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EDITORIAL

WHICH IS IT?

By DANIEL DE LEON

WITH Senators Foraker and Spooner in the lead a number of prominent Republicans are doing worse than insinuating, they are pointedly, and, what is more, justly charging the present incumbent of the White House¹ with subordinating the two Houses of Congress and the Judiciary to the will of the Executive, and they are not slow in pronouncing such procedure to be a wilful violation of the Constitution and an evidence that, with such an Executive, “popular government ceases to exist.” True enough, these same gentlemen affect to breathe more freely in the hope that next March 4, Taft, “a lawyer and law-abiding” President, will fill the Executive chair.

Whether Messrs. Spooner, Foraker & Co. actually breathe more freely in the hope of Taft’s election, or whether they do not, they are a lot of dullards if they are sincere; a lot of hypocrites, if otherwise.

Granted that Taft is all they claim—what of it? The Constitution and “popular government” did not depend upon the good will of a Washington, a Jefferson, an Adams, a Lincoln, or even a Jackson. These distinguished men, indeed, had it in their power, as all people filling a post of trust have, to promote the institutions they are elected to guard, or to injure the same, to some extent. But nobody will say that “popular government,” even as understood by the Spooners and the Forakers, let alone the Constitution, was at the mercy of the Washingtons, the Jeffersons, etc. To believe that Taft will act differently from Roosevelt is to admit that the Constitution has fallen upon evil days, and that “popular government” is hopelessly dead. No live institution ever is dependent upon the good will of any one man.

So that whichever way the matter is looked upon, the Forakers and Spooners stand in unenviable light.

¹ [Theodore Roosevelt.—R.B.]

Either they are sincere, and then they are too dull to realize that the “popular government” of which they dream is actually dead—as dead as a door-nail, and that veiled political autocracy has become the reflex of actual capitalist economic autocracy;

Or the gentlemen are well aware of the fact, but, differently from the Socialist Labor Party—on whose Presidential banner, typical of its principles, the names of Gillhaus, as proxy for Preston, and Munro are intrepidly inscribed—find their account in concealing their knowledge, and in worshipping at a shrine that is empty.

Which is it?—In either case, Down with the pack!

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