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EDITORIAL

## THE PICKLE OF THE C.F.U.

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**A**T Sunday's session of the Central Federated Union Typographical Union No. 6 was made the target for assault from the delegates of several organizations. "No. 6" was called "selfish." This was the cleanest of the darts hurled at it. The assailants were the delegates of the engineers, firemen and other Unions, men of whose trades work in printing plants. The reason for the assault was that No. 6 insisted on keeping aloof from a conference, the object of which is to unionize the men, outside of the printers' trade, who are working in printing plants. The angry delegates threatened, if not seconded in their efforts, to order their printing in open shops, at any rate to ignore the "Union Label." Such threats, of course, created a stir, and it was finally decided that the Allied Printing Trades shall—well, shall behave.

This is stepping upon dangerous ground. It means nothing short of questioning the sanctity of the "Union Label." It is a step in the direction of holding that neither is a "Union" a Union, or a "Label" what it purports to be, if the protection afforded by either is bounded by its own "autonomous" craft boundaries. In short, the move spells "Industrialism," and Industrialism faces class-conscious Unionism—exactly the opposite of what the C.F.U., together with each of its constituents, stands for.

A measure of Industrialism already appears in the Allied Printing Trades. Nevertheless, the allies in this body are well known to be a set of mutually upon-one-another-scabbing concerns. Hardly a strike breaks out in the craft of any of the allies without the others remaining at work, that is, scabbing upon it. With this experience behind them, it is not surprising that the Allied Printing Trades are averse to increasing the number of allies. With such allies as they now have their reputation for scabbery is bad enough. Increase the number of allies and the opportunities for the blot of scabbery to be multiplied is an inevitable thing. The

very engineers, firemen and others, who are now clamoring for solidarity, will forget all about it when any of their allies go on strike; and if they do not forget all about it, their “sacred contracts” will make them.

Wise in their generation are the delegates of the Allied Printing Trades, together with the other delegates, who oppose the move of the engineers, etc. It is with these men the case of an alert sub-class instinct, so to speak. Revolutionary Unionism sings the knell of their living. Was then the conduct of these collective gentry, the C.F.U., a conduct that ignored the sub-class interest of the collective Labor-lieutenancy of the Capitalist Class? Not at all.

The labor-lieutenant of the Capitalist Class is but the backward falling shadow of the Capitalist class itself. Class conscious though the Capitalist Class is, it is seen itself recruiting the soldiers that are to overthrow it, and even casting the mold in which these soldiers are to be organized. This work of capitalism is involuntary. It is a work that the fatality of its own existence forces upon it. Ditto, ditto with its shadow, its labor-lieutenants. The same inherent and fatal law that propels by dogging capitalism, propels by dogging its Labor agents. Will they, nil they, they are bound to produce the conditions that will cause the stench of craft Union leadership to become so intolerably pungent and all-enveloping as to cause the stench-emitter to be wiped out and bona-fide Unionism to be organized.

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

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