

DAILY PEOPLE

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TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

AN OPEN LETTER.

By DANIEL DE LEON

Daily People Office,
New York, Oct. 28, 1905.

MR. Marcus Feder,
Cleveland, O.
Dear Sir:—

Yours of the 25th instant, complaining of what you call the injustice done your firm by this office in commenting upon the strike of your stogie employes “without inquiry”, was received to-day. To judge of the accuracy and reliableness of your statements with regard to matters that we have no personal knowledge of, by matters of which we do have personal knowledge, your striking employes must be right and you must be wrong. There is no foundation in truth in your statement that *The People* made any comments on the strike in your shop. The article you refer to was a two-column article, one column and-a-half of which was a translation of your own article in the *Hebrew Banner* against your employes on strike, and only half a column containing their answer. Not a word of comment by *The People*. Enlightened and our general opinion of the employing class fortified by your false charge against *The People*, we are now ready to indulge in comment.

You claim fairness. Your conduct convicts you of unfairness. You saw no wrong in your filling one column and-a-half of the *Hebrew Banner* with your own side of the story only; you see no wrong in that paper’s publishing your charges and the bouquets that you generously shower upon yourself, without that paper’s “making any inquiry”; but your righteous wrath, your injured sense of fair play is indignant at having another paper publish a communication of your employes, notwithstanding that communication was so fair as to give you first the floor by publishing your own tirade against them, and then taking up only one-third of the

space to answer you. Such is the “fairness” that the capitalist has for the workingmen—full rights for himself, the denial of any for them.

The false pretense of unfairness, so completely exposed above, illumines your pretenses concerning your establishment being set up “for the benefit” of your employes; concerning its being set up in order to provide employment for your fellow Russian Jews, who, you claim, labor under such prejudices from gentile employers that they can not get work; finally concerning your “emphatic” declaration that you are “not opposed to organized labor”.

As to the claim that your establishment is a benevolent institution, that has a familiar sound. President McCurdy of the Mutual Life, just convicted of having played fast and loose with the funds of the policy and stockholders, and of having benevolently drawn, he and two other near relatives, \$3,000,000 out of the concern within three years, he also said that his concern was a “benevolent” affair. Evidently you, Sir, belong to the fraternity of “missionaries” of which President McCurdy is now a convicted member.

As to your claim that your fellow Russian Jews could get work nowhere else owing to Christian prejudice, we boldly venture to say that you know better. The capitalist knows no creed, race or color. To him all workingmen are alike. All he looks for is human marrow to suck up, and live in clover. Jewish marrow tastes as good as Christian marrow to the Christian capitalist, and Christian workingman’s marrow is as toothsome as Jewish workingman’s marrow to the Jewish capitalist. Neither cares a rap for the creed or nationality of the marrow. When you set yourself up as a Jew philanthropist, you did so simply with the hope to lure the helpless and confiding Russian Jews so that you could exploit them more readily. Their present rebellion simply means that they have discovered your trick.

As to your protestation of love and affection for organized labor, “PROVIDED IT IS INTELLIGENTLY GUIDED”, we believe you. From the veriest cockroach boss up to the well rounded capitalist, up further to the Trust magnate, and still further up to the Czar of Russia as the top-notch exponent of usurpation—they all hold the identical language. All dote, simply dote, with a doting that is doteful, upon the organization of their victims—PROVIDED THE SAME BE INTELLIGENTLY GUIDED. The proviso never fails. The organization of their victims never must be of

that unintelligent nature that demands the abolition of usurpation and exploitation. To demand that is the acme of lack of intelligence, and being so unintelligent the exploiting class can, of course, have no love for such organizations. They have love only for the organizations captained by the Gomperses and the Morris Brauns: such organizations are supremely intelligent: it is the height of intelligence (sic) to allow oneself to be plundered. Nothing can be more idiotic than to oppose that.

In conclusion, Sir, we recommend to you that you accept the open challenge, issued to you by your striking employes, that you debate the question in public with them. In the measure that you consider the Gompers, which means your methods intelligent and just, in the measure that you consider yourself a perambulating lump of charitableness,—in that measure you should be anxious to throw public light, by public debate, upon your own “philanthropy”, “religiousness” and “intelligence”, and upon the corresponding badness of “organized labor, unintelligently led”.

Yours Respectfully,
ED. THE PEOPLE.

P.S.—As we go to press a despatch reaches us that the “organized labor, unintelligently guided” of your employes has beaten you. We urge you now all the more to debate the question in public with your employes. Capitalist “organized labor”, or “organized labor intelligently guided” is in grave danger.

ED. THE PEOPLE.

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