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**Letter to the Editor of  
*Quincy Labor News*  
from Eugene V. Debs  
in Woodstock Jail,  
Oct. 5, 1895.**

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Woodstock, Ill., Oct. 5, 1895.

W.W. Williams,  
Editor, Quincy Labor News

Dear Sir:—

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As for the nomination for the Presidency with which you do me the honor to associate my name, I am not a candidate and cannot accept such honors even if tendered to me. There are many and cogent reasons why I should decline to hold public office or be a candidate for public honors or emoluments.

I only regret that the draft upon my time is so constant and excessive to give me little leisure to keep abreast of the procession of stirring events which now engage the attention of the American people and especially men of thought in the ranks of organized labor.

My prison bars deprive me of active participation in affairs which command my solicitude. Where I deprived of my liberty for crime, had I been adjudged guilty of a misdemeanor or a felony by a jury of my peers, under due process of law, rights guaranteed by the constitution to every grade of criminal known to the code, I would have suffered in the silence becoming such law breakers. But to be imprisoned for no crime whatever, to be deprived of my liberty when there is no

stain upon my innocence, to be arrested, sentenced, and imprisoned as if I were a Russian subject, is at once as flagrant an act of despotism as was ever committed.

Aside, however, from all personal considerations, the infamous invasion of my liberty and the liberty of my associate officials of the American Railway Union touches every workingman on the continent and was designed to intimidate them and to force them into submission to their employers.

It is this alarming condition of things which appeals to the working men of the United States. In vain will it be for them to entertain the thought that they are not the victims of despotic power should they arouse the hostility of the corporations which employ them.

These corporations run the judicial and military machinery of the government which will tolerate no manifestations of that freedom and independence which were once the glory of our people.

In surveying the field I fail to discover any hope for the toilers, the wage slaves of the United States, excepting in their unification; and this accomplished, I behold at no distant day their emancipation.

I am not a visionary. It is my habit to deal with verities. I know the processes of evolution require time. Education is not achieved in a day. I am satisfied the trend is right and as I survey the field, my confidence gains strength and vigor.

The American Railway Union stands forth as a sublime test of moral courage. Traded, defamed, and persecuted, it does not falter. Beaten down, it rises again. Having the best interests of labor at heart and based upon the truth, it becomes invincible and all over this fair land men of courage are rallying to its standard. The battle does not frighten them. Corporations and courts do not intimidate them, nor defeats discourage them. With them an injury to one is not only the concern of all but an injury to all. They will never close their eyes and ears to the cries of distress and no power beneath the stars can silence their tongues when the liberties of their fellow workers are invaded.

To the workingmen who read your valuable paper, I would say, *Stand Together*. Permit no artificial lines to separate you. No matter under what flag you rally, the flag of unity should wave triumphantly over all.

Unified, solidified, working together and voting together, you can conquer. Divided and fractionalized, your doom is sealed.

*Eugene V. Debs.*