

To The Rescue!

(April 28, 1906)

There is no power without justice. —*Napoleon Bonaparte*

It seems to me that in such a land there must be, non this question of slavery, sluggards to be awakened, as well as doubters to be convinced. Many more, we verily believe, of the first than the last. There are far more hearts to be quickened, than confused intellects to be cleared up — more dumb dogs to be made to speak, than doubting consciences to be enlightened. We have use, then, sometimes, for something beside argument. —*Wendell Phillips*

I am aware that many object to the severity of my language; but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth, and as uncompromising as justice. I am in earnest — I will not equivocate, I will not excuse, I will not retreat an inch — and I will be heard. —*William Lloyd Garrison*.

There is not a scintilla of creditable evidence against the leaders of the Western Federation of Miners who are now locked up in the prison pens of Idaho.

The kidnaping of these men is prima facie evidence of their innocence. It is not a case, not of lawful prosecution, but of diabolical conspiracy and premeditated murder.

Governor Gooding, the central figure in the atrocious plot, has already declared guilt and pronounced judgment.

The simple question is, Shall it be carried into execution?

The answer, **NO, NEVER!** swells from a million hearts and the thunder of their righteous indignation reverberates from shore to shore.

There is no spark of justice, and, therefore, no shadow of real power in their wicked, heartless conspiracy.

The very isolation of the scene projects these midnight assassins into bold relief, while the finger of retributive justice points them out as they flit from cover to cover in their gumshoe maneuverings to wind and twist the deadly coils about their innocent victims.

Compared to such hyenas, ordinary highwaymen become reputable citizens.

The whole infamous plot will collapse like a soap bubble and every conspirator will flee for his miserable life the very moment the light is tuned on and an aroused working class and an outraged people close in on the gang of dark-lantern guerillas.

Caught in a trap of their own setting, and buried in the pit of their own digging, will be the final verdict of the higher court in which inexorable Justice is meted out to all.

With one mailed clutch upon the throats of his victims and the other brandishing the dagger of assassination, the so-called governor of Idaho presents a spectacle for men and angels to contemplate.

He has no particle of evidence, and knows it, else he would have proceeded by lawful means instead of waylaying his unsuspecting victims and bludgeoning them in midnight darkness. That such a malefactor has the grim audacity, after striking down all law, to invoke its protection is the very climax of criminal conspiracy.

He may surround himself — this Standard Oil candidate for the United States Senate — with his state militia and armed Hessians, but he will never escape the consequences of his brutal acts.

It is not the fair trial that we are protesting against, as they would have it believed, but the foul conspiracy to murder innocent men that cries to heaven.

It must not, shall not, be consummated.

The doors of the prison cells can be made to swing wide open and our comrades walk forth free men without a single violent blow.

To the rescue, ye toiling millions!

Your leaders have been ambushed by the enemy and their cry should arouse you like a trumpet blast upon the field of war.

Awaken, ye hosts of Labor! For you and your loved ones these faithful sentinels on the watchtowers have been put to torture; and must they now seal their fidelity and devotion with their lives?

To suffer these men to perish as the bloody consummation of a satanic conspiracy to destroy organized labor that the Standard Oil brigands and their murderous minions may have unbridled sway would cover the working class with obloquy, outrage civilization, and make the twentieth century infamous to the last stroke of recorded time.

It is not Moyer, Haywood, Pettibone, and St. John alone who are in the balance. It is the working class of the United States and of the world.

It is, in fact, an acute stage in the class war.

That is precisely what it is! The attack of the mine owning capitalists upon the mine working wage-slaves!

The “sovereign” states of Colorado and Utah, with all their civil, political, and military machinery, belong to, and do the bidding of, the Standard Oil Company. John D. Rockefeller and Henry H. Rogers are the real governors. The dummies strut and swagger but do the bidding of the syndicate of sharks that list them in their assets.

And what is the shibboleth of this gang of pirates who have swooped down upon these states and extinguished civil government?

“To Hell with the Constitution!” — “To Hell with Habeas Corpus!”

Choice specimens, these, to pose as law-abiding citizens and moralize the people about peace and order!

A majority of 46,000 votes in Colorado is received with a volley of tobacco juice from the legislative and judicial hirelings of the mine and mill owning brigands who are the state.

In such a state citizens are good or bad, safe or dangerous, as they serve or refuse to serve the brigands. Moyer, Haywood, Pettibone, and St. John would not crook the knee and bow prostrate to the tyrants. That was treason to the State of Rockefeller.

Swiftly followed the intrigue of the brigands, the conspiracy of the governors, the midnight ambush, the kidnaping, iron handcuffs, special train, secret deportation, sneaking “sleuths,” and solitary penitentiary cells.

Thus endeth chapter one. Now for the next!

Sound the Alarm!

Far and wide let the cry resound, ***“To the Rescue!”***

Arouse, ye sleeping Hosts of Labor!

The working class must write the second chapter, and it shall not end in tragedy. The issue is clear as the light of day at noontide. The life of the labor movement is in peril. The blow has been foully dealt from the dark and aimed at the heart.

Awaken, you workers, from Maine to Mexico! Close up the ranks and lift high your banners!

To allow your loyal leaders to be wantonly massacred would brand you all with everlasting shame and bring disgrace upon your children and your children yet to be. We must meet this issue of life and death with becoming courage and determination. We should scorn to desert our comrades; we must be true to them as they have been to us.

Whatever cowards may say or traitors may do; whatever mercenary retainers may write or preach or charge or threaten, we shall stand loyally by our comrades to the very end, be that what it may.

The four names of our brothers in chains shall constitute our battle-cry: Moyer, Haywood, Pettibone, and St. John!

Let them proceed with their hellish plot and we will make it the political issue of the nation and dare them to face us before an outraged working class.

Let the mass meetings be renewed and all join in them, regardless of past differences.

Let no man dare divide the forces at this critical hour, lest he be looked upon as an emissary of the enemy.

Let one meeting be followed by another, and still another, increasing in numbers, intensifying in determination, and swelling the volume of protest and indignation until its roar is heard across the continent.

New York and California! Minnesota and Texas!

When you workers shake hands you shake the nation.

You need not assault Gooding's jail in which our heroes are captives. You have but to open your eyes, great Samson that you are, and fix your gaze upon the culprits and they will shrivel and crawl in the dust at your feet.

Let the warning notes be sounded and repeated! Let the workers be aroused as if by alarm bells at midnight.

Come forth ye toiling masses, from mill and mine, from shop and store, from farm and factory, from land and lake! Come forth ye organized and unorganized! Come forth yet men and women and children who are oppressed and heavy laden! Come forth ye people all who honor good men and true, and who love the right and dare defend it!

Crowd all the halls and streets and commons everywhere! You are the people!

Parade the streets and bear aloft your flags and banners! Let unnumbered voices rise and ring in warning protest! The cause is just; it must prevail.

Let woman's voice be also heard and woman's influence felt. The wives of our imprisoned comrades have suffered more than we shall ever know, and their children cry to us to save their fathers.

Be not deceived by any seeming lull in the plutocratic program. The tide of protest must rise higher day by day. The burning resolutions must be made to pour in a blazing torrent upon the heads of the conspirators.

Every dollar that can be raised at every meeting must be gathered in for the defense. A million dollars may be needed to trail the serpent, unearth the reptile, and lay bare the vile conspiracy.

Duly authorized representatives of organized labor must attend the trial from the opening hour, a dozen at least, to hear the evidence and keep an eye on the proceedings. Every national union should send a delegate; every large city a representative. The cost would be but a trifle; the effect incalculable.

Such a representation could absolutely bar chicanery, compel a fair trial, and thus win vindication. Through such a medium, in case of emergency, the whole nation could be aroused.

Labor now has its own press that reaches the millions, and the results are already cheerfully apparent.

Labor has its own correspondents on the scene and their work has had a telling effect on the public mind.

In this connection, the work of the *Appeal* and of [George H.] Shoaf, its special representative, cannot be too highly commended. It has had a really magical influence, and in this crisis every nerve should be strained to increase its circulation to a million copies.

The fight is on. It has been forced upon us. We are not responsible for it.

We are not favoring violence, but resisting it.

We are seeking, not to commit, but to prevent murder.

“Thou shalt not kill!”

Hear that, Gooding and MacDonald!

Beware! A promised senatorial toga may yet turn into prison stripes.

Beware the wrath of an avenging people!