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## Those 'Middle of the Roaders'

By DANIEL DE LEON

**B**oth foes and friends have been giving undue credit to that element of the People's party now generally designated as "Middle of the Roaders."

Their friends, together with their empty headed admirers, have looked upon them as uncompromising adversaries of the old parties; their foes have done them the honor of calling them stubborn fanatics. Neither is true.

The "Middle of the Roader" is a Southern element; it is not an economic class and represents none; the breath of its nostrils is antipathy for the "Bourbon Brigadiers," who treated its men with contumely and would not admit them in the select circle of the "Brigadiers." The "Middle of the Roaders" have no quarrel with gold or silver; least of all with the social system of wage slavery. They are themselves wage slave holders. Hence the "Middle of the Roader" is not amenable to the allurements of "free coinage," the "insult to silver" does not start his pulse beating; hence any and every party is his ally, whether that party be a gold or a silver standard one, that will aid him to humiliate the "Bourbon Brigadiers."

That this element stood in St. Louis in the "middle of the road" resulted simply from the circumstance that the majority of the Populists had gone over to the Democratic side. To draw these over, the "Anti-Bourbon Brigadier" element had to step into the middle of the road. Had it been in the majority, it would have been found on the Republican side of the road, and the other fellows would then have filled the role of "Middle of the Roaders."

At St. Louis, Populism decomposed, by the heat of the approaching Social Revolution, into its component parts. The only class conscious element in its fold merged with its kindred—the middle class that controls the Democratic Party; while the elements that were not clear upon their class interests have been floating about. Among these are the workingmen and the "Middle of the Roaders." What the

workingmen element may yet do is not yet certain, although the signs multiply that the bulk of it will find its way into the camp of its brothers—the Socialist Labor Party. As to the “Middle of the Roaders,” they will go to the Republicans—where they belong. Only there can they find that solace that they are in search of for the social snubs they have received and are daily receiving at the hands of the “Bourbon Brigadiers” whom they in fact envy.

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

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