
Great Achievements

by Eugene V. Debs

Published in *St. Louis Labor*, vol. 6, whole no. 376 (April 18, 1908), pg. 3.

The working class of the United States has achieved the most extraordinary victory in all its history. So great is it that not one workingman in ten thousand has any real conception of it, and its magnitude will not be revealed for a full quarter of a century.

Ten years ago Moyer, Haywood, and Pettibone would have been hanged by the neck as felons until dead — to fulfill the law and avenge the Dignity of Capitalism in the United States. To-day, by the fiat of “a jury of their peers,” illuminated by a powerful and irresistible working class sentiment, they are free men.

Two years ago these labor leaders were kidnapped, deported, thrown into dungeons, and told to prepare for their legal lynching, as were certain other leaders at Chicago twenty years ago.¹ Their doom was sealed. All the powerful interests of capitalism were ranged in the background and the scaffold and dangling nooses loomed in ghastly relief before the startled gaze of the victims.

The capitalist press, stupendous power, opened its batteries. Filth and venom belched forth from guns shotted to the lips. The President of the United States, greatest potentate on earth, issued his dictum from the Thrones of Capitalism.

The Philistines of Labor must die.

The Supreme Court of the nation, most august of capitalist tribunals, confirmed the sentence. The governors of states signed the death warrants and proclaimed the approaching execution. The leading minister of the President’s cabinet was dis-

¹ The reference is to the Haymarket affair, which ended in November 1887 with one prisoner committing suicide in custody while awaiting execution and four other radical leaders hung for allegedly inspiring the bombing.

patched to the scene to express in person the President's desire and pave the way for the arch-crime of Capitalism and the martyrdom of Labor.

When, lo! A Giant appeared. The Mightiest Colossus of all the ages! The flame of indignation flashed from his eyes and his huge frame, tense, gnarled, awful, quivered as he spoke.

All the highways of the past had he tramped, all the agonies of the ages had he endured, and now for the first time this Avenging Nemesis was seen, and for the first time his voice was heard.

The thunders of Jehovah issued from his lips and in his presence the assembled pigmies, bent upon murder, cowered and trembled.

"Let my people go free," is all he said. The assassins vanished in the darkness, the dungeon doors sprang open, and that hour the Sons of Toil walked with Freedom.

Edited by Tim Davenport

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