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EDITORIAL

THOSE POLICE MEAL TICKETS.

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE freight handlers strike of this city is furnishing many instructive lessons. As is well known, the Tammany police, under the direction of Commissioner McAdoo, is “protecting” the property of the N.H. and H.R.R.,¹ the corporation involved—that is, it is aiding the company to load freight with scabs, and by clubbing the strikers. The N.H. and H.R.R., in turn, is standing by the police. It is reported that, at the request of Captain Shaw, of the Madison street station, the corporation has issued meal tickets to the uniformed police, good at the Plymouth House on South street, the expense to be borne by itself. This secures to the corporation continuous service and good will, while, at the same time, keeping in good physical condition the arm that swings the club whose blows end the strikes for more wages and better conditions.

These little meal tickets are full of meaning: they illustrate the intimate relation between politics and wages. The Tammany stevedores and saloon keepers tell the freight handlers to keep politics out of the union, that is, working class politics. At the same time they use their jobs and their saloons to keep the union in politics, in capitalist politics, in Tammany politics, the politics that use all the political powers, including the police, as in this instance, to assist corporations, club strikers and render unsuccessful every attempt to increase wages and improve conditions. The Tammany stevedores and saloon keepers tell the unions that politics are not trade unions, but the politicians in control of the political powers soon show them that trade matters are politics, by calling out the police to defeat their efforts to improve matters in their trade.

The N.H. and H.R.R. knows the intimate relation between politics and wages. It

¹ [New Haven and Hartford Railroad. [Click here for a brief history.](#)]

knows it can increase its dividends by keeping wages down and preventing the betterment of conditions, with the aid of the political powers controlled by Tammany and the old political parties. It does not utter the parallel fallacy to that of the trade unions, viz., “politics are not corporation matters.” The N.H. and H.R.R., like all corporations, sees to it that the political powers are within its control. Meal tickets to the police are but one of the many means to this end. They help to understand them all.

Workmen, take politics—working class politics—into your unions. Contemplate what would follow if the political powers—the police included—were with, instead of against you, when out on strike. Victory, and not defeat, would then be yours. Then politics would be trade matters to you, in the same beneficial sense that they now are to the N.H. and H.R.R. Then you would realize the intimate relations between politics and wages!

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

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