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ONE CENT.

EDITORIAL

AN OPEN LETTER.

By DANIEL DE LEON

CITIZENS Industrial Association, New York, N.Y.

Gentlemen:—This office is in receipt of your favor of the 20th ulto. with enclosure intended for publication, as a “matter of interest to our readers.”

It so happened that before perusing your letter-head we ran our eyes over the “enclosure.” We truly trust you may not take us for trivial if we confide to you the information that the enclosure made us smile, and the smile grew to laughter, and the laughter grew to a roar. In your rats-in-a-sinking-ship desperation, you have become so rattled that you are positively idiotically silly. So you really believe such a thing possible as political candidates “who stand free from pledges to any organization”? Where outside of the Fiji Islands is such a thing conceivable? Or can you be still more idiotically silly as, knowing such a thing to be impossible in a class-government, to imagine you can humbug other people into the belief? Such a scheme smacks of the joke practiced upon children of inducing them to try to drop a pinch of salt on a bird’s tail in order to catch it. Of course, you, having now a government consisting of men pledged to the organization of labor-plundering capitalism, are anxious to mislead the unrepresented Working Class, now organizing to be represented in government, into being taken in by your “unpledged-to-any-organization candidates.” That pinch of salt can not be dropped upon the tail of the Working Class bird.

Our amusement ceased, however, when we read your letter-head and were reminded by it that you are the publishers of the *Square Deal*—a paper as true to its name as the “Prime”-labeled meat cans, that contain children’s fingers and other dainties of the kind, are true to their label. Amusement then ceased and amazement took its place at the effrontery of the publishers of such paper pretending to sound

the alarm against Anarchy when your publication is itself a loud call for riot.

The ways of civilized society demand that everything should be done in order to insure calmness and impartiality in trials, especially in trials where the lives of human beings are at stake. Like a pack of Anarchists with blood in their eyes you violated the principle. Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone are in jail awaiting trial under the charge of having blown up ex-Gov. Steunenberg of Idaho with a dynamite bomb. The only testimony upon which the charge hangs is the alleged confession of a self-confessed multi-murderer. This notwithstanding, and notwithstanding the many circumstances that point to the theory of a plot, now happily frustrated, which your fellows of the Mine Owners' Association concocted to murder the three prisoners off-hand under the cloak of a legal verdict;—all this notwithstanding, you were guilty of the indecency of publishing in your paper pictures of these men in the act of assassination.

The freedom of the press includes the freedom of an organization of lawless men, like yours, to pillory themselves. You have done that to perfection. *The People* is not in the ring to promote banditism; it is here to put the kibosh upon the banditism of capitalism. We decline to publish your poisonous trash and thus help your organization pick the pockets of the workingman by stuffing their heads with your false pretences.

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

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