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EDITORIAL

WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

TO-DAY is the one hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary of him who had acquired the title of “the father of his country.” The name is not inappropriate. Washington’s genius was many-sided. On the field of battle he aroused the admiration of the veteran campaigners of Europe, who followed, upon maps in their closets, the moves of the “rebel General” in what seemed an unequal contest with the military forces of Great Britain. The war being over, he as the chairman of the Constitutional Convention, became the subject of the fascination of statesmen. The Constitution being adopted, and he being chosen the first President of the then new Nation, his tactfulness and energy became the marvel of both foes and friends, domestic and foreign men in political life. At the close of his second term, Washington became the idol of still a third set of men. His voluntary retirement into private life made him the wonder of a world accustomed only to the sight of grasping personal ambition. He became the subject of enraptured poets, painters and composers. Each of the episodes in the life of Washington are footsteps on the sands of time, footsteps to be emulated. It would seem that such a career was a series of culminations, and that the last culmination reached heights not to be excelled. Not so with Washington. His farewell address was his highest contribution to mankind.

Washington’s farewell address, though frequently referred to, is rarely read. It deserves a place beside the Declaration of Independence—each holding unique eminence. Washington’s farewell address is a collection of maxims in the shape of suggestions for future guidance. To-day, one hundred and ten years after the issuance of that document, there is a passage of peculiar fitness to the great issue that presents itself to this generation—the issue of the removal of the capitalist system and its substitution with the Socialist Republic—the issue that involves the transition of society from the TERRITORIAL to the INDUSTRIAL basis.

Capitalism, being the culmination of the social order grounded on property, recognizes territory only as the basis of constituencies. The thing{,} advantageous tho' it is to the capitalist order, brought along its resulting inconveniences. In Washington's days parties had a tendency to form themselves on {a} territorial basis—Eastern and Western, Southern and Northern. The consequence was the engendering of a special sect of animosities and rivalries, and these ripened into latent treason, signalized by an inclination to enter into dealings with foreign nations. Washington sketched the fact and the evil, and referring to the citizens who lent a willing ear to men who led on that false path, he asked: "Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?"

The question is an admonishment, to-day, to the rank and file of the Working Class, who are misled by such labor-leaders as seek, through the craft system of Unionism, to connect them with the aliens to their class, the Belmont Civic Federation of many disguises, and thereby to sever them from their brethren, their fellow proletarians.

A new Nation is aborning. The Nation of Labor—the Socialist Republic. That Nation's constituent parts are, not territorial districts, but the Industries. These, and the men engaged in them are brothers; the Capital Class is the alien, an alien foe, at that. Alliances with the latter means the keeping apart of the limbs that are to form the new Nation, the keeping apart of brothers. The reasons why in 1797 the life of the Nation depended upon the people's being deaf to those advisers who would sever them from their own fellow citizens, and connect them {to} aliens, is the reason why, to-day, the Working Class must be deaf to those inauspicious characters who point to the Capitalist Class as the "brother" upon whom to rely, and with whom to ally themselves.

The world over there are to-day but two Nations—the Capitalist Class and the Working Class. The worker allies himself with aliens when he clasps the hand of brotherhood with any but his class.

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