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EDITORIAL

TO THE STRIKING PAINTERS ON THE MUNICIPAL BUILDING.

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WORKINGMEN—Barely organized into the Industrial Workers of the World to resist and overcome the encroachments of the employing class, and in the very midst of your battle, you were approached by a set of men who sought to draw you away from your organization into their own, and who claimed that they, not your organizers, were the I.W.W.

As workers of experience such conduct, we know, was enough to put you on your guard against the prowlers who sought to buzz you. None who mean well by workingmen will ever seek to introduce confusion, a strike being on. Furthermore, as workers of experience, the language held to you by the prowlers—“What good will the casting of a little paper ballot do you?”—served you, we know, as further warning. To men engaged, like yourselves, in an economic struggle, with no immediate thought of politics on their mind, the language of the prowlers betrayed distinctly what they were—dynamiters, still and dishonestly veiling their purpose, yet dynamiters sure enough, the worst bane of the Working Class.

We know that the conduct, backed by the language of the prowlers, was ample warning to you. Nevertheless, a word to you:—

Wide and deep is the cleft that divides the I.W.W. from the A.F. of L., on the one side, and the bogus I.W.W. on the other.

Being no puller-in, the I.W.W. imparts to its recruits the fullest information in order that they may choose for themselves, and that none join it without knowing what it is he rejects.

As to the A.F. of L., its affiliation with the National Civic Federation sufficiently indicates its principles, even if these principles were not proclaimed by itself—“The Brotherhood of Capital and Labor.” If you believe that the Capitalist

Class and yours, the Working Class, are brothers; if you believe that brotherly should be the relations with the capitalist who lives upon your toil, screws down your wages, mutilates your limbs, and periodically even kills you through the pressure behind him for more and more and more profits; if you believe that you can get along in the long run by seeing to yourself only, to the extent of scabbing upon your fellow workers;—if you believe in that, then your place is with Gompers' and Mitchell's and O'Connell's A.F. of L. concern.

As to the bogus I.W.W., its utterances are clear enough as exhibited by those of its members who prowled around you. If the ballot is to be wholly discarded there is nothing left but physical force. Armed and disciplined physical force is out of the question for the workers. Organized physical force being left out, there is left only the unorganized, that is the individual physical force. That is dynamite, Anarchy, in other words. Of such opinion was the Labor Movement when in its infancy. A sad experience taught it better things. It discovered that Anarchy spells s-l-u-m-m-e-r-y, and is, therefore, a Labor degrader. If this experience is not yet yours, and you reject the A.F. of L., then your place is with the I.W.W. of the prowlers.

As to the I.W.W., it stands upon the principle that between the Working Class and the Capitalist Class there is an irrepressible conflict, to be ended only by the overthrow of the Capitalist and the establishment of the Industrial Republic; and that in order to reach that goal the Working Class must stand united upon both the economic and the political field. The I.W.W. has learned the lesson that, without the Union, the Working Class can not be emancipated, and that without their political party, the Working Class can not organize its Union upon a proper basis. The I.W.W. learned the lesson that pure and simple politics debauches the Unions, and Pure and Simple Unionism leads either to A.F. of Hellism, or to the even worse ditch of Anarchy.

If you are emancipated from the thrall of A.F. of L. principle and from the shackles of Anarchy then your place is in the I.W.W.

Choose—there is no middle way.

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