

EDITORIAL

“KICKS” THAT THE KICKEE LIKES.

By DANIEL DE LEON

FROM the columns of this, that and the other paper, and from a number of other bourgeois rostrums, “kicks” are being dealt at the action of Chief Justice Russell of the Court of Special Sessions who imposed the ridiculous fine, the minimum fine, of \$20 upon Max Blanck, one of the owners of the Triangle Waist Company, for having the doors of his new factory locked when operatives were at work, notwithstanding the late appalling catastrophe of 140 girls being burned to death in the identical Mr. Blanck’s factory by reason of similar violations of the factory act.

The Chief Justice is receiving the “kicks” vicariously for the class that he represents. The actual kickee is the Capitalist Class. And the “kicks” suit the kickee.

It seems paradoxical, yet it is a fact that if the bourgeois agencies who are at present administering the “kicks,” abstained from doing so; if they kept still or lay low; or even if they praised the action of their Chief Justice;—it seems paradoxical to say that, under such circumstances, the Capitalist Class would feel distressed. Yet such is the fact, however otherwise it might seem, superficially looked at.

Even if Mr. Blanck and his Company did not stand under the heavy cloud that the disaster of two years ago has raised over their heads; even if the heaviness of the cloud had not been rendered additionally threatening by the lurid lightning of the miscarriage of justice of Mr. Blanck having been then acquitted;—even then, if a bourgeois Blanck, as free of previous sin and white as his name might imply, were now let off with a slight fine for endangering the life {sic} of his employes, the performance would amount to a virtual acquittal, and, as such, would be one more underscoring of the fact that bourgeois law is there to be broken by the bourgeois, and to be used as a rod of scorpions upon the back of the proletariat only. And the added underscoring would take its place among the forces that are raising and propelling

the tidal wave that threatens to engulf the modern Iniquity known as the Capitalist regimen. If the virtual acquittal of, hence, the virtual encouragement given to, such a hitherto white Blanck would be calculated to have such an effect, what must not the effect be of the goad of virtually acquitting and thereby encouraging a Blanck who is Black? The answer is obvious.

Under such circumstances there is but one way imaginable to dull and break the point of the goad. It is for Capitalist agencies to affect indignation at the conduct of their judicial fellow. Such indignation lends itself to be used as an argument that the judicial misconduct is purely a personal sin; that the Capitalist, as a Class, does not share the guilt; that the guilty act is the act of a "black sheep"; finally, that Capitalism being guiltless at heart, the way to do is to "bore from within," patiently wait for the expiration of the term of the "black sheep," and, then, should he dare to run again, vote him down, and elect—what?—whom?—why another of his ilk.

It is quite certain that the kickee in question is enjoying the "kicks," orders them, likes them.

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