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EDITORIAL

## TAFT AT AUGUSTA.

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**P**RESIDENT-ELECT TAFT is no bumptious lump of vainglory, like Roosevelt. What Roosevelt does or says, does, in a superficial way, reflect capitalist thought and action. What Taft says, or does, affords deeper insight.

Deep is the insight Taft's words, uttered since election, have off and on allowed into the frame of mind of the capitalist, or private property-holding class. Deepest of all, so far, is the insight afforded by Taft's speech, delivered on the 11th of this month, before the Augusta Bar Association. Among the things he said was:

“We are looking forward, must look forward during the next decade, or two decades, or three decades, to a test of our present institutions and present method of civilization, of the question whether the institution of private property is one worthy of being preserved.”

When a spokesman of capitalism speaks of “civilization” he understands by the term the social institutions founded upon the private ownership of the necessities of production. When he inquires into “whether the institution of private property” is to be preserved he means thereby whether civilization itself is to survive. The posture of the head and front of Capitalism suggesting such inquiry is a posture of alarm—a symptom of deep alarm in the collective breast of the class he represents.

At such a season, and by the light of the alarm felt by the Tafts, the forecast made by Lewis H. Morgan, over thirty years ago, as the summary of his scientific investigations on *Ancient Society*, is prime reading, and food for thought. Said Morgan:

“Since the advent of civilization the growth of property has been so immense, its forms so diversified, its uses so expanding and its management so intelligent in the interests of its owners, that it has

become, on the part of the people, an unmanageable power. The human mind stands bewildered in the presence of its own creation. The time will come, nevertheless, when human intelligence will rise to the mastery over property, and define the relations of the State to the property it protects, as well as the obligations and the limits of the rights of its owners. The interests of society are paramount to individual interests and the two must be brought into just and harmonious relations. A mere property career is not the final destiny of mankind, if progress is to be the law of the future as it has been of the past. The time which has passed away since civilization began is but a fragment of the past duration of man's existence; and but a fragment of the ages to come. The dissolution of society bids fair to become the termination of a career of which property is the end and aim; because such a career contains the elements of self-destruction."

With Morgan, the Socialist holds that human intelligence will master its creature; with Morgan he holds that the interests of society are paramount to the interests of the individual, thoroughly though the individual be convinced, as happens with the capitalist, that HIS interests are society's interests; with Morgan the Socialist holds that a mere property career is not the destiny of mankind; with Morgan the Socialist holds that dissolution of a social system with which property is the end and aim contains the elements of dissolution; finally, differently from Taft and Taftism, the Socialist looks serenely into the future, aware that the inevitable destruction of Capitalism as inevitably means its substitution with Socialism.

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

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