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EDITORIAL

A PUZZLE SOLVED

By DANIEL DE LEON

HERE is a question that will test the powers of observation of newspaper readers: Who is the “labor leader” whose name appears most frequently in the capitalist press, and uniformly favorably quoted? Is it Gompers? Is it Mitchell? No! These are quite prominent, but occasionally they are “roasted”; occasionally they say things that are “unwise” and then they are quickly “hauled over the coals” by some Republican or Democratic organ. The labor leader in question is a gentleman who sails under the alias of Harry White, his original name being Korkorwinsky, or some such combination of sounds.

Whether it is as an interviewer of Schaffer on the eve of a great strike, or as an expresser of “the best interests of Labor,” or as a foreteller of “good times,” or as an expert on the “field of Labor,” or as a “trusted man in the councils of Labor,”—whatever the subject, Mr. White’s name never fails to grace the columns of capitalist journals, and, not infrequently, is even quoted with editorial benediction. To put it in the vernacular, the gentleman “has a cinch” on the press. He is a universal favorite among the “labor leaders,” and, of course, he is a particular pet of the illustrious ex-minister to Turkey Oscar Strauss, and especially of Mr. Marcus M. Marks, the big capitalist clothier—mark you, clothier—with whom he hobnobs as a “Labor Vice-President” on Hanna’s Civic Federation. Here was a puzzle. How comes this to be thus? The secret is now out. The perverseness of two wicked workingmen, Samuel Klein and Aaron Goldman, loosened the string that hitherto kept the cat confined. She is now out. And a scrawny, scurvy creature she is.

The two workingmen above named dragged Mr. White on the 9th inst. before the City Court of this city in a suit for breach of contract. The plaintiffs swore that Harry White, acting in his capacity of General Secretary of the United Garment Workers, engaged them to go to Chicago to take the place of workingmen on strike in a factory; that they refused to go until they had received an agreement guaranteeing them six months’ employment at \$18 a week; and that they were discharged after they had earned only \$50 each. They now sued for the remaining

\$310 due to each under the contract, and won their suit. White himself appeared. He did not deny the contract, but, reversing the “Partner of Hester Street” story, claimed he was acting on his own responsibility—procuring scabs on his own responsibility—and not as the agent of his Union! The plea did not save the Union’s treasury. As to White himself, whichever way the case had gone, he stood convicted.

The puzzle is solved. Mr. White’s sustained popularity with the fleecers of labor, with the clothier Marcus M. Marks in particular, and with the labor lieutenants of the fleecers, is due to his readiness to do for them the very dirtiest work of all—the pimping for scabs, and assuming the whole responsibility!

Any wonder that this scullion has an undying hatred for the Socialist Labor Party, and a keen sense of contempt for the Bogus Socialists, who rub elbows with him, echo his slanders and affect to bore Socialism from within him?

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