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EDITORIAL

GIVE THEM ROPE!

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE wise man of antiquity who said, Oh, that mine enemy may write a book! did not know the American vernacular, or he would have said, Give my enemy rope! The two phrases express the same idea, only the latter puts it more forcibly. Give a scamp a chance to utter himself, give him rope, and he will hang himself—that is the present status, self-hanged, of the scab concern known as the Volkszeitung Corporation, in the matter of the lithographers.

In the recent trouble of the lithographers it was obvious that the men were being sold out by the leaders and that a crushing defeat was in store for the rank and file. *The People* truthfully stated the facts all along, and all along the two papers of the Volkszeitung Corporation—*Volkszeitung* and *Worker*—held the opposite language. The final hour of defeat finally struck, and thereupon the scab Volkszeitung Corporation hanged itself squarely, and proceeded to prove that, even making allowance for the fathomless ignorance of the concern it is nothing but a sling-shot around the neck of the workingman. It proved it in this wise:

Its English organ, the *Worker* took the following stand:

LITHOGRAPHERS WIN.

After a full week of conference the committees of the Lithographers' Union and the Lithographic Employers' Association came to an agreement on Monday evening which bids fair to end the general lockout which has kept 10,000 men out of work for several weeks. The proposed agreement goes to the local unions for confirmation, and the vote will be completed throughout the country by April 15. The result may be considered as a decided victory for the men, since the aggression was made from the other side with the evident purpose of undermining the union and forcing the acceptance of individual contracts and the open shop.

And what stand did its German organ take? Now watch, the following:

“The result of the lithographers’ lock-out again proves how ill advised workingmen are when they place their fate in the hands of the Civic Federation. The so-called agreement, if carefully examined, is nothing but a defeat.”

Thus two papers, issued by the identical concern, simultaneously hold language that is diametrically opposed. One says, “Victory,” the other “Defeat!”

Of course, there is “policy” behind all this—the identical policy that helped sell out the brewers—“coppers” and “pennies,” “peesiness” in short, such as the scamp crew that owns the two papers love to drive.

In the meantime, this holding of two opposite views affords an insight into the tactics of the Social Democratic, alias Socialist party. It is all things to all men only in different languages. And as all men’s views can not accomplish results that are good, that party is worse than a broken reed, but in the meantime the “Ballon Muetzen,” who run the *Volkszeitung* and *Worker* are finding their account is in it.

They got rope and they hanged themselves.

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

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