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## MINISTER STRAUS, TURKEY AND CHINA.

By DANIEL DE LEON

Oscar Straus, Minister to Turkey, does not seem to understand either the reasons that lead the Russians to press on Turkey, or to move towards the Pacific Ocean by way of China. The “stolid resistance to change” which he finds in the Chinese nation is the result of a system under which the tendency has been to round off and smooth the people into a uniform whole. No nation is more compact than China, and none produces men of such thorough uniformity. This, instead of producing weakness, is the source of China’s strength. Given the oppression and the misery to which the people are subjected; given a people showing as great a divergency of temperament as that shown by all European nations, we should have a state of chronic civil war.

When Mr. Straus says that we cannot “Christianize” the Chinese, he is right. It lies with them to Buddhize us, and they are capable of doing it, because, though their methods are slower, they are irresistible.

However, the mere religious side is a question apart. The thing around which the whole trouble centers is commercial domination. Russia includes in itself both the slow, ponderous, mass characteristics of the Chinaman, and the more rapid, incisive characteristics of modern capitalism. Straus is centuries away from the field of conflict. Russia cares little for the territory included in the Turkish Empire. What she does want is the Dardanelles. With that, she would be impregnable.

Beveridge, the long-distance thinker of the Republican party, compared Russia and the United States to two youths,—strong, vigorous, above all potential. They have a future which was England’s in the days of Elizabeth, but all that was then won must be again thrown into the ring for newer, hardier, greater nations to fight for. Russia cannot realize this future until she plants a stronghold on the great sea. She presses forward, and downward, and she will continue to do so until she gains her first point of vantage in the south,—unless headed off by the impending social revolution.

The climate makes it impossible for her to become a great world power through the Arctic Ocean. The opening of the Pacific was inevitable. The point of points, the ground on which the last and greatest move will be made, will be Turkey. If Mr. Straus could but wake to the actions of our modern world, he would understand that the analogy which he finds between the Chinese and the Turkish question was caused by one great nation in its struggle to gain supremacy in the Eastern world.

But of such clearness of head Mr. Straus is incapable. The vulgarity, that is to say, superficiality of Capitalist Class thought dominates him.

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