

EDITORIAL

FALSE WEIGHTS, NOW MURDER.

By DANIEL DE LEON

REPORTS in the capitalist press itself confirm the fact known before that the killing of one and the dangerous wounding of six other Sugar Trust employes, now on strike in Williamsburg, was an unprovoked, an unjustified and nothing short of a criminal act committed by the special watchmen in the employ of the American Sugar Refining Company.

The regular Police officers on the ground had found no occasion to “enforce order.” There was order—but for that very reason there was a state of things as distasteful, even harmful, to the Trust. Disorder, riot, was desired; and the special watchmen drew their firearms, and operated them.

Literally speaking this is true—the special watchmen drew their firearms, and operated them. Still, the statement is imperfect enough to be misleading.

Menials take their cue from their masters’ slightest hint. A wink will do. Often less than that. It is the menial’s feature, he being a child of the slums, to adapt himself to his master’s nature. Vile is the nature of him who sports a menial. The nature of him who sports a menial being vile, vile is the conduct as vile the performance of his menial. The menial is but the vile arm that executes the wishes and satisfies the needs of the vile master’s head. The menial’s conduct is the master’s. The two are ONE.

This fact was not overlooked at the recent examinations and trials of this identical Sugar Trust for defrauding the Government by false weights. Vainly did the heads seek shelter behind their menials, and turn these into scape-goats. The menials were seized, and the arrests and indictments went higher up, and higher up, and still higher. Only the barrier of the grave protected the head-most head.

As in the instance of the systematic swindle of operating false weights, carried on for years, and running into the millions of dollars, so in this instance of riot,

assault with intent to kill, and murder perpetrated by the menials of the Sugar Trust. They pulled the triggers, the head inspired the deed. The act was ONE; guilty all—both head and arms.

The Williamsburg tragedy is a fitting commentary upon the much boasted-about “vindication of Law and Order” by the conviction of the in-false-weights-dealing Trust. Only the caricature of Law, the caricature of Order, is vindicated by the punishment of one offender. Such punishment is justly construed by an Offending Class as a Seal of Approval officially stamped upon the Offending Social System.

True Law, real Order—these are vindicated only by the dethronement of the Offenders-breeding Offensive Social System of Capitalism.

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