DAILY PEOPLE

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EDITORIAL

AN OPEN LETTER.[1]

By DANIEL DE LEON

TO E.B. Moore,
Treasurer Wesseransett Worsted Company,
Skowhegan, Maine;

Dear Sir:—

Allow us to express unqualified gratification at the obvious slip on your part to which we owe the privilege of having been favored with your letter of the 4th of this month, offering to us, for the sake of "human interest," material for a special issue against an radical revision of the tariff, lest the WEEKLY PEOPLE "lose its principal source of revenue—subscribers and retail advertising."

First of all permit us to place on record the fact that the Socialist is not bamboozled by the cry of tariff revision.

The Socialist knows that revision, however far down, does not drop a copper more into the pockets of the wage slave class. Whatever copper finds its way into that pocket depends upon the market price of labor power in the labor market; and that market price depends upon the supply. Seeing that the law of capitalist development is, on the whole, to raise the supply, the conclusion cannot be escaped that lower tariffs will not place more wealth in the pockets of the wage slave class.

This point being grasped, you will readily realize that neither will the Socialist be taken in by "protection" reasoning. The obverse of the economic logic, which renders the Socialist immune to free trade blandishments, likewise renders the Socialist proof against the siren song of "protection." Seeing that the price (wages) of the wage slave class depends upon the supply of labor in the labor market, and that the

[1] [Also printed *Weekly People*, Vol. XXII, No. 42. Saturday, January 18, 1913. The correct spelling of the company's name is "Wesserunsett".—*R.B.*]

supply is bound to increase on the whole, "protection" protects the wage slave class not at all.

Obviously, the "human interest" standpoint to which you appeal, has, like the "flowers that bloom in the spring" in the song that you know of "nothing to do with the case."

We would be slow, diffident, and even reluctant to advance this theory, fearing to draw upon us the charge of "personal incrimination," were it not for the circumstances that your letter itself furnishes, not by implication, but expressly, the fact that proves our conclusion regarding the misnomer, in connection with this matter, of the "'human interest' standpoint"—to wit, your appeal that we guard the "principal sources of revenue" of our publication.

If the WEEKLY PEOPLE were run for revenue, then we would carefully consider your plea for "protection," and we would as carefully consider your opponent's plea for "free trade." We would then determine on which side our, not "human" but material interests lay; and we would decide accordingly. We would decide that "humanity" (our pocket being the humanity), "patriotism" (our pocket being the "patria"), and the "sanctity of the family" (our pocket being the saintly family), all combine to cause us to shout: "Up with the tariff!" or "Down with the tariff!" as the case might be.

It so happens, however, that the WEEKLY PEOPLE is not run for revenue. It being the property of the Socialist Labor Party, its sole purpose is to educate the wage slave class free from the mental thrall under which the Protection and Free Trade capitalist class alike rifle its pockets, buy plundering it in the shop of the fruits of its toil.

You will realize that your offer has no fascination for us. It is, therefore, declined with thanks.

EDITOR WEEKLY PEOPLE

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