

EDITORIAL

LA FOLLETTE TO BE ON THE MOVE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE instant the Wisconsin Senator Robert Marion La Follette cast his vote in the Senate for the Wilson tariff bill and, while thus helping the bill to pass, emphasized the act by throwing some hand-grenades into the camp of the "Progressive Republicans" with whom he was supposed to be affiliated, the opinions went abroad that he had "removed himself from the Republican party," and that he was about to "jump into the Democratic party."

That La Follette is on the move is quite certain. Is it equally certain that he knows just where to go?

On the stump in the recent campaign in the Third Congress district of Maine Bryan said: "The Progressive is a man who is ashamed to be a Republican, and hasn't the courage to be a Democrat." The statement is piquant but misleading. Neither the Progressive, nor the Republican, nor the Democratic party has the sharply defined boundaries that Bryan's estimate would indicate. And none knows that better than La Follette.

That the Democratic party does not consist of Woodrow Wilsons the debate on the income tax clause of the tariff bill disclosed. While Wilson and those who share his socio-economic principles wield the income tax mainly as a leveler of fortunes, John Sharp Williams of Mississippi voiced the sentiments of those Democrats who approve the tax as a revenue-getter only, and object to it as a socio-economic weapon. The difference between the two views is not one of tactics; it is a difference of principle. The two elements holding the two different views cannot long pull together.

As to the Republican party, it likewise is rent by similar differences of principle. The fact has manifested itself in the Progressive revolt.

Here are four distinct factions of bourgeois Interests. They are bound to re-align themselves. Will La Follette take his stand with any of the four before they have taken shape?

La Follette is on the move—and so is Wilson—nor is there any telling how far the logic of events will cause them to move on.

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