

EDITORIAL

## AS TO MONOPOLY, AGAIN.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**M**ORE than every little while, with great frequency, questions run into this office on the subject of “Monopoly.” The questions indicate a rooted idea that economic development of the land has reached the monopoly stage. The error of the idea has been considered in detail in a previous article, that is reproduced in this issue—“Competing Monopoly.”<sup>1</sup>

We shall here supplement the same, in answer to a batch of more recent inquiries.

At the Boston meeting held, by the Socialist Labor Party on last November 3 in Franklin Hall, a young man in the audience asked the question: “What can the meaning be of the rupture of the capitalists in the Republican party?”

The speaker of the evening<sup>2</sup> answered:

“I have explained the difference of political form that separates the Taft from the Roosevelt camp—oligarchy with the former, monarchy with the latter. The difference of the two principles surely is not radical enough to warrant the split. Indeed, when the fact is considered that oligarchy is a half-way station on the road to monarchy, Taft may be summed up as an unripe Roosevelt, Roosevelt as an over-ripe Taft. This estimate would rather go to expose the substantial unity of the two standard-bearers, and to render all the more mysterious, rather than explain the cause at bottom of their rupture. The estimate compels digging deeper for the answer to the question. The meaning of the rupture between the capitalists in the Republican party—or, I prefer to put it this way: The fact of the rupture is a denial flung at the face of the popular error that Capitalism in America has reached the Monopoly stage. It is a manifestation upon which all those who entertain the error are furnished matter to chew upon.

“It should not need the rupture in the Republican camp to betray the economic competition that capitalists are still a prey to. The existence of

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<sup>1</sup> [“Competing Monopoly,” *Daily People*, Oct. 23, 1912.—R.B.]

<sup>2</sup> [De Leon was the speaker.—R.B.]

the Democratic party should be sufficient for the purpose. The Republican rupture only underscores an economic situation that the existence of two rival political parties—the Democratic and the Republican—denotes.

“The point is often made that capitalist political feuds are systematically gotten up to keep the working class in false gaze. While there is much truth in that, it is not the whole truth. There is at bottom solid economic reasons for the feud between capitalists to find ground upon which to sprout into bitter political rivalry. The political rivalry is an expression of their economic rivalries; and these betray the fact of competition among them.

“The monopoly stage is not yet. That the same will eventually be reached is a theoretic principle. That the same will ever be reached is doubtful. Many causes intervene to put off that day—and I certainly believe that the great final cause, the triumph of Socialism, will block that day for good and all.

“What is usually called ‘monopoly’ is merely competition between larger capitals, of course more and more to the exclusion of smaller capitals, to the exclusion of larger and larger numbers of the population. But that ever narrowing competition is not monopoly, nor can it end, as monopoly would, the working of the economic laws that Socialist propaganda is planted upon and that would inevitably bring about Monopoly, unless Socialism heads off the monster.”

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
Uploaded May 2014

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