



AN ADDRESS TO THE I.W.W.

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TO the Members of the Industrial Workers of the World; the American Federation of Labor; to the organized and as yet unorganized workers of the world:

Having been elected as a member of the General Executive Board of the I.W.W. and it being the duty of each member of that Board to “watch vigilantly” over the interests of the I.W.W., and as I am utterly opposed to the misconduct of the recent “free speech” fight in Spokane after my arrest, I declined at that time, to act on the Board, for fear I meet some member of the working class who had been starved and afterward neglected by those in charge of the money given for the good of the union men taking part in the struggle, and who would hold me responsible.

The public are generally familiar with the hardships suffered by our members at the hands of the police. They are also familiar to a great extent, with the brutal neglect of those who should have been their natural defenders.

I was arrested on November 2, 1909, and have been in jail till April 14, 1910. Therefore I am not responsible for conduct of affairs during that time.

After December 1st, the members refused farther [*sic*] to subject themselves to police brutality, which under the cruel circumstances was but natural. The workers themselves, therefore, called off the strike at that time, and thereupon I advised the local organizer, Mrs. Jones, that I thought if possible the legal authorities should be notified of our inability and disinclination to pretend farther [*sic*] to carry on a fight, which for the time being was a useless one. This suggestion of mine was received with bitter opposition. St. John, the General Secretary-Treasurer of the I.W.W., thereupon advertised a fresh strike to take place March 1st.

During the whole trouble from Nov. 2 to March 1st, Fred W. Heslewood, a member of Industrial Union No. 222, was at Coeur d’Alene City, Idaho, receiving large sums of money ostensibly for the relief and defense of the men in jail, their families and dependents. Heslewood acted as “Treasurer of the Defense Fund” by tacit consent of the Industrial Unions of Spokane, which were unable during the whole period to hold any meetings. Heslewood was endorsed and recommended in the I.W.W. papers, and in that of the Socialist, Republican, and Democratic press as

reliable and the “agent” of Vincent St. John, the General Secretary-Treasurer of the I.W.W.

Without wasting time on foolish personalities, it is the duty and interest of each member of the Industrial Workers of the World to inquire narrowly and broadly into the whole matter of receipts and expenses, the final agreement with the Spokane authorities; what mistakes we made, if any, and what is the best course to pursue at this and future times. If we fail to profit by our experiences, we are only comparable to the “beasts that perish,” and as several members have lost their lives, and many have lost their health in this struggle, I implore the membership to see that all this suffering is not entirely in vain; and if it shall be shown that any person or persons have simply ground our misery into dollars for selfish and foolish purposes, let us know it.

The “First of March.”

After the workers who were first arrested, and who were sentenced in most cases to 30 days in jail for violation of the free-speech ordinance were released, their true and awful stories of hardship and suffering had the natural effect of warning the rest of the membership that the police were prepared to go to any length to suppress the I.W.W. The members thereupon ceased offering themselves as victims. A “proclamation” was then issued by Vincent St. John calling for fresh volunteers to go to jail to fight for free speech, this fresh affair to take place March 1st. When March 1st came, and several members signified their willingness to go to jail afresh, in supposed obedience (!) to St. John, a committee composed of the Spokane agent for the

Seattle “Socialist”; a Socialist lawyer named Moore of Spokane, and several other Socialists and also two members of the I.W.W. thereupon called upon the Spokane chief of police, the Mayor, and the prosecuting attorney and stated that the fight was off; that there never was any intention of calling a strike on March 1st, and that they—this committee—were ready to submit to any terms required by the police unconditionally.

The chief of police then offered to liberate all the prisoners on the city chaingang, but nothing was mentioned regarding the 14 men who were serving six months in the County jail. The Governor finally, as an act of policy, released most of the county prisoners voluntarily.

In the meantime, during the last week in February, Fred W. Heslewood who had been secure in Coeur d’Alene City, was arrested on a warrant from Spokane and charged with conspiracy. He thereupon resisted an effort to extradite him to Spokane. This resistance broke down and it was only when Heslewood was under arrest and no longer able to escape the authorities and the jail, that he used his influence with the connivance of the local Socialist lawyer to call the strike off, saying that it was “not in the best interests of the union that he, Heslewood go to jail.”

I do not say that Heslewood was not sincere in this statement; being in possession of the union funds, it was natural that his sense of responsibility was very great.

Where is Our Money?

In the meantime Heslewood had been in receipt of sums estimated at from \$10,000.00 to \$15,000.00. In many cases, the men who were discharged from jail, although sick and

destitute were refused help, food or clothing. Although I was in jail myself at the time, I personally know of many men who were thus shamefully treated and neglected. The excuse given by those in charge of the money, was that all the money was needed to pay lawyers and “organizers”; that the bodily needs of the members were as nothing compared to upholding the alleged “legal” rights of the workers, and that the more we suffered, the better propaganda—whatever that means—it made for “Socialism.”

As for the law end of the affair, it was not and could not have been anything but a farce and a graft of the foulest kind. At the beginning of the trouble, Vincent St. John sent to Spokane from Chicago a lawyer named Tone—a partner of the celebrated Clarence Darrow. Tone looked over the law and the judge and then gave his opinion that nothing whatever could be done from a “legal” standpoint; that although the law was unjust and unconstitutional, and its enforcement unspeakably cruel, it was nevertheless impossible to better matters by any possible form of litigation. In the meantime a local Socialist lawyer, named F.H. Moore, whose partner, named Bruce Rogers, is contributing editor of the “Appeal to Reason”—and therefore honest, was being paid by Heslewood at the rate of \$100.00 a week. For what? God knows! It is only fair to state in this connection, lest it should be thought that I am hinting at any collusion between Heslewood and Moore, that Moore is a real estate agent and has lately sold Heslewood a fine house and lot on Providence avenue in Spokane. It is evident that Moore is an honest lawyer, because he frankly refused to offer any defense in my case, and I am convinced that he intended to

railroad myself and several other men who were personally offensive to him, to the State’s Prison, if we were confiding enough to “appeal” our cases to the Superior Court as he was ordered to do by those in charge.

But it would be idle and useless to tell of all the chicanery: the devilish discrimination against every active member of the union who refused to coincide in the policies of St. John and Heslewood. These facts are known to every one familiar with the local situation who has the manhood to speak his mind and the truth.

After I saw that Moore was unable in any case to defend his clients but that all the members who went into court with him secured the maximum sentence, I used my influence in jail to have all the men who were as yet untried for conspiracy, go into court without a lawyer, which most of them did. Moore’s clients received in all cases six months at hard labor. Those who defended their own cases—and no one pleaded guilty to conspiracy—received in most cases not over thirty days and several only fifteen days.

In the meantime there were no more victims to be “defended” and the money for the “defense” fund began to come slower. The plainest needs of the men in jail were mostly ignored, but we had the “comfort” of knowing that the “Socialist” press was full of sympathy for us!

A Disgrace of Human Nature.

The wholesale begging of money; the damnable neglect of the men for whom it was intended; the fact that even women and children, the families of members suffered from hunger while their fathers and husbands were in jail—these alone should brand those

criminally responsible with infamy. But what can be said after all this of Heslewood's brazenly refusing to allow his Union, 222, to audit his books? Will we be able hereafter to yell "graft" at our Fellow Workers of the A.F. of L.? Will we be able to say "No Contract" when we have a contract with the Spokane Police? Come, Fellow Workers, rub your eyes! And although I am "given over to Satan" for having tried to expose the conduct of those responsible, let us find out if all these and many other things are not really so?

The press of the I.W.W., which is supported by the membership of the union, should at least be expected to tell the whole truth for the benefit of the members. We can expect nothing but lies and misrepresentation from the Republican, Democrat, Socialist, Socialist-Democratic, and Socialist Republican press but how about the "Industrial Worker" and "Solidarity"? They seem to have been affected with a strange ignorance of all the facts although they were and still are in every one's mouth and a stench in the nostrils of the working class. For example, the account of the settlement of the March 1st strike, as it appeared in the "Industrial Worker" is incorrect from start to finish. The New Castle paper, "Solidarity," even {went} so far as to add insult to injury and gave a long editorial account of the "Treaty of Spokane," saying it is a notable "political" victory for the workers, and mentions "concessions" made by the Spokane police, etc.! The Spokane police have made no concessions of any kind. Matters are as they stood before the beginning of the fight in all particulars. Free speech is still forbidden in Spokane, and I defy all the Socialist politicians of the world to change one letter of the ordinance. We

tried to win by "filling the jail" and by passive resistance. We put up a good fight and were simply over-powered. That is all! Another time, let us hope for more industrial control. But what in God's name is to be gained by lying about actual conditions? Such tactics can only serve to make us a laughingstock and lose us the confidence of the membership. Such miserable subterfuges are a disgrace and a hissing in the ears of union men of all descriptions.

"Guilty of Treason."

Since my release from jail, and while still nearly blind as a result of eye-trouble contracted in jail, I have been expelled without hearing or trial by No. 222 of Spokane. This is, I admit, a suspicious circumstance. The childish "charges" are not for anything done as officer of the union or editor of its paper, but because I ventured to criticise the misconduct of those in charge of affairs during my imprisonment. To be in jail for "free speech" and then to be denied free speech in jail! I have gone through the formality of appealing this matter to the other members of the General Executive Board of the I.W.W. and I intend to remind the membership of this disgraceful persecution of me as an "anarchist" at the hands of the Socialists and of those who support Vincent St. John, Heslewood and their tactics, until the rule is finally established and made a part of the constitution of the I.W.W.: That free speech is not allowed an I.W.W. member while in jail, if it concerns the affairs for which he is actually in jail.

Industrial, Civil and Criminal Law.

And now members of the I.W.W., thou-

sands of whom I have initiated and written to, and lectured to, during my continuous services for the union during a space of four years, what have you to say? If, after having been cheated, slandered, robbed and betrayed by a group of men, whose conduct is unparalleled, I myself should appeal to the civil and criminal law in "defense" of my rights, has not the example been well set? As we are apparently formally committed to legal action, would I not have a right to appeal to the slander, the embezzlement, and the false pretense "law," seeing I am denied even a hearing in the "Industrial Court of the I.W.W."? If you are still unprejudiced, will you not give this matter your attention and come to some conclusion when the matter is brought to the attention of the working class in the Labor Press all over the country? Are you not able and courageous enough to demand justice for a Fellow Worker, if you believe that an injury to one is the concern of all?

This matter of free speech in jail will be continually harped on in my paper, until the rule is finally established, that persons going to jail for the I.W.W., are denied free speech in jail under fear of excommunication. Are you not afraid to look the boss in the eye and tell him to go to hell? Then let's have no bosses in the union, for God's sake. If, for instance, Vincent St. John—a member-at-large—of the I.W.W. has the power to call on all members of the union to go to jail; has the legal and industrial right to receive money and appoint his personal friends as agents for the receipt of money, and has then the right to keep, spend, or dispose of thousands of dollars without the knowledge or consent of the membership, has not any one a right to graft in the name of the I.W.W.?

Personally, I was in hearty accord at the time, with the street demonstration, but it was only as supported by the Industrial Unions of Spokane and their legally appointed Executive Committee, that I, as editor, advertised and called for volunteers in the "Industrial Worker."

It must not be forgotten that this is not the first fight of the I.W.W. in Spokane to secure the right to speak on the streets and to boycott the employment offices,—which is the only feature of the free speech agitation having economic importance at this time and place. We are not the defenders of the employers' constitution. We will have enough to do to defend our own I.W.W. constitution before we are through with the employing class.

In March, 1909, a similar and smaller demonstration for free speech was made by the I.W.W. in Spokane. At that time a committee composed of members of the Central Executive Committee of the I.W.W. of Spokane, J.H. Walsh, who was then local organizer, and the inevitable and criminal lawyer Moore, the Socialist, arranged terms with the Spokane authorities, by which we were to forgo any further demonstration and wait till the Spokane City Council got ready to pass a free speech ordinance. This they have never done, and keenly alive to their economic interest, they may never pass any ordinance to favor the I.W.W. till they are forced to do it by economic power.

The Net Results.

The matter remains as before. Some free advertising of the I.W.W. has been got, and the spirit of stick-together has been magnificent. But there has been a concerted effort on the part of Vincent St. John, Heslewood, Mrs.

Jones, as well as plain workingmen who have had nothing to lose and ought to have known better, to use the whole affair merely as an advertisement for the Socialist party and to boom their periodicals. The "Appeal to Reason" even apologized (!) for noticing the I.W.W.

The cases in court have all been dropped by St. John, Heslewood and the lawyers, although thousands of dollars were received to appeal the cases, if necessary, to the United States Supreme Court. While I do not admit that it is anything but treachery to the working class to look for justification of class action in the employers' courts, why, in the name of common sense and sincerity, why, even from the Socialist point of view, why were not any of the cases appealed? Echo answers "why"?

In the name of our dead fellow workers, and the untold misery of those imprisoned and sick whose sufferings have been mocked, and whose needs {have been} neglected, why have not these cases{,} any of them{,} been appealed if it is a good thing to expect justice from the courts of the employing class?

Thinking that there might be still some men of independent mind even on the G.E.B., I wrote from jail, a letter to T.J. Cole, an executive board member at Blue Island, Ill. The answer is as follows:

"Yours of recent date at hand. Hope you will not feel hard because of delay in answer from me. Regarding the legal phase of things in Spokane, I am most emphatic in saying that this must be fought through the higher courts. All the legal actions of that city are unconstitutional and no one knows this better than the officialdom of Spokane. In so far

as the I.W.W. is concerned, they are banking upon the supposition that the I.W.W. can not or will not furnish the funds for this. Well, they have another guess coming. Also keep this in mind, that no individualism must exist.

"There is no justice to be gotten out of the kangaroo methods of the lower courts there, and of a necessity the higher courts must reverse the decisions of the lower—and only can this be done by going to as high a tribunal as can be reached, which if necessary, is the Supreme Court of the U.S.A.

"Yours for the I.W.W., first, last and always,

"T.J. Cole."

And now Fellow Worker Cole, let us hear why none of these cases were appealed, and why it is "therefore," that we can not hold meetings on the streets of Spokane to-day?

Come now, Fellow Worker, who are so opposed to individual liberty of thought and expression in the I.W.W., can you as a Socialist, tell me the reason of your and the other executive board members' utter neglect in all this whole affair? If you answer that you were compelled to work and earn your living meanwhile, was there not enough money in the defense fund to pay the usual \$3.00 per day and expenses to attend to your duty?

The Effect on the Working Class.

While the prompt help of the labor unions of the United States and of the world, was most encouraging to us of Spokane, it is also true that hundreds of the most active members of the I.W.W. and many warm friends in the other labor unions are much disgusted over the "Defeat of Spokane" and are won-

dering where all the money collected has gone. Why none of the much cried-over martyrs' cases were appealed? Why the defense fund was insufficient to feed the wives and children of the prisoners, etc.?

The unprejudiced workers as well as the enemies of the I.W.W. are loud in their accusations of "graft," "compromise," "political treachery," etc. In view of the well-known fact that \$700.00 of the funds collected for the defense of Preston and Smith in the Carson Penitentiary were misspent by Wm. E. Trautmann—as appeared at the 4th Convention—it is not well to let the world see that we are able to run the affairs of the I.W.W. with a decent respect to the opinions of the working class?

As an "individual," I feel especially mortified over the present "defense fund," for I, as secretary of the Spokane Executive Committee, raised \$500.00 in the winter of 1908–1909 and forwarded the same to Vincent St. John to cover the shortage of Trautmann in the matter of the Preston and Smith fund, and that at a time when Moyer of the Western Federation of Miners was threatening exposure as agent of Mrs. Preston.

Have I not a right, with these experiences fresh in mind, to demand to know with no attempt at whitewashing or concealment, what is become of money that we as members of the I.W.W. are responsible for?

Facts are stubborn things; the average workingman trusts the officers of his union. He has "no head to bother with figures." But the following facts will not be hid: thousands of dollars were collected for us; Heslewood was drawing \$4.00 per day, and other organizers as much more. Thousands of dollars were paid to a well-known and detestable

shyster and real estate agent. Men were starved, sick, cold, and brutally neglected and robbed. As account of some sort may be rendered to the 5th convention of the I.W.W. when it is too late either to check or correct it and the money has all been "absorbed." But if the membership have so lost control of their own union that one or two men are allowed to take, keep, spend, or give away the union's money without let or hindrance, then good-bye to the confidence of the working class. Let us admit that we are unable to control our affairs, and then call ourselves the "economic organization of the working class"! Let us, if we can, keep from smiling, as we tell the workers that we intend to control all the industries of the nation and of the world while unable to control our hired men and unable to keep tab on a few thousand dollars! At this rate I fear it will be some time before we take and hold the banks and the Standard Oil Co. Is it not so?

Where will we be at, with the hospitals in our control, if our own members are refused medical aid? What will become of the hungry workers if we are too lazy and heedless to care for the released prisoners of our own industrial wars?"

A Crime to Speak—in the I.W.W.

All the above are merely suggestions. It is simply childish to accuse me of "Knocking" the union. The workers of the world have eyes, and ears and we ourselves as workers would be insulted if told we had no brains. Why not use our brains? It is not for me as an "individual"—with apologies to Fellow Worker Cole on behalf of the anarchists, that I am not two individuals at the same time—it is not for me then, with all my shortcomings,

to examine alone all these matters. If the membership can afford to condone the most disgraceful wind-up of a well-meant and bravely fought fight, and say nothing, I can stand it as long as the rest. But how about the future? Are we not to examine our failures and our defeats to the end that we avoid the same pitfalls on a like occasion?

This circular is free. It is not paid for by the "Appeal to Reason" or the "Chicago Slushialist." Neither is General Berger of the Milwaukee "Social-Republican Herald" paying for it. I am simply getting it printed on my personal credit and you can have it for what it's worth. I will be repaid, if after having hung and expelled me for printing such suggestions you will at least investigate their merit, and prevent the I.W.W. from becoming either a laughing-stock or the mere tail of a political kite as has been the case in former years.

The employing class of America is ready to spend millions of dollars to check the growth of the I.W.W. The enemy has its agents in all our business meetings. The only possible hope of the workers is to know at the time just what course to pursue and every man can then be found in his place, and the political, financial and all other schemes of the employing class can then be detected at once by the membership. Only he is a good I.W.W. member whose acts as officer or member of the organization are in accord with the interest of the working class. There is no other possible rule to guide us. Good man or bad man—all are good to us—if they act with us in the class struggle.

Be Fair With Ourselves.

And now, Fellow Workers, do not think I

am asking for "sympathy." It is up to the membership to see that even I have justice. If you think you can afford to "expel" one of your members without an opportunity even to reply to irrelevant charges made against him, and whose only offense is that of speaking his mind as an individual member when in jail on account of the union, where—granting we really had any industrial control—does "emancipation" for the working class come in? To be in jail for "free speech" and then denied free speech in jail—is this economic freedom? It matters little that I am personally very offensive to the Socialists; I still ask you what is to hinder the I.W.W. from becoming an industrial despotism if such practices are followed?

It has been charged that an effort is now making to affiliate indirectly with the Socialist party at the coming convention. I trust this is untrue; but have non-Socialists no rights in the I.W.W.? For instance, does it not seem likely to you, that during six months' imprisonment, other men besides myself may have been told enough to make remarks—some of which may have "savored of impatience"? Has the I.W.W. any jurisdiction over the personal utterances of its individual members while at their houses, on the street or in the jail—while speaking as "individuals"?

In conclusion, let me ask that this matter be laid before the business meetings of your local industrial union for discussion. Let us have the matter clearly understood, whether it is a right of a member of the I.W.W. freely to express himself in jail or prison as an individual, regarding matters which concern him. Be men—not children. Do you think it likely that you can deny rights to one member, and

give such rights to another?

It must be plain to all sensible workers that the whole affair is out of the jurisdiction of the I.W.W.; that the whole conduct of an active member for a space of four years is rather to be considered, than personal utterances of a man in jail which any prisoner has a right—even with capitalists,—to make. It is up to the membership to say if a man has a right to speak his mind in jail. as editor, is my reason for writing this circu-

It should be remembered, as showing the injustice of those now in control of Industrial Union 222 of Spokane, that part of my wages are now owing me as editor of the “Industrial Worker” for the issue previous to Nov. 2. This is refused me, as well as access to my books and accounts. I trust, however, that I will not starve to death even with no defense fund to keep me, and it is a mistake to think that the \$15.00 per week that I did not always receive lar which costs \$70.00 to print!

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