

# The Commoner.

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### SELLING HUMAN BEINGS

A reader of The Commoner sends in an editorial which recently appeared in the Cedar Rapids (Iowa) Republican in which the editor suggests the advisability of selling the Philippine Islands to Japan. The Republican says:

Whenever peace is concluded between Russia and Japan, the latter will come into possession of large sums of money. The Japanese have been looking for more land on which to expand their race and their national characteristics. Their little island is filled to overflowing.

Why not try to sell them the Philippine islands? The United States does not need those islands. Very few Americans will ever be able to live and thrive in that warm climate. There is nothing in common between the American and the Malay. They do not understand each other and they can not help each other very much for that reason. But the Japanese do understand the Malays and they can get along with them. They can intermarry and have a civilization in common.

So if Japan is willing to pay the price, why not let her have the Philippine islands? What does the United States want to go across the oceans to engage in the unappreciative task of trying to do something decent for semi-savages? This nation might hold a seaport or a coaling station or two in the islands for naval bases, but outside of those there is little in the islands that Americans can not get along without. There is still work enough for development on this side of the waters. The United States wants to get back to the good old Washington practice of keeping as many of its eggs as possible in one basket and that the home basket.

The Republican seems to be tired of the Philippine problem, and it has reason to be, for the nation has lost money and standing in its attempt to ape the colonial systems of other countries. But why regard the Filipinos as merchandise to be turned over at a fair price to some other nation? Why not recognize the inalienable rights of the people of the Philippines, and turn the government over to them? Has our nation so forgotten its traditions and its principles as to regard human beings as the proper objects of bargain and sale? Can we go out and buy people at so much a head, and then dispose of them at an advance whenever we can find a purchaser?



THE BOTTOM KNOCKED OUT OF HIS ARGUMENT

## .....OPPOSING POPULAR GOVERNMENT.....

A few months ago the Cincinnati Enquirer announced that it would no longer support the principles of the democratic party. It did not say this in so many words, but the language of the editorial was such that no other construction could be placed upon it. It has proceeded with its anti-democratic program so far that it has now announced its opposition to the election of senators by direct vote of the people. It criticises the people of Wisconsin for adopting a primary system, the provisions of which include a direct vote on candidates for United States senate. It says that this attempt to secure the election of senators by popular vote "is carrying to an extreme the current fad and heresy of legislative interference with the private affairs of a political party, which is a purely voluntary organization not created or constituted by constitutions or statutes." "Private affairs!" That is good.

The Enquirer then proceeds to scold the law-making powers for "tinkering" with the management of parties. It says that the Wisconsin law is a part of the movement "to take the election of the conservative body, which is undoubtedly

the balance wheel of our system, out of the hands in which the constitution put it." Too bad! Four times the popular branch of the federal congress has, by more than a two-thirds vote (in fact by an almost unanimous vote) adopted a resolution proposing the necessary constitutional amendment, but this "conservative body" has stood in the way of the change and as Mr. McLean, the owner of the Enquirer, lives at Washington he cannot be ignorant of the reason for the senate's refusal. It is because the senate, as now constituted, is so largely chosen by the corporations and so obligated to them that it impudently and insolently throws itself across the path marked out by the people. Today the senate is the bulwark of organized wealth, and its subserviency to the trusts is open and notorious.

But the Enquirer goes farther. It repudiates the whole theory of popular government. It says:

A member of a state legislature in voting on a United States Senatorship, is responsible to his constituents in his own district. If he is a man decently qualified for public life he will not allow the "instructions" of a state