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EDITORIAL

CONGER—ALLDS.

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THE Senate of this State is investigating the charges made by Senator Conger against his colleague Allds. A full week has been consumed in the trial. At least another week will be spent before the end is reached.

In a nutshell, the facts alleged are these: In 1901 several bills were introduced in the Assembly affecting the construction of bridges on highways. These bills were finally consolidated into one—the Maltby-Stevens bill. The object of the same was “strike,” a term applied to bills not intended to be passed, but the purpose of which is to be bought off by interests whom their passage would injure. The Maltby-Stevens bill threatened in this way the firm of Conger Brothers of Chenango, a firm that had risen from a country store to a thriving bridge-building concern. The firm consisted de facto of one Frank Conger and his brother Benn. Benn Conger was an Assemblyman in 1901 and so was Jotham P. Allds. Allds was on the Committee that had the disposal of the Maltby-Stevens bill. Towards the end of the session of 1901 Allds informed his colleague that “something had to be done” to keep his Committee from reporting the Maltby-Stevens bill. Allds demanded for himself \$5,000. Conger beat him down to \$1,000. Thereupon Deacon Moe, the confidential clerk of the Congers, came to Albany with \$6,500; distributed the same, in the room and under the direction of Benn Conger, into three envelopes, one of them with \$1,000 addressed to Allds, and sallied forth under the pilotage of Benn Conger, the then Assemblyman and now Senator, who introduced him to the three bribees, Alld included, and to whom, in Conger’s presence, the respective envelopes were delivered. Such is the testimony given by Moe and corroborated in detail by Conger himself.

Whether the testimony be true or not, the really alarming, the ominous spectacle which the affair presents is not that of bribery—bribery by a capitalist firm, bribery of capitalist legislators. Whether this particular case is true or not

matters comparatively little. Every sane man knows that these practices are common among our pious, law-abiding ruling class. What is really alarming and ominous is that, with not one word, has the capitalist press or pulpit condemned the self-confessed conduct of Senator Benn Conger.

What man of character, if approached with the proposition that Allds did Conger, would not instanter slap the face of the corrupt proposer, and kick him out of his presence? What man of character, if so approached, would not immediately raise the hue-and-cry, turn the light upon the corrupt proposer and his proposition, and immediately institute a house-cleaning process? What man of character would allow himself to be “held up,” thereby rendering himself guilty under the Constitution, and, as a consequence, placing himself for evermore under the thumb of an Allds? Common sense, to say nothing of morals, dictated a firm and immediate stand. This stand the then Assemblyman, now Senator, failed to take. Conger did worse. For nine long years he held his tongue. All the time, aware of what he says Allds had done, justified, accordingly, to believe that Allds was all the time at his old trick, Conger, nevertheless, remained dumb, willing that the corruption spread. And yet, not a note of condemnation of Conger is to be caught in the bourgeois pulpit or press, the alleged paladins of Law, Order, Morality! The one and the other detonate against Allds—and the one and the other, by silence, acquit and uphold the infinitely more guilty Conger.

Since the days of the Jeremiahs and Isaiahs lamentations are idle. They lack the constructive power. Vain it would be to lament over the depravity that the silence of the bourgeois press and pulpit, with regard to Benn Conger, proves to be general and dominant. From the Socialist’s breast no whining lament will proceed. The effect of the ominous spectacle upon him is the confirmation of the principle that, under circumstances such as these, Compromise may be tolerated in no form. That the only note to sound and stick to is the note of UNCOMPROMISING Reason—that alone can raise the standard of mental integrity, without which there will be only rotten cloth—cloth that can hold no stitch—for Socialism to work upon.

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