

EDITORIAL

THE OBJECT AND LESSON OF THE WATERBURY INJUNCTION.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE injunction restraining the labor unions of Waterbury, and their sympathizers, from actively supporting, by means of boycott, public persuasion, etc., the trolley strikers of that city, when taken in connection with the attachments issued against the funds of the labor unions deposited in banks, in a civil suit for damages brought against them by the trolley corporation, is a well-aimed blow at the resources of the strikers. It is a strategic attempt to separate the enemy from his base of supplies, as it were, and to kill the strike by a lack of public and financial support.

That this attempt will succeed in its legal phase the long list of precedents in favor of the corporation leaves no doubt. Strikers have been enjoined for picketing, peaceful assemblage on highways, for using persuasion to induce scabs to give up jobs, and for innumerable other legal acts prior to this! The Waterbury injunction includes all these acts, hence its far-reaching and sweeping character.

In England recently the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants was required by the awards of the Taffe Vale decision to pay a railroad corporation \$125,000, in round figures, for damages done during a strike. This decision staggered the trades unionists of England, as it enabled the corporations to raid their treasuries and deprive them of support during a strike. The legal principles underlying this decision are held to be applicable in this country. Their introduction has often been urged as a means to curb strikes here.

From all the foregoing it will be seen that, though the trolley company may not completely succeed in its strategic attempt, it will seriously cripple the trades unionists in the effort. Even this result would not be possible of attainment were it not for the

erroneous principles underlying old trades unionism, which blinds the working class to its true interests and insures the continuance of capitalist domination.

These principles teach that the interests of employer and employee are identical. So taught, the workers elect to the judiciary and other functions of the State men who are actuated by capitalist interests and who use their office in upholding those interests.

As the Waterbury and thousands of other strikes and injunctions prove conclusively, the interests of employer and employee are antagonistic and conflicting. It follows that the workers cannot protect their interests by electing the candidates of the employing class party. They must throw overboard the absurd policy of having “no politics in the union” but capitalists’ politics, and determine to march to the ballot box and seize the powers of State in their own interests through working class politics. They must vote the candidates of their class—the working class—the Socialist Labor Party, into office. Then and only then will the Waterbury attempts to cripple their strikes fail.

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