

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 9, NO. 277.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, APRIL 3, 1909.

ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

WHY THAT DEFICIT?

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE tariff debate brought out the fact that the fiscal year 1909 showed a deficit of \$87,000,000. Deficiencies lead to inquiries regarding the appropriations that have fallen short. Inquiry on this head reveals the fact that the appropriations made by the last session of Congress amounted to \$1,044,014,298.23. This is an astounding fact. Nor do revelations stop there. The average rates of the existing tariff are 44.16 per cent; the average rates of the tariffs now proposed are 45.72 per cent. The excuse for the increase of 1.56 per cent is the deficit.

The revelations suggest two questions—why the deficit? and why such large appropriations? Harriman's suggestion—"the best way in managing governments is just the same as managing railroads, and is to produce a better article of government at less cost"—has not been taken to heart. Reduction of expenses in government is not the cue of the capitalist State.

Harriman is hasty. The only government that would produce the best article is the government that gets no special pay. Such a government is possible only in the Socialist or Industrial Republic. In the political or capitalist government the government is something outside of the people and in no way co-operates in production. Seeing such government does not co-operate in production, as would the government of the Socialist Republic, it is a consumer only, and must be paid out of what other people produce. Once such a government is on foot the appropriations must increase. They increase so fast that deficits perpetually crop up, despite the ever huger appropriations.

Harriman, a clever fellow, can not have been in earnest. As a capitalist magnate he knows he needs for the protection of his plunder a powerful government, and he knows that costs money. Hence the deficit—hence the

inevitableness of the same—hence also the efforts of all clear heads in modern society to do away with a social system that requires the insatiable dragon of the bourgeois State to keep the system in some show of running order.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded August 2010

slpns@slp.org