

EDITORIAL

THE PRESIDENT'S WRATH FEARED.

By DANIEL DE LEON

SPEAKER CANNON has stood as a rock during this whole session stemming the President's demands for legislation. The Speaker side-tracked bill after bill that to him seemed injudicious, and stalled them effectively. Among the measures desired by the President was some anti-injunction legislation, it mattered not how jointless and foolish, provided its title could be used as a rattle to please Labor during the campaign. The Speaker, being a man of an older school, did not fancy clap-trap, and, being agreed with the President that a genuine bill should not be offered, leastways passed, he refused to entertain any "anti-injunction" proposition. Suddenly the Speaker "surrenders"—that is the graphic term used in the Washington dispatches: he will allow an "anti-injunction" bill to be brought in. The surrender is announced to be due to "fear of the President's wrath." Uncle Joe Cannon is no weakling. He is not a man to fear spooks. When he fears a thing, that thing has substance, and must have commanding substance. The wrath of the President, to which the Speaker has surrendered, must be something more than bluster. And so it is.

The observation has been latterly made with increasing frequency that the constitution of the land is slowly undergoing a decided change from democracy to autocracy. Speaker Cannon's surrender is the latest evidence—and no straw it is, but a big heavy beam, showing quite clearly the direction of the stream.

Even a Cromwell, taking possession of Parliament with his Ironsides and dictating the law; even a Napoleon, swooping with his Tricolor Army like a tornado down upon a field of battle, had for his foundation an economic development without which Ironsides and Tricolor Armies would have been powerless. The economic development necessary to impart power to "wrath" is obvious in the instance of the President in the year 1908. No Ironsides, or guns and bayonets are

there to drape the fact. It stands out bold. Not through any weapons of military power, but exclusively with the weapon of economic concentration does the President demand and obtain the unconditional surrender of the strongest officials in his party.

Capitalism has rounded the cycle. It needed and sincerely preached democracy at the outset of its career. But capitalism fatedly must lead to autocracy. And well it is that 'tis so. Progress is not from chaos to freedom, but from chaos via autocracy to freedom. The autocracy of feudalism had the redeeming feature of order. All autocracy has. Out of the order that autocratic feudalism kept, grew the progress toward capitalism, bringing about the possibility for freedom. Incipient capitalism has a chaotic society. Itself can not establish freedom, it can only offer the possibility therefor. Order again becomes necessary. That order is reached when concentration of economic power has attained the autocratic point that enables its chief political agency to command surrenders, and thereby prevent filibustering, bushwhacking or other manifestations of "independence." Without such economic concentration, the President's "wrath" would be laughed at. With the economic concentration, even a Joe Cannon caves in, and knuckles under.

Many weep at the development as a "going back." It is not. It is an evidence of progress, and is to be welcomed. Through the order, such as it is, brought about and preserved by autocratic capitalism—only through such order and from such order can flow the next step to progress—the Socialist Republic.

The effective President's wrath is a welcome sign of the times.

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

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