

# DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 11, NO. 155.

NEW YORK, FRIDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1910.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

## GOAL AND MEANS.

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“P EACEFUL Picketing Defense League” is the name given to itself by a Los Angeles body that has organized to resist the anti-picketing ordinance of that city. In pursuit of its purpose the “League” issues circulars announcing that “thousands of men are wanted” to go to Los Angeles and assist the “League.” As an inducement and encouragement, the circulars set forth that “the winter can be spent in pleasant and exhilarating fashion,” the “climate being excellent,” and that “no pleasanter or more profitable occupation can be found than enlistment in the army of freedom in Los Angeles.” The circular closes with an appeal to “you thousands” to make their way to Los Angeles, and, by their coming, to contribute “largely to disconcert the enemy.”

The circular’s substance may be summed up in these words—

“The worst means to reach the best of goals”;

or—

“The best of goals queered by the worst of means.”

That every abridgement, let alone infringement, of the Right to Picket must be resisted goes without saying. Where the Picket becomes a crime the Union is a bauble. No Picket, no Union; no Union, no Industrial Republic, or Co-operative Commonwealth, or Socialist Republic,—or whatever name one may choose to give to that order of things where those who work shall live, and those who don’t, because they won’t, shall be free to die agreeable to all the variations of their individualism. How vital the Right to Picket is to the Labor, or Socialist Movement, was imperishably entered in the Movement’ annals by the Socialist Labor Party’s presidential nomination for 1908—virtually a proclamation that went thundering into every nook and corner of the land.—The goal of the Los Angeles “League” is ideal.

But the means!?!

How many can be enticed to a spot, however uplifting the goal, with no Commissary Department, or prospect of any, other than “pleasant and exhilarating climate”?

If many thousands, then they will be a howling mob. The goal, to which the Right to Picket is so closely connected an avenue as to be an integral part thereof, is a goal that requires, that demands, that dictates Organization, Order, Discipline. No mob, howling or otherwise, can achieve that Goal, or even “disconcert the enemy.”

If only a few respond, then Impotence takes the place of Mob—with failure, if not disaster, in either case—not the “disconcerting” but the heartenment of the enemy.

The means proposed by the “Peace League” is too small for an Army, or too large for Peace—either way a hollow reed to start with.

The correct understanding of a Goal ever is reflected in the fitness of the means thereto. The conclusion is justified that the Los Angeles “Peaceful Picketing Defense League” has no more conception of the goal it proposes than a Choctaw savage, with Niagara in sight, has of the geologic past and future that monumental spectacle presents to his staring gaze.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
Uploaded November 2011

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