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EDITORIAL

THE WHYNESS OF LONG'S WHEREFORE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

NOTHING is needed but a good quantity of lack of information by the workingmen on the interests of their own class in order to have the rank weed of the labor misleader, or fakir, to shoot up in their midst. The present tribulations of the lithographers with their "President" Long is a case in point; and the case even proves more; it proves that under proper conditions the labor misleader can even become brazen in his work of misleading.

The issue just now with the lithographers is whether they shall submit their grievances to "arbitration." Everybody who knows anything of the labor question knows that the word "arbitration" is a misnomer when applied to Capital and Labor. Arbitration implies equality between the parties to the transaction; they must be peers. If they are not that "arbitration" between them is impossible, and the word can only be used as a cloak for fiendish purposes; between parties that are not peers, "arbitration" is simply a tying of the hands of the inferior in the interest of the superior party, so that the latter may lay on the lash more heavily under the semblance of the latter's consent. Capital and Labor (even if the Labor be artist Labor) are not peers. The former is master, the latter is slave—an article of merchandise, whose price depends upon its price in the market, the same as any other merchandise, but a merchandise that, being human, can give trouble, and must be humored, narcotized, dust thrown into its eyes to make the life of its master easier and his work of plundering smoother. "Arbitration" is one of those narcotics, and dusts.

It goes without saying that "President" Long, if not openly, then secretly, favors "arbitration"—as the employers are pushing for. And "President" Long knows what he is about. Only recently, the brewers of this vicinity were trepanned by their labor misleaders into contracts with their employers that place heavier burdens upon the

rank and file, and that tie their hands by reason of just the arbitration clause that the contract provides for. How that clause works the rank and file of the brewers are finding out. That moreover, "President" Long knows just what he is about on the matter, that there is no room for doubt as to his full knowledge of the trap he is trying to lead the lithographers into, is evidenced by the praises which he has recently been bestowing upon the *Volkszeitung*.

The rank and file of the brewers are at this very time coming forward with denunciations of the *Volkszeitung*, and they back up their charges with documentary proof. They show that, bribed by brewers' advertisements, the *Volkszeitung* "battled heroically for labor" by giving only the labor fakirs among the brewers who were holding up the employers' side, room in its columns, and suppressing the objections of the rank and file during the troubles that ripened in the present iniquitous contracts, which, among other things, provide for "arbitration." The iniquities of the *Volkszeitung* in this its latest sell out of Labor are just now the subject of the indignation of the brewery workingmen, and of extensive articles and comments by them. Can there be any mistake as to the whyness of the wherefore "President" Long has not bouquets enough to shower upon the Social Democratic *Volkszeitung*? Hardly!

There is nothing to arbitrate between Labor and Capital. So long as the capitalist system exists, the latter is master and tyrant. Labor's only course is to organize economically so tightly on its own class lines that it may be able to offer some resistance to the encroachments of the capitalist class and thereby give no chance for fakirs to feather their own nests, and at the same time organize politically under the banner of the Socialist Labor Party, that seeks to dislodge the capitalist class from its principle fastness, the political power, and that accordingly has no room in its ranks for such privately owned papers as the *Volkszeitung*, run for peesiness at the cost of Labor's hide.

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

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