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EDITORIAL

A “SQUARE DEAL.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

FROM two camps in the land skyrockets of distress are signalling to the Government for help.

One of the two camps consists of smaller property-holders who are crowded by bigger ones; the other camp consists of property-less wage-slaves who are ground down by the whole property-holding class, and as yet know no better than to “cry for help.”

With a “Square Deal” on its lips the Republican platform, unanimously adopted at Chicago by Rooseveltites and Allies alike, declares that it commends “the appropriation by the present Congress to enable the Interstate Commerce Commission to thoroughly investigate, and give publicity to, the accounts of interstate railroads.”—This is the deal to the goods-manufacturing and shipping property-holders.

With the identical “Square Deal” on its identical lips, the identical Republican convention adopted, with identical unanimity, a declaration approving the appropriation of “\$150,000 at the recent session of Congress in order to secure a thorough inquiry into the causes of catastrophes and loss of life in the mines.”—This is the deal to the property-less.

The picture is not yet complete. The amount appropriated for a “thorough inquiry” into the constant mine catastrophes is given—\$150,000. The amount is ridiculously insufficient for the magnitude of the work. But things are big or small in comparison with others. What was the appropriation made for the much easier inquiry into railroad accounts? If so niggardly an appropriation as \$150,000 is made for a “thorough inquiry” into the multiple mine disasters, the “Square Deal” would manifest itself in a proportionally smaller appropriation for the inquiry into railroad accounts.

The first thing to call attention is the silence of the platform, as adopted, upon this particular appropriation. The silence bulges into significance when the platform, as adopted, is compared with the original draft. The original draft incautiously mentioned the figures. The platform, as adopted, cautiously struck out the figures. They were \$350,000—more than double the amount appropriated for investigating mine disasters!

For the easy work of examining the books of the railroads at their head offices a fat, an effective appropriation is made by the "Square Deal". For the laborious work of inspecting the hundreds and thousands of mines spread over an area of fully one-third of the land the "Square Deal" makes not only a smaller, but so utterly inadequate an appropriation that it clearly is, not an appropriation to investigate and redress wrongs, but an appropriation to furnish junketing "investigation" committees the funds for a jolly good time.

Capitalist "Square Deal" is pap for Capital, kicks for Labor.

The capitalist "Square Deal," administered by the carefully framed Republican platform, is a loud announcement to the miners, and through them, to the rest of the working class whose members are daily slaughtered and injured by the scores and the hundreds in factories, mills, mines, on the railroads and on all the other fields of industry:

"Your sufferings and your sorrows are, like your toil, but sources of profit to us. You toil in poverty that we may riot in luxury. Your deaths and hurts from the catastrophes that befall you are but welcome pretexts for us to raise funds upon which to feast some more. That is your place and mission in the scheme of capitalist Square Deal. Shout with joy that such a privilege is yours. If not—injunctions!—or worse yet, imprisonment for 'murder' if you dare defend your lives as in Preston's instance!"

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