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EDITORIAL

NO ALMS! RIGHTS!

By DANIEL DE LEON

MR. ROBERT FULTON CUTTING—the public, it is hoped, knows who Mr. Fulton Cutting is: a philanthropist whose tenement houses were condemned and pulled down—appears in the public press with requests for alms to enable his Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor to “take care of nearly 20,000 adults and children.”

Mr. Fulton Cutting is a Republican. The Republican national platform for this year makes two statements.

One is that “we have a vast domain of three million square miles literally bursting with latent treasure, still waiting the magic of capital and industry to be converted to the practical uses of mankind.”

The other statement is that “when the Republican Party was born the total wealth of the country was \$16,000,000,000; it has leaped to \$110,000,000,000 in a generation.”

It is evident from Fulton Cutting’s own words that the 20,000 adults and children whom he appeals for have no share in that \$110,000,000,000 worth of wealth that his own party’s platform declares is to be found in the country. It is also evident that they do not own an inch of that three million square miles of domain which the national platform of Mr. Fulton Cutting’s own party declares to be literally bursting with latent treasure. In view of these facts, an appeal in behalf of a mass of people, that is larger than the whole population of many of our towns, should be directed to set them on their feet, and not to perpetuate their dependence.

That there is ample capital and ample territory on which to set these people to work appears clearly from the boast concerning that \$110,000,000,000 worth of riches and the existence of that three million square miles of domain “literally bursting with latent wealth.” A society that really aims at improving the condition

of 20,000 sufferers from want would furnish these the means to earn their living. Mr. Fulton Cutting's plan aims at perpetuating the blight.

Not alms are needed, even if the capitalist system were to prevail. Even under the capitalist system help is possible without alms. The only apology that Mr. Fulton Cutting can offer for his plan is an apology that he would bite off his tongue rather than admit, to wit, that capitalism perpetually needs a large number of people ever exposed to the miserable condition of the 20,000 adults and children whom he pretends to appeal for. Without the large reserve army of the unemployed, the struggle of Capital with Labor would place Capital greatly at a disadvantage.

The long and short of the story is that Mr. Robert Fulton Cutting's appeal is, not in behalf of the vast mass of humanity whom the crisis is causing to starve; his appeal is in behalf of the capitalist system which can afford neither to place these people on their feet, nor to have them die outright.

Whatever the response may be from the side of Capital, the response is emphatic from the camp of the Socialist Labor Party:

“No alms! Rights!”

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