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EDITORIAL

## INDIVIDUALS AND INTERESTS.

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**“I**F you want to plant a Government in the heart of a nation, attach to it INTERESTS and not INDIVIDUALS.” So runs through the ages, in all manner of languages and all manner of garbs a maxim that experience, however loose, had established. Empirically uttered, flung about as a phrase couched in resonant language, trippingly reeled off the tongue as a tart expression, the maxim passed unchallenged; it even pleased. So soon, however, as the constructive thought, imbedded in the maxim—the Class Struggle—, was held up; so soon as the scientific scalpel of Socialism was applied, the “reason why” laid bare, and thereby the path revealed by which material interests—thitherto the rock on which all aspirations after human well-being suffered shipwreck—, could be made the corner-stone of human well-being; in other words, just so soon as the maxim could be made practical, the hue and cry was raised against it. It threatened the class-power of the exploiting class. The several paid mouth-pieces of the exploiters tooted their pieces against the maxim, each on his special key: The pulpiteer, beating on his pulpit, drum ecclesiastic, declared it un-Godly, immoral and “subversive of religion”; the professor thumped his desk and “demonstrated” the maxim to be scientifically uncanonic; the politician, fervently raised his eyes to “The Flag,” and in patriotic ecstasy asked: “Can such un-Americanism be?” And so on, all along the line, with the dupes taking up the refrain.

But a great Truth, pregnant with the well-being of the human race, cannot be permanently howled down. Fate takes charge of it. Facts will cumulate, against which perverse and corrupt declamation cannot avail. Such facts are now showering fast upon the heads of the Labor-fleecing capitalist class, together with its understrappers. Texas now contributes one that, like a brilliant meteor, is lighting the economic sky wide and bright.

Of all the States in the Union, Texas was the only one that took a stand against the Trust that revealed sincerity. In other States, anti-Trust laws, so-called, had

been enacted for the express purpose of promoting the Trust, and were successful. New York, under Democratic-Republican rule, is a leading illustration. Otherwise in Democratic Texas. Her anti-Trust law was in earnest; Rockefeller was hauled up in effigy before it; requisitions for his extradition were issued to the Governors of this State and of Missouri. Of course, nothing came of it all, nevertheless, the attempt was bona fide. Now all this changes suddenly. What has happened? Let an Austin, Tex., press despatch itself tell the simple tale:

AUSTIN, Tex., April 15.—The question of whether the Standard Oil Company shall be allowed to enter the Beaumont oil field and carry on its business of producing and marketing fuel oil is agitating the Democratic politicians and oil operators.

Many of the leading Democrats of the State, including several members of the Congressional delegation, are extensively interested in the Beaumont oil fields and since the prospect of their acquiring a fortune is bright, their attitude toward the Standard Oil Company has materially changed and some of them openly declare that the Oil Trust should be permitted to enter the State and that the provision of the anti-Trust law, which is specially directed against that corporation, should not be enforced by the State authorities.

This change of front is legitimate. Capitalism itself is a form of Government. The Trust is a leading part of capitalism; accordingly, it is a leading part in a certain form of Government. Not INDIVIDUALS were sought to be attached to the Trust form of Government. Rhetoric, exhortations address themselves to the INDIVIDUAL, and they fall upon him like water on a duck's back, so long as they are repellant to his INTERESTS; the moment, however, when INTERESTS are attached, the INDIVIDUAL is brought over, rhetoric or no rhetoric, exhortation or no exhortation.

The quondam anti-Trust Texas Democrats, at the time with interests opposed to the Trust, followed their interests instinctively in being out in arms against the Trust; to-day, with interests that the Oil Trust promotes, their anti-Trust swords are promptly sheathed, and they are ready to strew flowers in the path of the once denounced "Octopus." The Trust form of capitalist government, having bothered little with INDIVIDUALS, and having ATTACHED to itself INTERESTS is planted in the hearts of its former Texas adversaries. The fools wonder; the Socialists understand.

Along the lines of the social architecture marked out by this glaring fact are the

walls of the Socialist Republic to be reared. Let this, that, or the other INDIVIDUAL go his way in peace; the INTERESTS of the Working Class must be attached to the liberating idea of Socialism. These INTERESTS demand the collective ownership of the modern tool of production; let these INTERESTS be quickened and the Socialist Republic will be planted in the heart of the workers—the nation!

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