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EDITORIAL

## PATRIOTISM AS SHE IS DID

By DANIEL DE LEON

**W**HEN a few weeks ago, a song was sung at an employed meeting in this city, beginning:

“My country, what of thee?  
What hast thou done for me  
That I may sing?”

the righteous capitalist press of the land sputtered like a bank president caught with his hand in the till, and with one voice denounced the “unpatriotic” sentiment.

And as actions speak louder than words, the whole master class took up the task of showing what true patriotism was.

For instance, along came the wine and liquor importers. To show how they loved their country, they started to congest the freight routes of two oceans importing their wares so as to get them in ahead of the new tariff which their country was going to place upon them.

Then appeared the envelope manufacturers. On the 22nd inst. they held a conference at Buffalo, to adopt plans whereby they could prevent their country from manufacturing its own envelopes, as it was making them cheaper than they could.

Jacob S. Coxey also gave a valuable demonstration of patriotism when he urged upon Congress to protect American arsenic against Paris green and London purple—because he had just bought an arsenic mine.

In other words, “patriotism,” in the mouth of a capitalist, is but a cloak for the furthering of his interests, his profits, his self-seeking, so long as they can be served that way. And when they can’t, when “patriotism” no longer proves profitable, “patriotism” is rolled in the ditch.

The trouble with the masters was, they thought the working people of the

country would continue forever to take this sham patriotism at its spurious face value, and in perpetuity peacefully allow themselves to be fleeced in its name. There is nothing more “unpatriotic” to oppression than to turn the searchlight upon it and end its career. Well may the false “patriots” howl.

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

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