

SECOND EDITORIAL

DEPEW'S DUPLICITY OR INSINUATING FALSEHOOD.

By DANIEL DE LEON

“What is the tendency of the future? Why this war in South Africa? Why this hammering at the gates of Peking? Why this marching of troops from Asia to Africa? Why these parades of people from other empires and other lands? It is because this OVERPRODUCTION of the civilized country of modern times is GREATER THAN CIVILIZATION CAN CONSUME. It is because this overproduction goes back to stagnation and poverty.

“The American people now produce \$2,000,000,000 MORE THAN WE CAN CONSUME.”

This is **Chauncey Depew's** double explanation of overproduction and expansion. It is a statement which proves that he was well nick-named “Smooth” Chauncey. He does not make the bungler's mistake of telling a plain lie cut from the whole cloth. He takes a half truth and insinuates deductions which are entirely false. It is true that “this overproduction goes back to stagnation



CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW (1834–1928)

and poverty.” It is also true that “the American people now produce \$2,000,000,000 more than they can consume.”

But this truth is true only when the explanation is given of WHY we can not consume all we produce. When the explanation is given, then the facts look very different; and the bald statement that there is an overproduction, justifying foreign wars, will appear in its true light of a dastardly insinuation of falsehood.

Over seventy-five per cent of the American people are debarred from consuming what they produce by the fact that less than six per cent of the American people own the machinery with which this seventy-five per cent produce the wealth—of which this \$2,000,000,000 is a part. This six per cent absolutely owns all the wealth which the seventy-five per cent produces. It is true

that the six per cent cannot consume all this wealth, and it is also true that the necessity they are under of finding a market for it is the cause of expansion, imperialism, foreign wars and domestic strikes.

This seventy-five per cent—the wage-workers of the nation—are debarred from consuming the wealth they produce by the fact that they receive starvation wages and cannot buy this \$2,000,000,000 worth of wealth. To say that, to say they “cannot consume it,” is like saying that the miners imprisoned in the Bull Pen, whose wives were driven from the gate by the soldiers, could not consume the food which was in the baskets on their wives’ arms. The working people CANNOT CONSUME the food stuffs, cloth, etc., which they produce, not because they have an overabundance of these things already, not because they are not in need of clothes, food, etc., but simply because they are prohibited by the capitalist system of private ownership of the machinery of production.

When Depew speaks of producing more than WE can consume, the WE does not include that vast army of wage-workers. By WE he means the small but powerful Ice Trust and Standard Oil Trust class of capitalists. Small in numbers but powerful in possessing the means of life which the American people requires, this gang of bandits cannot use up all the wealth they plunder from the American people, hence overproduction and expansion, or foreign invasion.

This \$2,000,000,000 “overproduction” of to-day is a hint of the freedom from want and the enjoyment of comforts which awaits the American people when they throw down the barrier that stands between them and the possession of the wealth they produce. To transfer the ownership of the machinery of production from the Democratic-Republican robber class for whom Depew distorts facts and figures, into the hands of the real American people, the working class, means to change from “overproduction,” accompanied by starvation and misery, to abundant production accompanied by comfort and happiness for the producers. Instead of Depew and his fellow bandits being engaged in the brutal work of ramming overproduction and imperialism down the throats of foreign nations and domestic strikers, they would then be given the choice of doing useful work or find themselves treated as a dangerous “overproduction.”

To the “expansion” and “overproduction” cry of the capitalist, the wage-worker answers with the Socialist Labor Party platform: “We demand the collective ownership of the machinery of production.”

Vote for Malloney and Rummel.

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