

EDITORIAL

## POSSIBILISM AND IMPOSSIBILISM.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HE term “Impossibilism” was introduced into American political parlance by the Socialist party in its struggle with the Socialist Labor Party and as a justification for S.P. existence against the S.L.P. The term turned up in the rare intervals when the S.P. Officialdom-and-Press dropped its tactics of slander. Even then, not argument, proper, was substituted for calumnious vituperation. A conclusion was hurled, with the premises and reasoning left out.

The omission is now being filled by Roosevelt—and convincingly so.

“Impossibilism” means a policy that does not immediately materialize in votes: “Possibilism” is the opposite; it does materialize immediately in more votes than does “Impossibilism.”

“Impossibilism” is the policy that educates, and, education is a slow process. “Possibilism” is the policy that lashes the waters, and that makes a noise.

“Impossibilism” makes notoriety, together with the usual accompaniment of cash, impossible: “Possibilism” makes such notoriety and cash quite possible.

“Impossibilism” holds that it is better to lose to-day in a cause that is bound to triumph later, than to triumph to-day in a cause that is bound to lose later: “Possibilism” rather triumphs now, though certain to lose later, than lose now though bound to triumph later.

“Impossibilism,” accordingly, is a bone that sticks across the throat of capitalist rule: “Possibilism is a bread-pill that the throat of capitalist rule can completely swallow—as it did through Roosevelt.,

The Socialist party is, indeed, “Possible”: the Socialist Labor Party is, indeed, “Impossible.”

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