

EDITORIAL

## JACOB'S TWO-RUNG LADDER TO NONSENSE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

SOCIALISM, BEING FUNDAMENTALLY WRONG, CANNOT BE DEFENDED UPON FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES.—From *The American Whip*, reproduced in Watson's Atlanta, Ga., *The Jeffersonian*, Sept. 30, 1909

**W**HATEVER is perfect in its kind deserves admiration.

Some people are seen sweating at every pore in the attempt to adjust facts to their theories, by toilsomely manufacturing premises that may square with their preconceived conclusions. The *American Whip*, endorsed by Watson's *Jeffersonian*, saves itself the trouble. It needs no facts for its premises; bothers not about seeking, or setting up any; its conclusions are THE thing, to which it arrives like a bolt from a clear sky. Socialism is fundamentally wrong, first rung of the ladder; therefore Socialism cannot be defended upon fundamental principles, second and top rung of the ladder. And there you are!

There is much sterling merit in this system, besides beauty. With other systems one needs to load his cannon with the balls of fact, in order to overthrow the false facts set up as the foundation for a false conclusion. With the *American-Whip-Jeffersonian* system no such loading of cannons is requisite. The system is so simple, as simple as Columbus's trick of standing an egg on end, that it invites imitation.

For instances:

The *American-Whip* and the *Jeffersonian* being scrub cattle, they cannot warble like canary birds.

Or:

The *Jeffersonian* and the *American Whip* being horse-thieves, they cannot be defended upon the principle of honesty.

Or:

The *American Whip* and the *Jeffersonian* being bald, no mattress can be made of the hair on their heads.

Or:

The *Jeffersonian* and the *American Whip* being crocodiles, they cannot climb trees.

And so forth, and so on.

That happens, however, with the *American-Whip-Jeffersonian* system that happens to no other original idea. With other originators, imitation only strengthens the originator. In this instance, imitation knocks down the two-rung ladder and leaves the originators with their noses flat upon the ground.

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

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