

Labor's Awakening (April 7, 1906)

Nothing that has ever occurred in the history of the country has been so deeply, widely, and instantaneously felt as the dastardly assault upon our leaders in the western states. The effect has been marvelous and for the first time the solidarity of labor becomes something more than a meaningless phrase. The reason for this is that labor now has something of a press and can now reach its millions with the truth as they have hitherto been reached only by the falsehoods of the enemy.

Hundreds of mass meetings are being held, or on the calendar, and hundreds more are on the way.

The governor of Idaho has hastened to explain that no wrong is intended, but that Moyer and Haywood shall have a "fair trial," and that was the intention from the beginning.

He lies. Every step in the conspiracy, from the time it was concocted in his office, proves that the intention was to rush these men — infinitely his moral superiors — to the penitentiary and scaffold.

The sworn officers of the state struck down every law that stood between them and their victims and stole them bodily and bore them away like thieves in the night, and yet they have the hardihood to claim that they propose to do justice to these men.

When Governor Gooding proclaimed these men's guilt in advance of trial — he who above all others should have preserved the dignity of silence until they had an opportunity to be heard — he not only disgraced his office and merited impeachment, but he inadvertently, in his eagerness and haste, revealed the who foul conspiracy and in the coming trial, his "confession," for such it is, must be put in evidence, and no stronger proof of the damnable plot to murder innocent men could be adduced.

The fact that the governor has begun to "explain" to organized labor is in itself significant. We now know the governor and before we get through he will know us.

He and his papers would have it appear that we are thirsting for violence and bloodshed. The exact opposite is true. He and his gang are the ones who have taken the law, their own capitalist law, into their own hands — and by what right do these outlaws now talk to us about law and order?

We of the working class, who have been clubbed and jailed repeatedly in defiance of law and without trial, know precisely by what means the two western outlaw governors and their allies will try to have it appear that we are the criminals when, as a matter of fact, their whole career is one of plunder and brazen disregard of law.

Governor Gooding, who has flagrantly violated law to get our comrades into his clutches, need not take the pains to assure us that they will have a fair trial. Several million American workingmen will see to that.

So sure are we that our comrades are totally innocent that from the very start we would have courted trial if we had not been convinced beyond all doubt that a conspiracy had been hatched to cold-deck these victims without a ghost of a chance to defend themselves. Every step thus far taken proves it, but now that the people are being aroused to the gravity of the situation all over the county, the conspirators are beginning to relent and show some sign of giving the prisoners a show for their lives.

Labor has just begun to awaken and stretch itself. From now on there will be something doing.

Must Have Fair Trial

Moyer, Haywood, St. John, and Pettibone must have a fair trial. This is matter of supreme importance to labor and the whole people.

They will get a fair trial only if the toiling masses see to it and that is now our special business.

All differences that temporarily divide us must for the time be forgotten. We must put ourselves in the places of our comrades and our families in the places of their suffering wives and children.

These loyal leaders of labor are innocent and their lives must be saved. Their death would be the deep disgrace and foul damnation of the working class.

Let the indignation meetings be held in every corner and crevice of the country and let the reports and resolutions pour upon the head of Governor Gooding in a roaring torrent.

John Mitchell proclaimed his faith in the innocence of these men and advocated the appropriation of \$5,000 for their defense from the treasury of the United Mine Workers, in convention assembled, and it was allowed amidst demonstrations of heartiest approval. This was the finest act in John Mitchell's life and he is entitled to full credit for it. It is also an act on the

part of the United Mine Workers which shows that, notwithstanding all differences, the hearts of workers, East and West, throb in unison when an attack is made upon their class.

The Illinois members of the United Mine Workers voted \$5,000 and the Indiana members \$500, acts of generous and fraternal significance, not without pathos when the scant wages of these hard-worked and sorely oppressed diggers of coal, themselves on the verge of a strike, are taken in account.

These incidents and scores of others of a like nature are immensely suggestive and it is not strange that the Idaho governor has begun with his assurances of a fair trial and a square deal to labor. *But for the spontaneous uprising of the workers no such polite palaver would have been dished out, but the marked comrades of the mine owners' hostility would have been expeditiously put out of the way in accordance with the original program.*

At first but little interest was shown in this extraordinary conspiracy. But when the great mass of labor began to move, everything else followed, and in the last few days there has been a veritable transformation.

Labor first sensed the crime and scented the conspirators. Labor first had its correspondents upon the scene. This was a revelation. As labor's startling reports of the true inwardness of affairs blazed forth and aroused the workers, other things began to move and one after another, labor unions — even the most conservative — public men, and newspapers fell into line and now nearly the whole country is awake to the plot of the plutocracy.

The Hearst papers were silent for a full month, but have now bust forth in scathing denunciation and have a special correspondent on the ground.

Provide a Labor Representative

The thing now in order is to provide for a regular representative of the working class to be at the trial and to daily report the testimony to the labor and socialist papers of the country. The real jury will consist of the more than 20 million wage workers of the United States. The attack is upon them and they must and will meet it.

We do not propose that labor's brave leaders shall be legally murdered; that self-confessed assassins shall swear away their lives; that bloodthirsty Pinkertons with no more conscience than cobras shall be

allowed to consummate their dastardly plot to hang honest men that they may riot in the proceeds of their own infamy.

Neither shall a packed jury, following in the footsteps of a packed grand jury, at the behest of a packed governor, pronounce murder instead of rendering an honest verdict.

Let Governor Gooding understand right now that labor has an eye on him and his man-catching machinery and that every move will be scrutinized and that labor reserves to itself the right to decide if the trial is fair or not, and if there is any attempt at crookedness, some other buttons will be pressed and the governor will witness some further developments to impress him with the majesty of an aroused working class in the United States.

[Publisher Hermon] Titus¹ is doing great work. He has shown himself to be the man for the mission. He must now give us character sketches of all the principals in the great drama. We want to know exactly who Governor Gooding is, what he is, his antecedents and connections. Every material fact about him must be dug up and every relevant fact of his life must be laid bare. The searchlight must be turned upon this man so that the workers of the land may see him exactly as he is.

Judge Smith and other judges must also be dissected to the very marrow of their judicial bones. We have a good idea as to who they are, but we want accurate, life-sized, inside and outside views of them, and then we can better judge as to their acts in the great conspiracy.

Then, too, we must have, when the jury is empaneled, a searching analysis of each member. We must know his character, his politics, his financial obligations and to whom, and all other things that will enable us to judge them truly for they are very important factors in what Governor Gooding promises shall be (and what the millions of workers in the United States will make it their special business to see that it is) — a fair trial.

We must arrange to have at least twelve representatives of organized labor to sit at the trial from the opening day. Each national labor union should delegate a representative for this purpose. With twelve men sitting close to the regular jury, twelve honest representatives of the organized millions of labor, twelve good men and true to keep their eyes on the jury and on the witnesses and the proceedings, and the millions waiting day by day for their report, there will be a fair trial and consequent acquittal; and to do this will require but a few thousand dollars and we can easily raise it.

The central labor body of every large city can easily afford to send one such representative. A great mass meeting in each such city can raise the necessary funds at a single collection.

If gentlemen of the capitalist class wonder about these things it is only necessary to say: Gentlemen, we know you and we know your courts and your methods. We know that as an exploiting class you have no scruples and we know, by bitter experience, that in every trial, when labor and capital are involved, the courts do your bidding. You and your public officials do not hesitate, when it suits your purpose, to take the law into your own hands and of this there is abundant proof, beginning with the infamous legislature of Colorado, purchased by you as if they had been so many swine, and utterly refusing to carry out the expressed and lawful will of the people; and if we, the workers of the country, take things into our hands, in a crisis such as this, you gentlemen have set us the example and you can give yourselves full credit for having pushed us to the wall and driven us to whatever extremities may follow.

Workers of all trades and occupations, awaken!

Workers of no trade and without jobs, arise!

The crisis is upon us, our leaders have been seized and we must go to their rescue!

Keep you eyes and ears open for reports from the Rockies — the scene of the arch-conspiracy!

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Thick layer of italics in original, almost certainly editorially created, removed for readability.

¹ Hermon F. Titus (1852-1931) was a Baptist minister turned medical doctor from Massachusetts who relocated to Seattle, Washington, in 1893. There Titus became involved in socialist politics and launched a newspaper, *The Socialist*, in 1900, originally as a means of supporting the Debs presidential campaign. Titus moved the paper to Toledo, Ohio, in 1905, soon bringing on board former national secretary of the Socialist Party William Maily as editor. Closely associated with the left wing of the Socialist Party, Titus's paper provided intense scrutiny of the brazen attempt to decapitate the Western Federation of Miners in the Moyer-Haywood trial. Titus returned to Seattle with his newspaper in July 1906 where it played an important part in the free speech struggle in the Pacific Northwest and as a tool for organizing the radical wing of the Socialist Party of Washington. In July 1909 Titus led a left wing bolt from the Socialist Party of Washington and founded a short-lived party known as the Wage Workers Party — a group which included among its members future communist leader William Z. Foster. Titus attempted to rebrand his periodical as *The*

Workingman's Paper in connection with this new organization but it failed in 1910. Titus later returned to medicine in New York, dying there in obscurity in 1931.