

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 11, NO. 101.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 9, 1910.

TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

CAESAR? CATILINE? WHICH?

By DANIEL DE LEON

HEARST! Roosevelt!—

When material conditions were making the old republic of Rome impossible, there arose two figures—Catiline and Caesar. They rose abreast of each other; yet were they not equal; they were supplemental figures. Neither could get along without the other. The oncoming Dictator needed the lower and connecting link of the demagogue: the demagogue lost his point without the Dictator being at hand, as the upper link in the chain, Caesar could not rise without the understrapping Catiline; the vices of the understrapping Catiline could mature the ripe fruit only if the Caesar stood ready to pluck the fruit. Every Caesar has his Catiline; every Catiline his Caesar. So sayeth History.

But History is a hindlook. The hindlook leaves no doubt which was Caesar, which Catiline. By the time the hindlook acquires eyes to see the two figures, though appearing abreast and often intermixed, have settled down into their respective niches. Contemporaries enjoy not the same advantages for a clear vision. Those living at the time of the Caesarian-and-Catilianian apparition may well, and often do, get confused as to which is which—which the light villain in the play, which the heavy villain: which the Catiline, which the Caesar.

This is the fix of present contemporaries in America in sight of Hearst and Roosevelt. They are kindred spirits—Catilianian-Caesarian, Caesarian-Catilianian, closely linked, with fortunes in one pot. One moment it looks one way; then, another. Catilianian both, in jackalism; Caesarian both, in vulturism. Which will soar? Which will grovel and be sacrificed?

A third question puzzles the contemporary—is there any factor to be considered, the effect of which will be to bring on in our generation an unraveling of the plot different from that of hitherto each time the Caesar-Catiline apparition

mounted the stage of history?

In other words, has the educational work of the Socialist Labor Party—unflinchingly imparted line upon line for twenty years, and with increasing intenseness during the last decade when S.L.P. teachings enjoyed the advantage of the so-called Socialist party as a foil—struck sufficient root to stem the Dictator-stream, and down both Caesar and his Catiline, Catiline and his Caesar? Or has the debauching worm of the said S.P. during these last ten years reached deep and wide enough to neutralize the constructive sap of the S.L.P.—and allow the Caesar-Catiline flood once more to overwhelm a nation?

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

slpns@slp.org