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EDITORIAL

THE FRENCH SITUATION INVERTED.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE discussion of reciprocity with Cuba is bringing out a situation that exactly inverts the situation in France, when the treaty was signed that ended the Franco-German war. Both situations shed a mighty light on the “patriotism” of the capitalist.

In France, the treaty of peace contained a cession to Germany of French territory. Such an act would appear galling to France. No doubt it was, and the ruling class of France did its best to appear to share the national sensitiveness. Nevertheless, those who engineered the treaty, with no less a man at their head than Thiers, not only felt not galled by the cession, they favored it. The reason was that they were interested in textile industries but shortly before started in the Northern Departments; the territories ceded to Germany were extensively taken up with textile industries, of long standing; so long as the latter were French territory, no tariff could be loaded upon them in the interest of the concerns situated in the North; by ceding to Germany those Eastern territories whose textile products seriously competed with the North, they became subject to tariffs; loaded down with duties, the goods of those territories could not compete with the “domestic” products, and these would boom. Accordingly, those territories were ceded to Germany with a bounding heart, while the eyes of the ceders shed crocodile tears, and their tongues patriotically wagged for “revenge.” Thus it was in France.

Now we are having a similar performance in this country: only, the picture is inverted. While in France textile capitalists shouted “patriotism” at the same time that they dismembered their country, we are now seeing the American Jingo, “Imperialists,” “Expansionists,” in short, the “patriots” par excellence, going in many places back upon their “Imperialism” and “Expansionism” in a violent attempt to keep the country from expanding by the incorporation of Cuba in the

Union. And why is this thus? The answer leaps to the ear at the sight of the men who are loudest in opposing reciprocity. They are the Henry T. Oxnards, of the American Beet-Sugar Association, and the Fryes, of the New England Tobacco Growers' Association.

The capitalist's fatherland, for which he has his patriotism on tap, is his pockets. He will patriotically dismember his country or stand in the way of his country's greatness accordingly as his pockets may demand.

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