

EDITORIAL

RIGHT AT ALL POINTS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

IN the course of an extensive, copyrighted interview on present social conditions, published by the Detroit., Mich., *Free Press* of the first of the current month, George W. Perkins, a former member of the plutocratic firm of J.P. Morgan & Co., says:

“Three alternatives confront business to-day. They are, first, the adoption by business men of a broad co-partnership method of doing business; second, a rapid drifting toward government ownership of many branches of business; and, third, Socialism. Does any businessman doubt that the first is infinitely preferable?”

Here are four distinct statements. Separately and collectively—right they are.

From a bird’s-eye view of all the four it follows:

1. Mr. Perkins does not fall into the error of confusing “government ownership” with “Socialism.” He knows the two to be radically different propositions.

He knows that “government ownership”—a term that implies the existence and even supremacy of the political State—is a form of class rule; whereas, “Socialism”—a term that implies the overthrow of the political State, and the erection of the Industrial Republic—snuffs out class rule, leaving no standing room for exploitation.

2. Mr. Perkins is too level-headed and clear-sighted a capitalist to hesitate which to prefer, the iron-fist or the velvet hand.

Government ownership is best typified in Russia. It is the “iron-fist”—economic and political concentration of powers. That has its fascinations for rulerdom, but also its serious disadvantages—as exemplified in Russia.

The first of Mr. Perkins’s three alternatives—“the adoption by business men of a broad co-partnership method of doing business”—is the “velvet hand.” The method

is well known as “profit sharing.” It is indeed broad. Employers and employes are enveloped in one common partnership mantle. Nothing can be broader—and broad is the benefit thereof to the “business men.” If the plundered can but be chloroformed into the belief that they are partners with the plunderer there would surely be peace, the peace of the graveyard. Mr. Perkins gives his decided preference to this alternative.

It requires an effort of genius, which we hasten to applaud, for a member of the Ruling Class, like Mr. Perkins, to see the alternatives so clear, and state them so definitely, despite the dust of confusion that rattled capitalists, along with the heels-over-head so-called Socialist party leaders, combine in raising.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official website of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded August 2012

slpns@slp.org