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EDITORIAL

FINANCIERING WITH INJUNCTIONS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

Facts innumerable have been reported in these columns that went to prove the International Union of Cigarmakers, Messrs. Gompers' & Strasser's organization, to be not a labor organization at all, but essentially a banking concern, run for the purpose of creating a "Gold Reserve," so as to secure, in the midst of declining wages with the rank and file, the increasing salaries of the "Union's" placemen—Presidents, Financiers, Strike Committeemen, Label Committeemen, "Organizers," and other leeches on the backs of the workers. Only recently an instance in point was quoted: the most striking until then. It was the instance of the almost simultaneous happenings in Boston and in the Davis factory here in New York. In Boston, the cigarmakers struck against a reduction; at Davis they refused to strike at the command of the International Union. In Boston the "Union" ordered the men back with the threat that they would be stigmatized as scabs if they did not go to work; in New York the same "Union" ordered the men to quit work with the threat that they would be stigmatized as scabs if they did go to work. These two orders, seemingly contradictory, were, however, quite consistent with each other. They were consistent with the banking or financiering interests to which alone, at the expense of the workers, the "Union's" pap-grabbing officers devote their attention. In Boston, a strike would bring in no revenue, because all the men are already members, and consequently, in Boston, a strike would cost money and drain the "Gold Reserve," because members are entitled to strike benefits. At Davis' in New York, on the contrary, a strike would be a source of revenue, because the men were not members, and "initiation fees" and other perquisites could be squeezed out of them, and for the same reason the strike there would cost nothing because non-members are not entitled to strike benefits. In short, the "union's" officers guided their conduct both in Boston and New York, by the same load-star, the load-star of their salaries: where the strike would impair the

funds from which the officers' salaries come, the strike is countermanded and the men are ordered to submit to lower wages; where a strike would strengthen the funds from which the officers' salaries come, the strike is ordered, and the workers are ordered out against their will to starve upon the streets. That instance was quite striking. But more striking yet is an incident that has just occurred.

The overwhelming majority of cigarmakers in this city are not members of the International Union. They are wise enough to stay out, being perfectly familiar with the corrupt practices of the local leaders. This situation was not objected to by the leaders, and for this reason: Every time they wanted to make a big haul for their treasury, they whipped large masses of the men into great expectations, got them to go on strike, and thereby fleeced them of "initiation fees," dues, etc., all of which the deluded workers paid in the hope of the "raise in wages" held out before their eyes. These expectations, of course, failed every time; in regular order the men were sold out and had to return to work beaten. But whatever mishap befell the men, the strike was a success to the International Union fakirs: they made their haul: initiation fees, dues, etc., were captured, and no expenditure was incurred, because most of the men, not being members, the "Union's" treasury paid them no strike benefit. Thus things used to run once upon a time; but conditions have changed, and with them methods.

Some ten weeks ago a similar strike for a similar haul was ordered by the financiers of the "Union." Thereupon some five or seven other manufacturers made common cause with this one, and locked out their men. The "Union" now attempted a bold financial stroke. In order to secure the big haul of initiation fees and dues of some 8,000 men, it decided to pay strike benefits for all, members and non-members. This was intended as bait. It was like dropping in a dime to pull out a dollar. In order that the scheme succeed, the strike had to be quickly won. But the manufacturers held out: the financiers thereupon "raised the ante" to the men to stiffen their backs; but still the manufacturers held out. To continue to pay strike benefits under such circumstances ceased to be the dropping in of a dime to pull out a dollar; it became the dropping in of a dollar to pull out a dime. This is no financiering, and it had to be stopped. And how did the "Union" go about to stop it? By the back-door process known to fakirdom, ITSELF BROUGHT ABOUT AN INJUNCTION AGAINST ITSELF TO STOP ITSELF FROM PAYING STRIKE BENEFITS!!!

This was a stroke of financial genius to get out of a hole by. The recently convicted Wall street "Napoleon of Finance" never did anything to equal it. The

reprobate fakirs can now strut before their deluded dupes, declare their readiness to pay strike benefits, but announce, with many loud diatribes against the Judge and silent blessings on him, that they are enjoined, and, but for that, their "Union" would "spend its last cent in behalf of Labor."

The Labor Fakir officered International Union of Cigarmakers is no more a labor organization than the army of the Tsar of Russia. As the Russian Army, so is the "Union's" rank and file made up of workingmen, but, just as the Russian Army, so is this "Union" officered by the worst foes of Labor, who tyrannize, play with it as with a pawn, fleece and sacrifice it.

No wonder the time is ripe for the rallying cry of rebellion that the S.T. & L.A. has issued.

Smash the fakirs!

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