

EDITORIAL

INCORRIGIBLE POPS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE Lincoln, Neb., *Independent* comes out with a broad-side upon the work of recruiting for the campaign of 1904. To avoid errors and defeat in the future, it is, of course, necessary to look backward, and learn from experience in the past. Pursuing this course, the *Independent* has this to say:

Mr. Bryan was twice defeated by the power of money and the lack of organization and united action among the “common people.”

Which is another way of saying that Mr. Bryan was defeated for lack of votes. The question comes, Why did the votes not come his way? Surely his campaign managers had money enough to cause his arguments to reach all the voters. Why did his arguments fail to draw the votes to him? Were they bought off by the “Money Power”? That’s nonsense. Fact is that Mr. Bryan defeated himself. The proof is almost a mathematical demonstration.

Mr. Bryan argued that the “common people” (of whom the overwhelming majority is the Working Class) were in distress because their employers were poor. He argued: “The cause of your employers’ poverty is the small volume of circulating medium. Increase the volume; that will render your employers affluent; if they are affluent you are too.” What’s the result of this reasoning?

Say that 100 workingmen read or heard Mr. Bryan. What they gathered from him was the absurd notion that the workingman’s welfare depends upon the welfare of his employer. Absurd, or otherwise, that was the fundamental notion he put into their heads. What is the consequence? Each of the 100 workingmen reasoned as follows: “I have no time to fathom the ocean of finance. But I don’t need to. My employer gives me the cue. He knows what is good for him. Mr. Bryan says that my welfare depends upon

my employer's welfare. I must aid my employer. I shall vote for or against silver according as my employer decides." And that settled Mr. Bryan. For every 1 employee, whose middle class employer wants silver, there are 4 whose full blown capitalist employer wants gold. Net result, out of every 100 workingmen, whom Mr. Bryan reached, his fundamental and absurd dogma of the dependence of the worker's welfare upon the welfare of his employer threw 75 into the adverse camp, and left only 25 possible supporters for himself. Money defeated Mr. Bryan only in the sense that without money, and plenty of it, Mr. Bryan could not reach the millions of workingmen whom he did reach, and 75 per cent. of whom he thus turned into staunch supporters of McKinley.

And his fate was a deserved one. The workingman's welfare is in inverse ratio to his employer. The fatter the capitalist, the leaner the workingman. The workingman's welfare will never be reached so long as he is satisfied to be a sort of moonshine to the capitalist sun. He must seek his own welfare as the starting point—and bring on the conditions when he who works shall eat and he who don't shan't.

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