

CRIMINAL RAILROAD BRAKEMEN

Tooe County, Utah, Jail, August 24th, 1914, On July 17th four fellow workers and myself, boarded a west-bound freight train on the Western Pacific Railroad in Salt Lake City, Utah. Crawling into the end door of a box car loaded with coal. After the train had gotten under way a brakeman by the name of Davis came into the car and asked us where we were going. When we had told him, he said that we would have to put up a dollar apiece. We told him that we did not have any money. He then told us that we would have to get off at the next stop.

Some of the boys, knowing that we would not be able to get another train there, asked him if he would not haul us to the next water tank so as to enable us to get another train. He said: "Nothing doing, put up or get off." I then spoke up and told him that we were union men, although we did not belong to the same union he did; we were striving to better working conditions and I hoped that he would at least let us ride to the first tank. He then said, "Let us see your card." I handed it to him; he looked at it and then started away. As he was going, he said, "I don't see why you tramps don't go to work once in a while so that you could hand the brakeman a dollar once in a while. We have to eat." Then he left. Well, we thought everything was all right. Shortly afterwards the train stopped for about two minutes. After the train had gotten under way again, running at about fifteen miles per hour and still gaining speed, he came back, and, standing at the end door, looking in he said that if we did not put up, he was going to have arrested at the next town. Thinking that this was a bluff on his part to get us to put up, we told him that we did not have anything. He went away saying that we would all be in jail at the next town. About ten minutes later, he returned with another brakeman by the name of Sparkes. Davis stayed at the end door while Sparkes came in. As soon as he got inside he said: "You fellows are going to put up, or we will throw you off." We told him we did not have anything. He then grabbed fellow-worker Gallway, a cripple, having a cork leg, with one hand while he began to hit him with the other across the face, calling on the other brakeman to help him. As soon as this happened I began to unroll my bundle to get at my gun. As I got my gun and got it loaded, Davis said to Sparkes: "Don't throw him off, he is a cripple." Sparkes said: "All right, I will throw the rest of the S. of B. off." He then started for me.

I covered him with my gun and told him that he was one of the dirties and meanest workingmen I had ever met, that I was not going to hurt him because he was a workingman and that I was trying to better working class conditions. But it was such workingmen as he, that kept the working class down. Further, that we would get off the train when it stopped and that if he tried to throw me or any of these men off it would be his life or ours; that he could see that we had the best of it, and that he had better get out and let us alone and we would get off when the train stopped. Well, he got out, but he tried to lock the end door saying that he would show us S. of B. something. I told him not to lock the door, but he was determined to lock it, so I had to fire a shot at him in order to get him away from the door.

Davis left as soon as he saw the gun. Sparkes left when I fired the shot. When the train started to slow down we started to get off. Fellow-worker Sam Olsen, (19 years old) started to get off first. Sparkes, who had been waiting on top of the car with a club for us to come out, struck the boy over the head, knocking him down so that his body fell down across the draw-bars. I rushed out to grab the boy; Sparkes, then struck at me and I began to shoot up at him and he beat it for the caboose. I again tried to grab the boy, but the train gave a jerk and his body fell under the wheels, cutting off his arm and leg. He died shortly after. I got off the train, ran back to the depot and told the depot agent to stop the passenger train and pick up the boy.

I did not see Sparkes, but have found out since that he crawled under the operators table in the depot. I went back and picked up the boy and made him as comfortable as I could. I was unable to get him to tell me where his people lived beyond that they lived in Omaha. He talked to me all the time. I asked him if he was in pain. He said, "No". I promised him that I would see that the brakeman paid for taking his life.

Names of fellow-workers in the car. Gallway and Edward Wints. Charges: "Trespassing." Demanded jury trial and were released. Fellow-worker Glen and myself are held under two charges: "Carrying concealed weapons, and assault with a deadly weapon with intent to do bodily harm, menacing the peace and dignity of the State of Utah."

TONN AGAINST TIPPING JUSTICE

I just got the latest issue of The Voice and Solidarity and see that the main issue of both papers is a call for funds for Rangle, Cline and Panener and appeals for new trials. Now I can't see what is the use of continually calling for funds to fight working class battles in capitalistic courts; it seems to me a useless expenditure of the hard earned money of the workers and throwing it into the hands of the very people that we should keep every cent away from. In the first place it is useless to try and clear our fellow-workers in any of the capitalist courts of this country, as to be an Industrial Worker of the World is enough to send a workingman to the gallows in the eyes of the business world of this country. There is only one way I can see to clear any of the working class, and that is the one thing we are always preaching on every street corner in the cities of this country, that thing called Sabotage. We have got to the point where we must attack the transportation industry—Sabotage it—and tie up the railroads of this country. Then you will hear a howl go up from the railroad barons that will clear our fellow-workers that are in the dungeons of capitalism, in no time. But as long as you monkey with their courts, so long you will have to dig up hard earned pennies to match against their millions of dollars. Going into court is just like trying to emancipate the working class by monkeying with the ballot box; its but a waste of time and hard earned money.

It is time for the I. W. W. membership to make an attack on the railroad industry of the States where our fellow-workers are in dungeons for the cause of labor; four or five men on each division can tie up an entire system in less than two days so that they cannot move a train either way.

Let us cut out this fighting the class struggle in the court house; it is not there—the class struggle is in industries, not in court houses, and it is in the industries where we must fight our battles to free those that are in the capitalist dungeons of this country, not in court houses where we are convicted before we get there by the dollar grabbing brigade. Its useless; cut it out, you slaves; get your fighting spirit up and hit the boss in the pocket book, and hit him hard. Start at once. There is no time to lose. Get into action each and every one of you and give the boss the wooden shoe.

Your for action and the O. B. U.,

Henry Tonn.

US, THE HOBO NATION

The unemployed are not residents of Portland, nor Seattle, nor San Francisco, nor Chicago, nor New Orleans, nor New York—nor anywhere on earth. The fact is they don't own any residence—the land sharks took it away from them long years ago. It therefore follows that no city, or community, or state, or government, is under any moral obligation to feed the unemployed. But the unemployed have acquired the sinful and unreasonable habit of eating. They insist on having something to eat. That is the unemployed problem in a nutshell. When the unemployed are sufficiently numerous hungry they become the sansculotte, as in France a hundred years ago, or a constitutionalist army as in Mexico today.

US, THE UNEMPLOYED

By Covington Hall

We shall come, the Unemployed, the disinherited of earth,

We shall crowd into your temples and your marble halls of mirth;

We shall come as you have made us, ragged, lousy, pale and gaunt—

You, the House of Have, shall listen unto us, the House of Want.

We are sickened of your "charity," our "God-appointed lot"—

We are wondering why us thousands in your slums and prisons rot—

We are measuring the chaingangs that stretch from coast to coast—

We shall come, us the light-less, us the "God-forsaken" host.

We shall come in all the madness born of hunger, pain and strife,

On our lips the cry for vengeance, in our souls the lust for life;

We shall swarm as swarmed the locusts that on Pharaoh's kingdom fell,

And shall swing your damned detectives and your gunmen into hell!

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WHY BUTTE REVOLTED

(Note. The following address was turned over to us last week by a free-footed rebel of the class of toil. It is the first document of its kind we have read. We publish it in order to help the revolting miners refute the many lies spread broadcast against them and that labor may know the truth. E. V. P.)

Butte, Montana, June, 30, 1914.

ADDRESS TO INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATIONS AND TO ALL LOCAL OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF THE W. F. M., AND TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

You have in all probability been made acquainted with the revolt which the miners of Butte have made against Butte Miners' Union No. 1, and the general officers of the Western Federation of Miners.

We, the executive committee of the new "Butte Mine Workers' Union," have been instructed by a mass meeting of approximately five thousand (5,000) to forward the following statement to all the locals of the W. F. of M.:

Inasmuch as the company henchmen are sending out sensational reports regarding the causes which led up to the revolt against Butte Union No. 1, W. F. of M., it is necessary that the truth of the matter be given equal publicity. Their statements that the I. W. W. is responsible for the events of the past three weeks are barefaced falsehoods; as is also their attempts to brand the leaders of the movement as organizers of the I. W. W.

There is a decided attempt on the part of the great Copper Interests of this district, as well as elsewhere, to destroy unionism, in all its forms.

With the help of Butte Local No. 1, W. F. M., whose control was, and now is, in the hands of Company henchmen, the Amalgamated Copper Company has been able to discourage and block any attempt of the miners of this camp to protect themselves against discrimination and organized greed. To explain this to those of you who have not worked in Butte, will, we know, be a difficult task. But those of you who have worked here will readily understand our repudiation of the W. F. M.

Butte Miners' Union No. 1, W. F. M., has for years been in the hands of the mine operating interests of the district.

In the Heinze-Amalgamated copper wars, the Miners' Union played an important part, and was a factor which brought victory to the Rockefeller interests. It allowed its members to be used by the Copper Interests in breaking the switchmen's strike on the Anaconda hill; arming them with pickhandles, to drive peaceful pickets off company grounds. It allowed its members to scab upon the Machinists' Union, while the latter were struggling for better conditions. It allowed its members to whip the Brewery Workers' Union back under the yoke of the master. Many more cases could be cited to prove the character of the controlling hands of the Butte Miners' Union No. 1, W. F. M.

Then, again, this corrupt gang (whose identity cannot be mistaken), that has and still is, running the Butte Miners' Union No. 1, made a desperate attempt to wreck the Federation itself during the trials of Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone, when, led by Frank O'Conner, the whole Butte delegation bolted the convention; at the behest of the Mine Owners' Association, no doubt. This Frank O'Conner is the present president-elect of the Butte Miners' Union No. 1, W. F. M.

He was elected at the fake election, held on the third of June, last.

There have been a few instances where true union men guided the policies of the organization; but mighty few, indeed.

Some few years ago, by an almost superhuman effort, the union was wrested from the control of the Copper Interests, and, a campaign of education was started along working class lines. The men in control began to build up the treasury, and in two years \$35,000.00 was deposited in the bank to the credit of the Union; \$3,500 was spent in remodeling the Butte Miners' Union Hall, and a loan to Lead (South Dakota) Union.

Such conduct apparently was a thorn in the side of the Copper Interests, so they determined to put a stop to these distasteful actions. This was in 1911 and 1912.

The first sign of Company activities was the lavish spending of money by the company stool pigeons.

Then the attendance at the meetings began to increase. At election time the capacity of the hall was utilized. By bulldozing, brow beating and stuffing of ballot boxes on the night of the election of the judges and clerks, they succeeded in electing the most well-known unprincipled crooks in Butte for judges and clerks.

As a result, the whole Amalgamated Copper Company ticket, with Dennis Murphy for president, and a full company delegation to the Victor convention. Dennis Murphy is now a candidate for vice-president of the Federation.

At this time an effort was made to secure the aid of the general officers of the W. F. M., in the attempt of the rank and file to get a square deal. Unfortunately, the officers used whatever influence they had at the convention against us.

Again in 1913, when the Amalgamated Copper Company introduced, for the first time in Butte, the "rustling card," of Coeur d'Alene fame, a mighty protest went up from the miners of Butte; Dennis Murphy, the president, refused to listen to anything that interfered with the company's peonizing of the Butte miners.

The last stand to correct the corruption in the Butte Miners' Union No. 1, W. F. M., was made at this 1914 election.

President Riley and the motley crew, whose bloated faces and bloodshot eyes, bespoke their principles, spent money like in "Brewster's Millions."

Things were gone to hell, with no possible way of correcting them, on account of the small capacity of the hall. We realized that our only hope to prevent fraudulent voting was to get the voting machines which are used by the city. When that question came up for final passage, the Company sent all the men home from the mines who would do their bidding. In spite of this handicap we had enough men in the hall (capacity 600), to pass the amendment, providing for the use of the machines. However, when the vote was taken, President Riley declared it lost on a show of hands and refused pointblank to give us a rising vote.

The amendment providing for the machines being defeated in this way, we made a fight for honest judges and clerks; but met with the same fate as before.

Under the above-mentioned method of packing meetings, we found it impossible to wrest the control of our union from the Copper Interests, and evidently because of the local support given the W. F. M. officials at Denver by Butte Local No. 1, they refused to correct these wrongs.

Rather than have such a click count, or, rather miscount, our ballot and then loudly proclaim, "We beat you," the ticket that represented the rank and file withdrew and left the Amalgamated Copper Company ticket without opposition.

This withdrawing of the ticket, no doubt, suggested the idea of revolt. The miners of two of the biggest mines in the camp refused to show their cards to the Butte Miners' Union No. 1, W. F. M. delegates and were sent home. A great mass meeting was held and a referendum ordered. The result was more than thirty to one (30 to 1) against the Western Federation of Miners.

Moyer came and tried to organize a compromise, which he refused two years ago. The only thing that happened of importance which resulted from his visit here was the complete destruction of the hall by dynamite. That was no part of our program and was done by an enraged crowd that had gathered in front of the hall, after some of Moyer's gunmen had shot down the hall steps and hit one of their own men who was coming up; and then shot out in the crowd and killed, or actually murdered, an innocent bystander.

We wish to state that we stand for and have been fighting for true unionism, not a mockery, and with the help of real union men (of which the country is full), our battle will soon be won.

In the event that you doubt the truthfulness of this statement, we only ask for you to send a man here who has the confidence of your organization; and let him make a fair and impartial investigation.

This much you owe us before you condemn us.

Signed by the Executive Committee,

Muckie McDonald, George R. Tompkins, John R. McGrew, John A. Niva, John Muzevich, Jack Sullivan, Mickey Sullivan, J. E. Bradley, Wm. O'Brien, Peter Marchando, John D. Gabbert, Teo. Stepanovich, Robert Noble, Fred Mignardot.

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