

EDITORIAL

## FRIENDS OF LAWRENCE LABOR.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**O**N January 24 the *Boston Traveler* published on its front page with extra type and extra display headline an autograph letter, written to Miss Mary Boyle O'Reilly by Dudley M. Holman, a member of the political family of Gov. Eugene N. Foss of Massachusetts, in which, among many other noteworthy passages, the following one occurs:

“The human side of the industrial problem receives generally but scant attention. Manufacturers are much more solicitous for their machines of iron and steel than for the flesh and blood machines that work as incessantly under conditions that are well-nigh intolerable, for it costs nothing to replace the worn-out human machines, while to renew the steel machines means to cut into the dividend rate.”

The letter was, of course, written “for publication.” The circumstance, moreover, of the letter’s appearing at the very time when the Lawrence strike broke out; the circumstance of its pointedly referring to the President of the American Woolen Company as the “one man really responsible for the present situation in Lawrence”; the further circumstance of the writer being the Governor’s own private secretary; finally, the circumstance of the letter being written on the stationery of the Executive Chamber at the State House in Boston;—all these circumstances combine to impart to the performance the stamp of an official act;—all these circumstances combine to do more; they combine to carry the unsophisticated working class off their base with the belief that such a thing is possible as loyalty to them on the part of bourgeois officials.

The very next day after publication of the Holman letter, and writing in the identical State House in Boston, and on the identical and official stationery, Governor Foss issued a special message to the Massachusetts Legislature on the situation

in Lawrence, and after an abundance of platitudes concerning his duty “to safeguard public and private property, including the unemployed operatives themselves,” the Governor comes down to hard pan by declaring that “*investigation may show that some reduction of wages was necessary.*”

The workingman, who places the slightest reliance upon any bourgeois manifestation of “loyalty” to the workers, steps upon a banana peel. In the wrangle that is perpetual within the bourgeois Happy Family, Foss interests may clash with Wood interests, and then each—one time the one, another time the other,—may for a flitting instant say a kind word for the workers, but the kind word is intended, not to benefit these, it is intended to injure the opposite bourgeois, and benefit the one who utters the word. Nothing that is of benefit to any bourgeois can any longer be of benefit to the working class; it is bound to be of benefit to the capitalist class, and that class only.

“Friend of Labor” Governor Foss and his Secretary illustrate the point. The bourgeois may give with his left, only quickly to take back with his right hand.

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