

DAILY PEOPLE

VOL. 6, NO. 268.

NEW YORK, SUNDAY, MARCH 25, 1906.

TWO CENTS.

EDITORIAL

OFF WITH THAT MASK!

By DANIEL DE LEON

THE *Denver Post* of the 9th of this month organizes itself into a “tableau of impartiality.” One set of people “would hang Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone out of hand,” another set of people “would set them free without further ado.” These two extremes the *Post* would have nothing to do with, it says. In order {to} illustrate its point, the paper imagines a dialogue between the two extremes. The more the two argue the further apart they get. A third party steps in. The two extremes turn to him upon the subject of the guilt or innocence of the men. His answer is: “I’ll tell you when I read the evidence in the trial.” This position the *Post* pronounces “incontrovertible.”

Off with that mask!

The theory of “waiting for the trial” is but a mask behind which to hide the bitter partisanship of the Mine Owners’ Association. It is a trick to slide off from the question. It is a sleight-of-hand manoeuvre, intended to expunge from the record one crime by the commission of a second.

That a crime was committed by the Governors of Idaho and Colorado, together with the prosecuting officers of the former State, is unquestionable. Upon perjured papers, and papers known to be perjured, the Governor of Idaho demanded the extradition of the men. How perjured the papers were upon their very face is demonstrated by the clandestine procedure in Denver. The Governor sneaked out of town, the arrests were made after the courts had closed for the week; the men were denied counsel and a hearing; a train hastened to snatch them from the jurisdiction of the State. At every step the law was defied and trampled on. It was the conduct of midnight burglars, anxious to get out of the house that they had broken into. This was the first crime. “Wait for the evidence in the trial”? Which trial? The trial of the lawless Governors? There might be some color of sense in that. Nor would the

Working Class wish to set the example of having the two official felons hurled from their posts, and forever branded with infamy, without due and proper trial. But it is not the trial of the two official felons the *Post* would have us wait for before saying “guilty” or “not guilty.” The trial that it would have the people form their opinion on is the trial of the kidnapped men. In other words, the *Post* would have the people shut their eyes to the first crime and abide the issue of?—of a second crime.

None, but those outside of a lunatic asylum who should be inside, will be naive enough to imagine that an officialdom, such as that of the State of Idaho that has had the insolence to commit the first crime, committed against the imprisoned mine officers, is above crowning that first crime with a second. Gov. Altgeld’s Pardon, now going through these columns, places the official stamp upon what the Capitalist Class is capable of. There is no crime, except one that demands courage, that the Capitalist Class is not capable of against the Working Class in its hatred for the Class that it robs and daily crucifies upon the modern Golgotha, and which it hates all the more by reason of the instinctive feeling that that very Working Class is destined to dethrone it. Apathy on the part of the Working Class on the score of the first crime; asinine patience to see the trial of the arrested miners before forming an opinion as to their innocence or guilt; silence now, and not raising the voice of indignation;—nothing would so much encourage the Idaho pirate class to proceed and round up their conspiracy. A jury would be packed (as Gov. Altgeld showed the Chicago jury was packed); the Judge would soil the ermine with preposterous rulings intended to encourage conviction (as Gov. Altgeld shows was done at the Chicago trial); a District Attorney and other police officials would suborn witnesses (as Gov. Altgeld proved was done at the Chicago affair). In short a regulation Western Kangaroo-court comedy, savoring of the oldest and wildest and wooliest Western practices, when the now capitalists of that region were gathering in their “original accumulation,” would be held—a travesty on law, a travesty on order, a travesty on civilized methods. The men would be “convicted.” The conspiracy would be crowned with its long contemplated finale of a triple murder. And?—why, then the first crime would stand white-washed!

Off with that mask, Denver *Post*! The Working Class of the land, tutored by a bitter experience, refuses to be trepanned by that “impartiality” that is tantamount

to insuring the successful execution of the second crime, and thereby expunging from the record the crime initial. That jugglery is too thin to deceive. The only thing that can stay the hand of the assassin now rising in Idaho over the heads of Moyer, Haywood and Pettibone, is the loud denunciation of the conspiracy, the first act of which was enacted in Denver. Reckoning with the Spirit of the Age in this Twentieth Century, the Working Class will continue to kindle the Torch of Enlightenment throughout the land—the Torch that will throw light upon this dark affair, and with its light confound the conspirators.

Transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.
Uploaded February 2009

slpns@slp.org