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EDITORIAL

ON YOUR GUARD, WORKERS OF PASSAIC!

By DANIEL DE LEON

IN its April 3d report of the I.W.W. strike in Passaic, the *New York Times*—the personal organ of “Dummy Director” Schiff, and, no doubt, of many, if not all, the silk manufacturers against whom the I.W.W. strike is directed—mentioned with not a word either the positive progress made by the I.W.W. strikers, or the mammoth meeting these held the day before at their headquarters, where 1,500 weavers packed the hall to overflow. Instead of which the *Times* filled up its space with romances concerning the “enthusiasm” that Haywood created by arriving in Passaic, and addressing a meeting, where, in the language of the manufacturers, he denounced Reinstein, the leader of the I.W.W. strike in Passaic, as an “impostor,” and proclaimed his own, the “I’m-a-bum” outfit, body, “the genuine I.W.W.”

Had the *Times* stuck to this line of “reporting”; had the *Times* stuck to the line of implying a “big and enthusiastic” meeting assembled in support of Haywood, and thereby suppressing the fact that, Haywood, being thoroughly discredited, his meeting was a fizzle, which crowned the introductory fizzle of a fizzled parade, in marked contrast to the simultaneous meeting held by the I.W.W.; had the *Times* stuck to the line of reporting Haywood’s echoings of the villifications that the manufacturers of Passaic are bestowing upon Reinstein; in short, had the *Times* stuck to the line of serving the manufacturers by setting afloat false information concerning the I.W.W.;—had the *Times* done that, then its April 3d mendacious report on Passaic would be of the ordinary nature, unrelieved by novelty, and undeserving attention.

It was otherwise. The *Times* reported that “the strikers had wearied of the peaceable methods ordered by Reinstein,” and it was these wearied men who furnished the “enthusiasm.” This is notable.

Why this disdain for “peaceable methods”? Why this whooping it up for a ridiculously small meeting, composed of such few Italian Anarchists as could be scraped together? Why this love and affection for Haywood, an Anarchist who openly preaches “Direct Action”? Why all this on the part of the *Times*? Of course this does not run counter to the *Times*’s intent to create what confusion it can among the strikers. But the *Times*’s conduct is more comprehensive and goes further.

The Passaic strike, like the rest of the strikes that are being conducted by the I.W.W., has afforded the manufacturers not the slightest pretext to fetch in the militia. Different from Haywood’s Anarchist, hence, bogus I.W.W., which starts with riots and only howls at capitalist outrages against workers on strike, the Passaic I.W.W. quickly set the wheels of the law in motion against the manufacturers’ hirelings who initiated violence, and it now has several of them under arrest, with warrants out for others. This novel method, of combining up-to-the-handle proletarian class-conscious action with the enforcement of the law against manufacturers’ brutality, has had its appalling effect upon Messrs. Manufacturers. In a number of mills, in neighboring Paterson and Astoria, N.Y., for instance, manufacturers have been forced to surrender. The case is pressing. Something must be done to break the spell. But how? The firm, orderly aggressive and aggressively orderly posture of the strike continues uninterrupted, and is a matter of public notoriety. True enough, manufacturers, when driven reckless in the struggle to squeeze profits out of labor, will violate all the statutes that stand in their way. Nevertheless, there is some check to this tendency. The Genius of the Age can not be outraged with impunity. Some pretext must be found in order to give a color of justice to the manufacturers’ breaches of the law in the public’s eye. How can that be done if the I.W.W. aggravatingly persists in its firm-wise posture?

At this point the *Times* jumps to the rescue: “Will the I.W.W. do no acts that will justify the militia’s interference in the public eye? I will supply the act. I shall publish false reports concerning ‘enthusiastic’ approval of Direct Action. Thus I will create a public impression that will readily justify the importation of the militia.”

That is the meaning of the *Times*’s false report.

And it is ominous. Coming, as it does, together with the turning up in Passaic of so sinister a figure in the Labor Movement as Haywood—a figure the trail of whose

mob-organization is marked with workers' blood—the warning is timely to the Passaic proletariat that they be on their guard.

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