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EDITORIAL

THE DANBURY MOVE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

ON the 12th of this month a unique suit, or rather, series of suits, was instituted in the United States District Court. The plaintiff is the firm of D.E. Loewe & Co. of Danbury, Ct. The defendants are all the national officers of the American Federation of Labor, along with the national officers of the United Hatters of North America, and 250 members of this organization, residents of Danbury. As an accompaniment of the suit, the homes and bank accounts of nearly 150 Danbury hatters were attached. The complaint of the plaintiff firm is that it has been damaged in the amount of \$240,000 by the conduct of the above named organizations in boycotting its goods as punishment for its refusal to employ only Union labor in its factory. The suit is brought under the anti-Trust law that forbids acts in restraint of trade.

There is no lie that can live. In the words of Carlyle, a lie is a cheque drawn against Nature's bank, bound to be returned with the endorsement "No effects." The suit of the firm of D.E. Loewe & Co. is the endorsement "No effects" with which is flung back at Society the false cheque drawn against {the} bank of facts both by the plaintiff firm of D.E. Loewe & Co., and each and every one of the national officers whom it now sues. That false cheque is the lie, or consecutive lies, that the "Working Class and Capitalist Class are brothers with reciprocal, if not identical, interests"; the lie that "harmonious relations are possible between the two"; the lie that the Capitalist is not a vampire on the Workingmen's flank; the lie that justice can exist in the land without the overthrow of Capitalism and the rearing of Socialism.

The test is easy. Imagine a blacklisted workingman, deprived of the opportunity to earn his living in shop after shop in his town, because his employer dislikes his economic and political views and his insistence on free speech; imagine such a

blacklisted workingman, traveling from town to town where his trade is conducted, and finding the arm of the blacklist ahead of him; imagine such a workingman, driven to the edge of the Nation, virtually pushed into exile, as so many are, turning sharp around and saying: "I shall look for redress in the Courts"; imagine him bringing a suit in the United States Courts, basing his complaint on the anti-Trust law and proving that the blacklist is a boycott and in restraint of his trade—the selling of his only merchandise his labor power; imagine such a workingman suing for damages!

The point needs but to be stated and the fact of the series of lies, above cited, leaps to sight. Such a suit would be roared down as absurd. And absurd it would be. It would be absurd because the workingman's interests are not reciprocal with the capitalist's; because under the capitalist system the workingman is himself an article of merchandise, with no rights that the capitalist need respect other than such as he may choose to bestow upon his horse. Such a suit would be absurd because it would proceed from a denial of the criminal foundations of capitalism.

D.E. Loewe & Co. may have been injured. But the existing social system is grounded on the principle of injury to somebody. To redress the injury claimed to have been suffered by D.E. Loewe & Co. is to inflict injury on others, on workingmen by depriving them of even a weapon of defense. Capitalism is not based on equality of rights. No social system is where classes exist. In all such social systems one class is bound to be the under dog.

Crooks may try to conceal the fact; visionaries may be too addle-pated to see it; the fact remains, all the same, that the existing social system will keep the land in a cat-and-dog fight until the Working Class, its head illumined by Socialist truth, and its chest expanded by the consciousness of the high mission of its class to free society for all time from the night-mare of class rule will clap a perpetual injunction on the capitalist class together with the echoers of its lies—the miscreant labor fakir.

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