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EDITORIAL

CRITICAL TO AMERICAN LABOR.

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FOR some time the rumor has been afloat that Gompers “was to organize national indignation meetings” in order to secure justice at the trial of Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone; the rumor has been gathering shape from month to month; last month’s *Socialist Party Official Bulletin* announced the holding of secret meetings looking to the calling together of a national conference of Trades Unions “under the auspices of the American Federation of Labor”; finally, the Central Federated Union of this city, a Gompers organization, took, at its session of the 20th instant, the concrete step in that direction. A motion was unanimously adopted “calling upon President Gompers to summon as soon as possible a national convention of representative workingmen to secure the ways and means that may guarantee the prisoners [Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone] an impartial trial and give them the benefit of proper counsel.”

The fix in which a capitalist conspiracy has placed the prisoners of Ada County Jail is precarious enough. When, however, the bat-like figure of Samuel Gompers, the Vice-President of Belmont’s Civic Federation, rises above the horizon, and spreads its clawy sable wings over the heads of those much-tried prisoners, then, not the fate of these men only, but the fate of the whole Working Class of America is darkened by a heavy cloud.

Concede the circumstances and the issue most favorable to a conference of Labor “under the auspices” of Gompers. Concede that a conference of Labor “under such auspices” would result in the merited acquittal of all the three men, and that, in the absence of a conference “under such auspices,” all the three men would become the victims of a judicial murder;—concede that, the extremest case possible, and what would be the result? The result would be that the Gooding-McDonald National Conspiracy, with its ramifications in every State of the Union, would have

purchased from Gompers the right to slaughter workingmen wholesale. That National Conspiracy would have purchased from Gompers immunity to resume the sport of shooting down in the back whatever number of workers they chose when on strike. It would be a repetition of the appalling scene history tells about that took place on an island of the Rhone, we think it was, when, upon the death of Caesar, the triumvirate that was about to despotize the world exchanged lives among themselves—each granting to the other two the privilege to sacrifice the lives of some of his own friends, in exchange for the right granted to him by them to sacrifice the lives of some of their friends. Moyer, and Pettibone we know little; Haywood we know better. When recently the proposition was made to Haywood that he withdraw from the political contest in Colorado, with the veiled promise of acquittal, his indignant answer was he would SOONER WALK TO THE GALLOWS THAN BETRAY THE WORKING CLASS. Upon the theory that

in companions
That do converse and waste the time together,
Whose souls do bear an equal yoke of love,
There must be needs a like proportion
Of lineaments, of manners and of spirit,

the conclusion is justified that Haywood's sentiments are also Moyer's and Pettibone's. So concluding, it is unimaginable these men would consent to purchase their lives by contributing directly or indirectly towards the relapsing of the American Labor Movement into the charnel house over which Gompers hovers as the sable genius of that pit.

Moreover, the circumstances are by no means those just assumed, to wit, that only a conference of Labor "under the auspices of Gompers" can save the three innocent lives now in jail. A comprehensive view of the circumstances point, on the contrary, to the theory that nothing will so steel the nerves of the would-be capitalist assassins as the established fact that, thanks to their crimes, Gompers has been enabled to place his hook in the nose and his bridle in the mouth of American Labor, at the very time that hook and bridle were slipping. A conference of the Working Class of the land "under the auspices of Gompers" would patentize the fact that Belmont's labor lieutenant—the ominous figure, under whose bat

wings the working class of the land has been led to repeated slaughters, and kept un-taught and ripe for further slaughters—controls the acts of Labor.

A monster conference of the Unions of the land?—Bravo! The sinking of all differences and of all heartburnings that differences engender?—Certainly! But “under the auspices” of GOMPERS?—Why, the identical wires, that connect Gooding-McDonald with the McParlands and Orchards, connect with Belmont’s Vice-President and the parlor of Mrs. Potter Palmer. He who knows not this knows nothing; he who knows this and yet would shut his eyes to the fact is a fatuous fool. The fact is too obvious to need proving even by the significant circumstance that the mover of the motion at the Central Federated Union was none other than the Morris Braun—the worthy whose relations with the brewery bosses, black as those relations were, were eclipsed not quite two years ago when, as a committee “in behalf” of the striking employes of Belmont’s subway and elevated roads, he declared the “strikers had done wrong” in that “they had broken their contracts!”—the worthy whose infamous lieutenant-ship for Gompers raised such a howl in this city that even the participant in, and profiter by his crimes, the Volkszeitung Corporation party, felt constrained to drop him from its ticket on which he had become a fixture!

Let all the Unions—A.F. of L., I.W.W., and the numerous not affiliated ones—unite in a monster National Conference to push, watch, safeguard the trial of our brothers in Idaho, but not to push, watch and safeguard the interests of Belmont’s fraternity, as would be the inevitable result of such a conference “under the auspices of Gompers.”

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

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