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EDITORIAL

WALKING DELEGATE SCABS.

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Fall River, Mass., is one of the great centers of the textile industry, and it is agitated at present over a proposed wage reduction in the mills. Here is the real situation: The thousands of employees are forced to produce the wealth which the mill-owners divide into five shares; four of these shares the owner pockets, and the fifth he gives the worker as wages. In this division, the workers have no voice. They own neither the machine nor the wealth produced therewith. They own nothing but their labor power and this they **MUST** exchange for the amount offered them by the employer, or else get out and make room for a wage slave who will; and there are plenty of the latter.

A reduction in wages means that the owner will no longer pay as much as formerly for the thing the wage slave has to sell: labor power. The wage slave is to have his rations cut down. It all means less bread and meat; shoddier clothes; meaner hovels; fewer enjoyments. No wonder he protests. But, he owns no machinery, and he **MUST** use machinery, hence his protests can only avail when those protests take the shape of a concerted move by the wage slaves for possession of the machines. Instead of this, however, the plundered Fall River slaves have organized so-called Unions which recognize the right of the employers to own the machines and to rob the workers, but plead pitifully, plead to the capitalist to rob more gently.

Out of their scanty wages, the slaves thus organized(?) pay a Walking Delegate to plead for them. He is supposed to resist wage reductions in every way but the one way in which they can be resisted. When an honest wage slave is placed in such a position, he rebels against the criminally foolish attitude of the Union(?) and insists on fighting for the possession of the machine until the fakirs and crooks fire him out. If he does not do this, he is a scab.

The Walking Delegates in Fall River are scabs. A scab is a member of the working class who in any way helps to lower the wages or increase the hours of the

wage slaves, or assist the capitalists in retaining possession of the machinery of production. Here are the utterances of some of these Walking Delegates as reported in the Fall River *Globe* of August 29. We want to do these men justice, and will print their denials or corrections if the *Globe* has reported them incorrectly. Unless such denial appears, these men stand convicted of being scabs under every definition ever given to the term by decent men.

James Whitehead, secretary of the Weavers' Association said: "Talk of reducing wages is premature after the good times of the past 12 months. The remedy for a depression in business is not a reduction of wages, BUT CURTAILMENT, and such curtailment should be general throughout New England. To reduce wages would not help matters at all if the mills run full time."

Secretary O'Donnel of the Spinner's Union said:

"It would be time enough to talk about reducing wages when it is impossible to pay dividends. If the manufacturers believe that a further curtailment would be beneficial, the operatives, in Mr. O'Donnel's opinion, would prefer that to a reduction in wages."

Sec. Jos. G. Jackson of the Slasher Tenders' Association said: "The only true remedy is curtailment."

Sec. John McCarthy of the Loom Fixers' association said that he did not believe the manufacturers would reduce the wages. The conditions would improve BEFORE THERE WAS ANY NECESSITY FOR A REDUCTION OF WAGES!

Sec. James Tamsey of the Carders' Association said: "The experience of the past has shown us that reducing wages has not been of any assistance or any good to anybody."

Here, black on white, is a record of perfidy and treason that only scabs could make. The real union man would have said: "Curtailling production is bound to reduce wages. The manufacturer will always, by any means, reduce wages as long as he owns the machine. We must strike at the ballot-box for possession of the tools with which we work."

The labor leader who does not lead the working class through the ballot box to the ownership of the machinery of production is a scab.

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

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