

# DAILY PEOPLE

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EDITORIAL

## NO SCAPE-GOATING!

By DANIEL DE LEON

“The blood of Paul Mendelsohn<sup>1</sup> is not upon the head of his assassins only. The murder in Waterbury is but one of the fruits of the systematic coddling of lawlessness that began with the befriending of John Mitchell and his union in Pennsylvania throughout a series of murderous crimes that has no parallel.”—*New York Sun*.

**D**ID the Waterbury tragedy and the alleged lawlessness in Pennsylvania “begin,” are they to be traced to the “befriending of John Mitchell and his union?”—Not unless the source of the Mississippi is to be placed at Baton Rouge.

Some three years ago a conflict arose between the *Sun* and the typographical union. The *Sun* published its statement. It is estopped from going back upon that. According thereto the conflict was not between it and its employees; it was not a conflict over wages. According thereto the conflict was with the leaders of the union, who, in the hire of the Mergenthaler linotype machine company, fought the *Sun* for introducing a rival and competing machine. The conflict raged violently: the strike turned into a boycott. The *Sun* secured injunctions against these leaders, and in its affidavits called them “bandits,” “criminals,” “outlaws,” etc., etc. Finally on March 10, 1902, peace was restored. How peace was restored between the *Sun*, on the one hand, and the “bandits,” “criminals,” and “outlaws,” on the other, the below passage from the Tammany *Times* of April 26, reproduced among the editorial paragraphs of *Printers Ink* of May 7, will give an idea:

“We understand that the ‘pool’ formed to buy the interests of Paul Dana in

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<sup>1</sup> A Waterbury, Conn., policeman shot to death on March 8, 1903. See the *Daily People* news item on page 2.

the New York *Sun* raised one million dollars to complete the transaction. Of this \$700,000 was to be paid to Paul Dana and the remaining \$300,000 was to go to the Typographical Union for the purpose of bringing about the settlement of the *Sun* strike. The payment of that \$300,000 was undoubtedly a legitimate business transaction, since the Union refused to settle unless allowed a liberal amount for the expenses of carrying on the war. But it would be interesting to know how much of the \$300,000 ultimately found its way into the treasury of the Typographical Union in general and Big Six in particular, and how much stuck to the fingers of the middlemen in the form of commissions."

In other words:

As is well known, the only point finally at issue between the *Sun* and the strike and boycott manipulators was the status of these same manipulators. There was, indeed, no question of wages; the question was whether the labor skates, who run the union, should preserve their powers, or allow their wings to be clipped. These wrapped themselves in the mantle of Labor, like the Plebs Leaders of old Rome, and fought, that is to say, heroically sacrificed the rank and file,—taxed them heavily (we think as high as \$1 a week), and with the large funds thus collected lived in clover themselves, as Secret and Agitation Committeemen with "no questions asked," and waged a war of boycott against the *Sun*,—and the *Sun* caved in: befriended them to the extent of \$300,000! And this happened before John Mitchell began to be befriended!

St. Louis may not be the head springs of the Mississippi; but surely it is ahead of Baton Rouge. And in truth, not even the *Sun* is the starting point of the "coddling of

#### PEOPLE SHUN CARS.

##### Killing of Special Officer Forces Waterbury People to Walk.

Waterbury, March 9.—Excitement runs high over the killing of Special Officer Paul Mendelssohn, who was shot in an attack on a trolley car last night. The cars to-day are not carrying a single passenger.

Early to-day leaders of the strike gave out interviews in which they declared that the union would offer a reward for information leading to the detection of the man concerned in last night's violence.

Deputy Coroner Philip Pond, 2d, of New Haven, came here this forenoon and began the official investigation. Conductor George Weberndorfer and Motorman J. W. Chambers have been ordered to remain at the police station as witnesses, pending the official examination. They said to-day that they believe seven or eight men (all of whom were masked), were concerned in the affair, although on account of the darkness they could not see clearly.

The search for the assailant was renewed to-day after a posse of police had spent most of the night in the region about Forest Park. As far as is known the detectives have found no clue to the perpetrators of the crime.

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lawlessness,” or the “befriending of criminals.” Why did the *Sun* cave in, “coddle” and “befriend”? Did it wish to? It was forced. By whom, or what? It was forced by the loss of advertising patronage. Again, in other words:

The advertisers, capitalist concerns, like the *Sun*, were, some of them, intimidated by the boycotters: they feared they would lose customers, they feared loss of pence if they advertised in the *Sun*; others, knowing better, seized upon the boycott as a welcome pretext to escape the blackmail that is usually implied in the advertisements of capitalist papers. In short, these capitalist advertisers “coddled” and “befriended” the labor skates, before the *Sun* did. Net results, they dragged the *Sun* in their wake.

Enough has been here said to prove that the “coddling of unlawfulness” and the “befriending” of “criminals, outlaws and bandits” did not start with the capitalist concerns that “coddled” and “befriended” Mitchell. Enough has been said to show that the whole Capitalist Class is the fountain head of the evil,—now one set, then another, but in the long run the whole pack of mutually rending capitalist swine, to whom, alternately against one another, the labor skate is of use, flesh of whose labor-fleecing flesh, bone of whose labor-fleecing bone he is.

By all means, let not the blood of Paul Mendelsohn lie on the head of his physical assassins only. Let it also and especially lie where it morally belongs, on the head of the principal of the deed, the Capitalist Class, without whose “coddling” and “befriending” the labor skate could not exist a day; the Capitalist Class, of whom the Mitchells and the Waterbury assassins are but the agents,—agents who, the Capitalist Class being removed, could

do no more than Caesar’s arm,  
When Caesar’s head is off.<sup>2</sup>

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
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<sup>2</sup> [William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*]