press has of the police.

All the Democratic and Republican papers editorialized yesterday on the riots on the West Side and mouthed the ordinary ignorance of their kind, but through it all, the conception of a policeman as a janissary was plainly voiced and the police were told, sometimes in as many words, that as long as they were faithful to their masters and traitors to the working class, from which they have been perverted, much will be overlooked. Here are specimen gems: “He might be a ruffian himself. He was sure to be a protector of vice and crime.” This editor is speaking of the New York policeman. “From the street car strikes of last year the ‘Tammany Cop,’ with his whirling night stick, stands out in splendid contrast,” etc. “They were janissaries to be sure,” literally says this editor.

As the Mohammedans perverted the children of the Christians whom they slaughtered, into murderers of Christians, so the capitalist class takes the children of the working class and makes janissaries of them. The policemen are warned that any leniency toward that working class will be met with swift punishment. Loyalty to that capitalist class which has reduced the policeman’s parents to the condition of wage slaves, is the one thing demanded. As long as the “cop whirls his night stick” on the heads of strikers, he will be forgiven if he falls short in other directions.

Perhaps the Rep-Dem papers and their labor-fleecing owners may awake some morning to find that their janissaries have had their eyes opened to the light of the true faith, have dropped the role of janissaries and assumed the role of citizen long

enough to vote for the triumph of the working class and enforce its mandates. Policemen there are who have been known to think, and these present janissaries of capitalism have one thing their ancient prototypes did not have: a Socialist Labor Party to teach them their power and their duty to their class.

The editor quoted above is himself a janissary of the pen and so is well fitted to write about the janissary of the club.

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

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