

EDITORIAL

## THE “SILENT VOTE.”

By DANIEL DE LEON

**D**URING the campaign Bryan more than once expressed his reliance upon the “silent vote.” Few things more than that opinion describe Bryan’s political bat-blindness. There was a “silent vote”; that vote plumped itself for Taft. Given the existence of a “silent vote,” it could go in no direction other than it did—for the powers that be.

The “vote” that supports oppositions is everything but silent: it is loud: it announces itself. It is the law of opposition votes to be noisy. On the other hand, the vote that supports things as they are is quiescent, hence silent.

Much lies in this to guide the practical methods of the social revolutionist.

If even an “opposition” movement cannot be “silent,” but is bound to be noisy, it follows that a movement that is more than “opposition,” a movement that is revolutionary, can not choose but give loud notice of itself. Loudness excludes the idea of conspiracy. Consequently, the Social Revolution, on the one hand, and any method that requires silence or secrecy, on the other, are mutually repellant factors. A grasp of this social phenomenon dispels the fumes of “pure and simple physical force”—fumes that rise from the old conception of the Conspiracy as a means for social upheaval.

Bryan, complacently prating about the “silent vote,” betrays the navel-string that connects, not only him with the petty bourgeois, whose out of date economic interests he voices, but also the out of date petty bourgeois with the still more archaic revolutionists, whose revolutions were bred in and executed by conspiracies.

The Plutocracy will not, can not be overthrown by a “silent vote.” The vote that will floor the Plutocracy will be the loudest “vote” that has yet stepped upon the political field of history. It can not be otherwise. That “vote” will be, must be a Mass Movement. The loud pulsations of such a Movement are not repressible into silence.

Its tread will be heavy; its very breath will be like the roar of thunder.

Petty causes, petty preludes. Grotesque is the idea of the revolutionary roar heralding a petty bourgeois patchwork—as grotesque as the notion is unscientific that the “silent vote” could ever run in that channel.

Great causes great preludes. The roar that will overthrow the Plutocracy is the roar of the gathering masses—gathered in the political camp of Socialism and simultaneously drilled, over and above board, under the light of the noon-day sun, in the Army of Occupation—the revolutionary and industrially organized Labor of the land.

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