

Daniel De Leon

Editorial: Neither of the Two, Brother Wayland

Our esteemed contemporary the Greensburg, Ind., *Coming Nation* is doubly in error when it says Socialists are bitter upon the Populist movement because they fear that, if Populism succeeds, the people may rest satisfied under the improved conditions that Populism will bring about, and lose sight of the more perfect and glorious condition of freedom and well-being which can only come with the Co-operative Commonwealth.

The first error in this opinion is that Socialists imagine the Populist program could improve conditions. Socialists know that, if Populism got into power, the crash that would follow would be incomparably worse than any of the crashes that are inherent in the capitalist system. Socialists know that the controlling element in Populism to-day is not the element whose opinions the *Coming Nation* represents; that controlling element is not one that realizes that an economic revolution has taken place during the last 60 years—an economic revolution that must be followed, should society survive, with a corresponding social revolution; in a word, that the controlling element is not Socialist, it is middle class. Ignorant as that controlling element is of the economic revolution the land has undergone since the days of Washington, it stands basically upon the identical principles that serve as the foundation of the fully developed capitalist bull-frog; in foolishly trying to *correct* the incorrigible abuses of well developed capitalism, instead of *pulling the capitalist system by the roots and destroying it*, it would go about experimenting, with the result that is

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experienced by everyone who neglects the warning never to pour new wine into old bottles—explosion!

The second error is the allegation of bitterness on the part of Socialists towards Populists. Knowing, as they do, what would await the country in the event—fortunately unimaginable—of the Omaha platform vanquishing, and vanquishing with Peffer, Simpson and Co. at its head, Socialists, on the one hand, deprecate the waste of energy and forces among the really radical elements in Populism, and on the other, they have no more love for the resurrected and silver-galvanized ghost of Greenbackism than they have for any other capitalist instincts that believe in hiring and exploiting labor.

Towards the latter, Socialists hold the calm, cool and deliberate but intense attitude of unswerving hostility; towards the former, the Socialist attitude is one of wonder implying the question, “How long will you, brothers, waste your time and deprive us of your aid wherewith we could march straight and rapidly upon our common goal?”

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*A De Leon editorial transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the
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