

EDITORIAL

GOMPERS VINDICATED.

By DANIEL DE LEON

WHAT is announced as “the third blow” dealt to “organized labor” in rapid succession, is the decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the case brought by Dietrich Loewe and Co., hat manufacturers of Danbury, against Martin Lawlor and 200 other members of the United Hatmakers of America. The company sued Lawlor and others for huge damages, said to have resulted from a boycott. The unanimous opinion of the Court is that the boycott was an infraction of Section 7 of the Sherman anti-trust law, and that the company’s huge claim for damages is justified. The reports are to the effect that the decision “is the most damaging blow organized labor has received.” In view of the fact that the designation of “organized labor” is one to which Mr. Gompers lays exclusive claim, and that the capitalist papers accept the claim, what the reports mean is that the decision “is the most damaging blow that Mr. Gompers has received.” This is a mistake. The decision “is the most triumphant vindication that Mr. Gompers has received.”

It is Mr. Gompers’s contention that “Capital and Labor are Brothers.” In pursuit of his contention he has made the A.F. of L. a tail to the Civic Federation, with himself, besides several of his A.F. of L. Presidents, as “Vice-President,” or “Labor Lieutenant,” of Belmont. Now, the claim of brotherhood has its unavoidable consequences. The Sherman anti-trust law was enacted, as it would seem from its name—“anti-trust”—against Brother Capital. It was intended, at least, in its behalf the claim was made, that the “anti-trust” law was to pare the nails of wicked capitalists. If one brother is wicked, the circumstance of the other not being extra good is, to say the least, a possibility. One can not claim brotherhood to a hyena, and deny hyena qualities—not altogether. The contention being that “Labor is the Brother of Capital,” the conclusion can not be escaped that the vices peculiar to the

one must also be vices found in the other brother. Vices must be “gone for.” The “anti-trust” law “goes for” the vice of “restraining trade.” What more logical than the reasoning of the court that—seeing “organized labor” is capable of the identical guilt that “organized capital” was previously found guilty of, and, seeing that a law was passed to punish “organized capital,” that, therefore, the same law should be applied with even-handed justice to “organized labor”? Nothing more logical than that. Considering, furthermore, that it is Mr. Gompers—whose “untiring efforts in behalf of that justice that shall place ‘organized labor’ on a par with ‘organized capital’”—has done more than any other one person to furnish the Supreme Court of the United States with the basis for its decision—considering this fact, who will deny that Mr. Gompers has received a triumphant vindication?

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

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