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EDITORIAL

## IN THE GLASS INDUSTRY.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**T**HE pernicious effects of the private ownership of machinery and the fallacious teachings of pure and simple trades-unionism are now to be witnessed in the gas belt of Indiana.

In this territory, there are located many of the plants of the American Window Glass Company (the window glass trust). These plants have been ordered shut down, owing to the fact that the trust has decided to equip them with its newly invented glass-blowing machine. This shut down has caused intense feeling among the glass blowers at present employed in the plants. They fear that the machines will supplant them entirely and that the trust will be independent of them in the future.

It is not easy to contemplate the loss of one's occupation. Such an event means the loss of years of training and experience needed to acquire skill. It means the loss of the means whereby the worker and his family live. In these days of labor markets overcrowded with the young and vigorous, it is difficult for a man past thirty, used up by exhausting and intense labor, to enter another trade and secure the necessities of life.

So, coupled with this fear there has gone a feeling of resentment against the introduction of the newly invented machine. This resentment is said to have found expression in an attempt to burn the plant at Hartford City. While this report is to be taken with a grain of salt, until verified, it is, under the circumstances, likely to be true. Not only are the glass blowers fearful of losing their means of livelihood, but they are also the victims of the false teachings of the labor fakirs who run pure and simple unionism. This has aggravated their position. For a long time they have been taught that the interests of the trust and themselves were identical. They were made shareholders of the corporation. Their leader, Simon Burns, was made their representative on the board of directors. Now, all at once, they find the delusion to be what it is. They find that this

identity of interests is a myth. They are no longer to be regarded even as employees of the company. They are to be thrown out on the street, their skill rendered useless, with the conditions of the modern labor market against them. The existence of themselves and families is thereby jeopardized. Rendered desperate by their future prospects, kept ignorant of their true economic status, they strike blindly.

Were they living under Socialism, the invention would be a means of lightening their toil. At present it only serves to increase the hoards of their masters—the capitalist owners of the trust. Had they been tutored in the school of the class struggle—in that of new trades unionism—they would have realized that invention menaced their livelihood as long as capitalism prevails.

The lesson is plain. Down capitalism by means of the S.L.P. ballot. Instruct the workers by organizing them in the S.T. & L.A.!

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