

# THE PEOPLE

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## ANARCHY RAMPANT

*By Daniel De Leon*

Alexander Berkman, a crack-brained youth born and reared in the suffocating atmosphere of barbarous Russia, committed on the 23d inst., an assault with intent to kill upon the body of Henry Clay Frick, the President of the Carnegie steel works. Berkman had no personal provocation or motive. He committed the assault believing he would thereby promote the interests of the workmen against whom the Carnegie Company was waging a murderous war. By the letter of the law, the deed was criminal. Nevertheless, however criminal Berkman's offence may have been, numerous are its extenuating circumstances. It cannot be considered as an isolated act. It must be examined in the light of the accompanying circumstances—the *res gestae* of the case.

A few weeks before, a piratical band, known as the Pinkerton army, and levying war under no flag, or a flag not recognized by the law of nations, was hired by this identical Frick to invade the peaceful hamlet of Homestead in violation of the law of the land. The pirates were repulsed and captured by the loyal inhabitants of Homestead after they had, in addition to their crime against public and constitutional law, committed the further crime of murder and caused the destruction of property. Yet, instead of promptly clapping these malefactors in jail and starting proceedings against them and their employers, Sheriff McCleary, the chief law officer of Allegheny County, not only allowed the pirates to escape, but himself aided them in getting beyond the jurisdiction of the County and the State, and furthermore, left Frick, the pirate employer, unmolested to repeat the offence if he chose.

Next, the law, whose arm had just been so lame against criminals, was suddenly raised against innocent men. Warrants were ground out by the dozens for the arrest, upon the charge of murder, of the very men who had loyally repelled a piratical invasion and vindicated the honor and the dignity of the American flag, while Judge Magee still further prostituted the ermine in favor of capitalism by referring to the conduct of these heroes as "vindictive and devilish", and to the pirates as "unoffending citizens."

Next, further warrants were issued, upon the same charge, against men who had taken no part, directly or indirectly, in the battle of Homestead, for the sole purpose of intimidating them into returning to work at the Carnegie Mills, under conditions that had caused them to strike.

Next, martial law was enforced by the militia of Pennsylvania in Homestead—ALTHOUGH NO MARTIAL LAW WAS PROCLAIMED.

Next, the constitutional right of peaceful assemblage was denied at Homestead by Genl. Snowden, the Commander-in-chief of the militia.

Next, Private Iams, contrary to military regulations, constitutional and statutory enactments, was submitted by his military superiors in the camp at Homestead, without trial, to a brutal and inhuman sentence for the simple expression of an opinion.

Nor is this all. It is hardly a year ago when nine poor men, who had been tried and acquitted by a jury in New Orleans, were dragged out of jail and butchered by a mob of “leading citizens”; the Grand Jury refused to take steps for the punishment of the assassins upon the allegation that theirs was “the act of the whole parish”; and our infamous plutocratic press said amen.

These are a few of the *res gestae* in the case of Berkman—they are part of a long indictment ere long to be drawn up and prosecuted against the capitalist class of brigands, like the indictment drawn up by Thomas Jefferson and prosecuted by the Revolutionary Fathers a hundred years ago against the British tyrant.

It is no wonder that, revolting deeds of anarchy like these being perpetrated, with the plaudits of the plutocratic press, by the very men to whose special keeping law and order are committed, a semi-barbarian should follow suit. The example was set to him. He imitated it.

Capitalism has reduced itself to an intolerable absurdity. Anarchy is to-day rampant in the country. Down with it!

We call again for the punishment of the Anarchists Frick, Sheriff McCleary, Genl. Snowden, Col. Streator, Judge Magee, William A. and Robert A. Pinkerton, together with the whole pack of pirates whom they turned upon Homestead.

If Berkman is guilty, so are these. He no more than they. He a good deal less than they.

[Transcribed by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.  
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