

EDITORIAL

## “BAD BUSINESS”—AND WORSE.

By DANIEL DE LEON

**A**T three different passages in his [Open Letter to Haywood](#), Trautmann quotes Haywood as having said: “Bad business!”

When “in defiance of the express will of the rank and file in Lawrence” the committee that supervised the financial transactions of the strike was automatically dissolved by orders from the headquarters of the Chicago I.W.W., Haywood commented: “It’s bad business!”

When put in possession of a letter of December, 1912, containing information from the headquarters of the Chicago I.W.W. that “complaint should not be made that a certain person is serving in detective agencies,” and stating that the said person was doing so “with the approval of the general officers,” Haywood commented: “Bad business!”

Again, when Haywood arrived in Akron, O., and learned that the “Volunteers” of the Chicago I.W.W. turned the headquarters of the Socialist Labor Party and of the Socialist party, which had been placed at their disposal, into sinks of pestilence; that they stole clothing from the strikers; and that, finally, when they were driven out of the halls “they clogged the sewer pipes, turned on the water, flooded the floors, broke the furniture, and hung up the Red Flag over their scavenger district of Vandalism with an inscription “Sabotage the landlords if they refuse you halls and rooms”—when Haywood learned this, “Bad business!” was his comment.

But there is worse:—

Repeatedly in the course of the Open Letter, after enumerating scavenger instances of conduct with the consent, often under orders of the Chicago headquarters, Trautmann asks Haywood whether his efforts to remedy the evil were successful; himself answers with emphatic “No!”; and then he throws out the hint whether

Haywood is “an unconscious instrument in the hands of an Inner Circle,”—and Trautmann appeals to Haywood to do the right thing in the present crisis.

All of which throws up the question, Is Haywood tied too tight to an Inner Circle of perverts to perceive the abyss that yawns at his feet, and, through him, at the feet of scores of ill-starred proletarians? Is the momentum of his decline too strong to enable him to rein himself in, immediately to stop on his downward career, turn around, and become to the Movement what, in 1907, circumstances bade him be?

This is the juncture to give publicity to a letter written from this office to Haywood in 1907, upon his acquittal at Boise City. [The letter will be found elsewhere in this issue.](#) The hopes entertained for and from Haywood when that letter was written gradually melted away, until they were dashed last year when—the Lawrence strike, conducted by the Anarcho Chicago I.W.W., and the Paterson strike, conducted by the Socialist Detroit I.W.W., being in full blaze, and the golden opportunity thus offering itself to Haywood to solidify the ranks of the proletariat on the industrial field—Haywood, instead of seizing the opportunity, did exactly the opposite: rushed, or weakly allowed himself to be inveigled into Paterson and Passaic county generally, and there flanked by “scavengers” and at least one detective agent, in person widened the breach.

Will Trautmann’s call prove more successful than was our call and admonition of five years ago? Is Haywood hopelessly a “leader lost,” the thrall of Circes and other scavenger Inner Circles, a derelict afloat on the storm-tossed billows of the Labor Movement?

There’s “bad business”—and worse.

But leaders may come and leaders may go, onward still will march the Cause of Working Class emancipation, and with that of human Freedom.

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ADDENDUM

## DE LEON TO HAYWOOD. A Letter Written Six Years Ago.

New York, Aug. 3, 1907.

William D. Haywood,  
Denver, Colo.

Dear Comrade:—Such, I know, must have been the shower of congratulations that poured upon you on your acquittal, that I purposely kept in the rear lest my voice be “drowned by the multitude.” Moreover, how glad I felt needs no words; my “daily letter” will have reached you promptly, anyhow.

Besides that, I had a special reason to wish to avoid the crowd. What I now have to say I say, banking upon the message that your lawyer, Miller, delivered to me in your name, at Boise, last April. He said you would have liked to meet me and talk things over in the hope of coming to an understanding. I am about to leave for Europe to the International Socialist Congress. Things in America remain in a disturbed and disordered condition. Nevertheless, it is a state of disorder and disturbance from which your acquittal is calculated to bring speedy order and harmony. The capitalist class has again wrought better for the Social Revolution than that class is aware—it has, through your now celebrated case, built you up for the work of unifying the movement upon sound ground. Those who have been early in the struggle have necessarily drawn upon themselves animosities. However undeserved, these animosities are unavoidable; and, what is worse yet, tend to disqualify such organizations and their spokesmen for the work of themselves speedily effecting unification, however certain the soundness of their work may make ultimate unification. Important as their work was in the past, and will continue to be, not through them could a short-cut to victory, through united efforts, be made. The very value of their work in one direction interferes with their power in another. As I said, the capitalist class, through this late persecution of you, has “produced” the unifier—the Socialist who understands, as the Socialist Labor Party does, that, without the ballot, the emancipation of the working class cannot be reached; and that, without the industrially economic organization of the workers, the day of the workers’ victory at the polls (even if such victory could be attained under such circumstances), would be the day of their defeat; last, not least, the Socialist who is unencumbered by the animosities inseparable from the early stages of the struggle. We are again in the days when the old Republican party was organized out of warring free-soil and abolitionist,

and of up to then wavering elements. Thanks to your own antecedents, your celebrated case, the unanimity of the Working Class in your behalf, and your triumphant vindication, the capitalist class has itself hatched out the needed leader. The capitalist class has thrown the ball into your hands. You can kick it over the goal.

The season is so solemn that I shall speak solemnly. Upon the wisdom of your acts it now depends whether the ball is to be kicked over the goal within appreciable time, or not. The S.L.P., of which it has been slanderously said is run by one man, myself, just because it is a self-directing body, is sane enough to listen with respectful attention (even though it may disagree) to one who has so long filled my post in its ranks. My individual efforts may be relied upon by you, if you desire them, towards the work that circumstances have combined to cut out for you.

Men who are incapable of appreciating straightforward and consistent action have long been pronouncing the S.L.P. dead, more lately also the I.W.W., and myself as merely anxious to “hang on to something.” The soundness of the S.L.P. principle, coupled with the power of its press, insures it against any such death. As I stated in the course of the recent debate *As to Politics*—so long as its mission remains unfulfilled, the S.L.P. will hold the field unterrified: the day, however, when the I.W.W. will have reflected its own political party, in other words, the day when the vicious nonsense of “pure and simple political Socialism” will be at end, it will be with a shout of joy that the S.L.P. will break ranks.

I need say no more. To-morrow I take ship for Europe. Shall be back early the second week of September, I should be pleased to hear from you.

In order to insure the delivery of this, and not knowing your address, I forward it, care of our mutual friend Vincent St. John to be delivered to you in person.

With hearty well wishes,

Yours fraternally,

D. De Leon.

P.S.—Inclosed I send you a clipping from the *Daily People* of September 22, 1906. It contains my letter written from Franklin, Ind., on the subject of your nomination for Governor in Colorado. Perhaps you saw it before now.—D.D.L.

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[The above letter was delivered to Haywood by St. John in Chicago a few weeks later.

The term “daily letter” is the name that Haywood gave to the *Daily People* in a letter written by him from his cell in Boise, Ida., to Daniel De Leon. He received the *Daily People* daily, hence he endearingly called it the Editor’s “daily letter” to him.

Haywood, never answered the above letter, either in writing or in person.]

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