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EDITORIAL

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

By DANIEL DE LEON

GENTLEMEN:—

The Constitution of the United States is an empowering act.

By that act the Federal Government, on the one hand, has no powers other than the powers expressly conferred to it, and, on the other, the powers conferred upon the Federal Government are expressly denied to all other individuals, municipal, county or State organizations in the land.

The power to issue money is a power vested by the Constitution in Congress. It is, therefore, a power expressly forbidden to all others, be they private or public bodies. The laws made and provided on the subject are ample and explicit. It is the duty of the Federal Government to uphold these laws and enforce them.

The Constitution and the laws are being violated in Goldfield. The mine owners have issued “scrip.” Congress only can issue “legal tender,” or decree what shall be “legal tender.” The mine owners of Goldfield have decreed “legal tender” attributes to the “scrip” they issued. They demand that the same be accepted by their employes in payment of their wages, in payment of the debts due to the latter by the former.

Even if the Goldfield events went no further, there would be cause to set in motion the legal machinery of the land and stop this crime, and punish the criminals. False coiners and counterfeiters are arrested; much money is spent in keeping up an alert body of secret service men to track down such malefactors, and bring them to the bar, on the way to the penitentiary. The Goldfield mine owners’ scrip is COUNTERFEIT MONEY, to all intents and purposes.

But the Goldfield events go further.

Not satisfied with trampling under foot the Constitution and the laws of the

land, the Goldfield mine owners have invoked, and, to the eternal disgrace of the Executive, have received his aid in their nefarious attempt. Federal troops have been ordered to and are now in possession of Goldfield.

Gentlemen, it is Anarchy that now rules the roost in Goldfield.

The facts are not questioned. They are unquestionable. The pretences of “possible” disorder on the part of the miners are too transparent. The inspired reports about “thefts,” “murders,” and “finds” of concealed weapons near the camps, are even fishier than such reports usually are, their usual object being to attune the public mind to the expectation of acts of violence on the part of capitalist employers. The real facts had come out before. They were admitted. It was an unguarded admission, true enough. It is upon just such slips by malefactors that counterfeiters are usually detected and brought down. The real fact in the case is the refusal of the miners to accept as “legal tender” the spawn of the mine-owning counterfeiters, their refusal to countenance the usurpation of Congressional powers by private, irresponsible, profits-hunting capitalist concerns. Federal troops are now in Goldfield to overawe the miners in the interest of the lawless mine owners.

Gentlemen—the miners of Goldfield once more are on the breach for Civilization. For over a year the camp has been the field of attempted anarchy by the gold mine owners. Again the facts are unquestioned and unquestionable. A murderous, unprovoked attempt was made in broad daylight only recently upon Vincent St. John, the sober and intrepid leader of the miners in that camp. His would-be assassin, “Paddy” Mullaney, now walks the streets of Goldfield under a paltry \$2,000 bail furnished by the very element that now invoked and received the support of Federal troops in their usurpation of Congressional powers. Valuable to the country’s safety as has been the stand taken by the Goldfield mining proletariat before now, their stand now is infinitely more vital. The path to Progress lies through order. There is hardly a principle more vital to order than the principle underlying the Constitutional provisions vesting Congress only with the power to establish a “legal tender.” Under a social system such as the one now prevailing, the Capitalist System of individual production of wealth—under this system the soundness of money is a cornerstone of whatever order the sufficiently and inherently disorderly Capitalist System can afford. Allow that cornerstone to be

shaken—allow the medium of exchange to be polluted, as the Goldfield mine owners are attempting to do—and all the Federal troops now in blue, or later to be stuck into uniform, could not prevent the country from being turned into the howling wilderness of official and private riot that Russia now is.

Gentlemen—rightly or wrongly, the Federal Executive has been charged with bringing about the present distressful industrial or financial panic. Even indiscretion is a serious offense on the part of the Chief Magistrate of the Nation. The right of free speech can not be withheld from the President. He could hardly be disciplined for indulging in the delight of hearing himself talk. This other, however, is a horse of different color. The President, by ordering Federal troops to Goldfield, has violated his oath of office. It is not order the “troops are sent to preserve”; they are sent to Goldfield to “introduce the disorder” of PRIVATE MONEY; they are sent to start arolling a ball that, considering the present conditions the country is traversing, is well calculated to turn into the blackest social thunder cloud that ever gathered and burst over this Nation’s head.

Gentlemen—THEODORE ROOSEVELT SHOULD BE IMPEACHED. The incredible has come about. An issue has arisen, in which Labor and intelligent Capital, Capitalists (if intelligent) and Socialists alike have a common cause—THE CAUSE OF AVERTING SOCIAL CALAMITY. That cause has arisen through the latest act of the President, whom even a Yale College professor designated as a man of a naturally “lawless mind.” The President’s action in responding with Federal troops to the cry of the Goldfield counterfeiters for help against the miners who are planted upon an essential principle of order—that action is banditism. Its perpetrator must be impeached.

Gentlemen—grave issues are presenting themselves for solution to our generation. Not chaos but order is the handmaid for the intelligent solution of social problems. Every day you allow to go by without ordering the recall of the troops from Goldfield, every day you allow to go by without causing the counterfeiting usurpers to remain unwhipped of the law, every day you allow to go by without introducing impeachment procedures against the witless anarchist in the White House—every such day not only renders you accomplices in the social crime of Goldfield, but would go far to justify the belief that the Capitalist System is so

decrepit that it lacks even the wisdom to uphold that essential law of its own existence—SOUND MONEY.

—EDITOR THE PEOPLE.

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