

# ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY

RAYMOND ROBINS

AT THE

“NATIONAL PROTEST” MEETING

OF THE

CHICAGO FEDERATION OF LABOR

Held Easter Sunday, April 19th, 1908, at  
Federation Hall, 275 LaSalle St.  
Chicago, Illinois

---

AUTHORIZED EDITION  
5,000 COPIES



FROM  
THE PRESENT CRISIS.  
(By James Russell Lowell.)

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide,  
In the strife of Truth with Falsehood, for the good or evil side;  
Some great cause, God's new Messiah, offering each the bloom or blight,  
Parts the goats upon the left hand, and the sheep upon the right,  
And the choice goes by forever 'twixt that darkness and that light.

Careless seems the great Avenger; history's pages but record  
One death-grapple in the darkness 'twixt old systems and the Word;  
Truth forever on the scaffold, Wrong forever on the throne—  
Yet that scaffold sways the future, and, behind the dim unknown,  
Standeth God within the shadow, keeping watch above his own.

Then to side with Truth is noble when we share her wretched crust,  
'Ere her cause bring fame and profit, and 't is prosperous to be just;  
Then it is the brave man chooses, while the coward stands aside,  
Doubting in his abject spirit, till his Lord is crucified,  
And the multitude make virtue of the faith they have denied.

Count me o'er earth's chosen heroes—they were souls that stood alone,  
While the men they agonized for hurled the contumelious stone,  
Stood serene, and down the future saw the golden beam incline  
To the side of perfect justice, mastered by their faith divine,  
By one man's plain truth to manhood and to God's supreme design.

By the light of burning heretics Christ's bleeding feet I track,  
Toiling up new Calvaries ever with the cross that turns not back,  
And these mounts of anguish number how each generation learned  
One new word of that grand Credo which in prophet-hearts hath burned  
Since the first man stood God-conquered with his face to heaven upturned.

For Humanity sweeps onward: where today the martyr stands,  
On the morrow crouches Judas with the silver in his hands;  
Far in front the cross stands ready and the crackling fagots burn,  
While the hooting mob of yesterday in silent awe return  
To glean up the scattered ashes into History's golden urn."



*Raymond Robins*

## Scab Labor Employers Supreme Court Decisions and the Way Out for Union Men.

---

---

Mr. Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen and Friends:—

To the more thoughtful men in this country, the cause of organized labor and the rights of the group of toil, are more in jeopardy at this moment than at any other time within the last thirty years. The chief reason for this belief is the recent decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in the suit of Loewe vs Lawlor, known as the Danbury Hatters' case.

It is my purpose here today to discuss some of the fundamental implications that lie in this decision. It is necessary for you to consider what it means for the Supreme Court of this country to find, that the printing of a list of unfair employers and products in a trade union paper is a conspiracy in restraint of trade.

### Is Labor Important to National Welfare?

We are required to go back to first principles. We must take a review, as it were, of the aims and achievements of organized labor, to determine whether we have been mistaken through the long years in demanding union conditions for the working people of this country; or whether the Supreme Court is mistaken in finding that organized action—for the protection of the rights of men, women and children who earn what they eat—is a conspiracy in restraint of trade. We have further to determine whether free men must accept the decisions of the Supreme Court as a rule of political action and a final settlement of questions on public policy. Now mark what I say! Every law-abiding citizen will abide by the decision of the Supreme Court until it is reversed; but if the decision be contrary to a just interpretation of the law or the Constitution, or in conflict with sound public policy, then every intelligent and free man in this Republic should do what he can to see to it that such decision be reversed. (Applause.)

If it be true that organized labor is a conspiracy against the rights of man; if it be true that employers have a vested right in the purchasing power of the group of toil, so that the members of that group cannot protect their own people from dishonest goods made under anti-social conditions; then the cause of union labor will finally be defeated in this country, and we will go back to the old order of one man seeking to barter his labor power with a great corporation, and trying to protect himself from unjust conditions by stopping work as an individual. Each workingman will then be in the position of the cat in the tub on the lake. The cat doesn't have to stay in the tub; it can jump into the lake and drown if it objects to the tub. (Applause.) And because this is no child's play, but rather the facing of a fundamental issue and a fundamental crisis in the life of this Republic, I count it

high honor to be privileged to discuss this issue before you this afternoon. I want to be just; I want to be deliberate; I want to say the full measure of such truth as I think I know, and then I want to abide the consequences of such statement even after it has been garbled in the press and lied about in one quarter or another of the privileged group of plunder in the City of Chicago. (Applause.)

The questions that now fall to be considered first are these:

Should workingmen seek to improve their condition and the condition of their fellow workers? Is the welfare of labor important to the welfare of a nation?

#### Abraham Lincoln on Labor.

Let us go back from the heat of this present time for an authority on these questions. Let us go back to the greatest statesman of this Republic, a name that even the group of plunder and the subsidized press have to speak of with respect. Let us go to this great soul that came out from the common-places of the world, who lived the common life, who bore the common burdens of poverty and toil, and who out from the conflict of a great human issue, rose, by reason of his courage and his brain, by reason of his great heart that beat true to the life of men, to the highest place, not only in the administration of this Republic, but to the highest place in the hearts of all free men of all the nations of the earth—let us go to Abraham Lincoln. (Great applause.)

Listen to his answer. I quote him as he spoke in the city of New Haven on the 6th of March, 1860: "I am glad to see that a system of labor prevails in New England under which laborers can strike when they want to \* \* \* I like the system which lets a man quit when he wants to, and wish it might prevail everywhere." Hear him again as he speaks in Cincinnati, February 12th, 1861: "I agree with you, Mr. Chairman, that the workingmen are the basis of all governments, for the plain reason that they are more numerous." \* \* \* And later in the same address Lincoln said: "Mr. Chairman, I hold that while man exists it is his duty to improve, not only his own condition, but to assist in ameliorating the condition of mankind." Finally, my friends, listen to these words from Lincoln's first annual message to the Congress of the United States under date of December 3, 1861, written just as this plain, simple man was going about the greatest task ever given to any mortal in the political world: "Labor is prior to and independent of capital." (Great applause.) "Capital is only the fruit of labor and could never have existed if labor had not first existed. Labor is the superior of capital and deserves much more consideration. (Applause.)

This is Abraham Lincoln, not an Anarchist, who tells us this great truth of the right and dignity of labor in the civilization of mankind. (Applause.)

My friends, I do not want to assume the infallibility of anybody. I do not believe in the authority of great names over the free life of man. More truth is breaking out from human experience upon this earth as generation succeeds generation, and the wise men of today are as wise as the wise men of yesterday. But to those who demand authority we will say, "We rest our case upon Abraham Lincoln's statement of the service and rights of labor in producing the wealth and promoting the civilization of the world." (Applause.) Leaving now the authority of great names, let us examine for ourselves the share of labor organizations and the group of toil in the welfare of this Republic.

#### High Wages Make Prosperity.

Labor organizations demand high wages for the working people that feed and clothe and house the world. Is this a just demand?

We are an industrial people. The daily welfare of this nation rests upon industrial prosperity. Upon what foundation does industrial prosperity rest? Upon the purchasing power of the group of toil. What maintains this purchasing power? High wages. Every man and woman who can think knows this great truth, that the buying power of the workers is the basis of industry throughout the entire nation. That the wages of labor rather than the profits of the capitalist are the basis of trade and industry is subject to very simple and sufficient proof. Imagine, if you please, that my friend here is enjoying an income of \$25,000 a year. By grinding down wages or controlling the market so

that prices can be increased to the consumer, let us suppose that his profits are increased 100 per cent for 1908. He will now have an income of \$50,000 a year. What will he do with his profits? He has all the beds he needs; a man doesn't want to sit in more than two chairs at the same time; nobody wants to wear more than two suits of clothes at once, especially if it is a little warm; so a man with an income of \$25,000 will have practically all the commodities of labor that he needs. What will he do with the additional \$25,000? He will invest it in stocks and bonds, paper evidences of debt, charges upon the industry of the country, for the next thirty or fifty or a hundred years. These securities largely representative of the "water power" of monopoly and special privilege, are tied around the neck of legitimate industry, and are a common burden upon the honest laborer and the honest business man alike. They enable an idle and dissolute class to sit back and clip coupons, for which your wages are clipped to pay. (Applause.)

Now, imagine, if you please, that this extra \$25,000 in profits is changed to \$25,000 in wages. Suppose it is distributed for fifty weeks to 100 men at an increased wage of \$5.00 a week. What will these 100 workingmen do with this extra \$5.00 a week, or \$250 for the year? There is not a single workingman's family in Chicago tonight that has all the useful things they need. These increased wages will go to buy better food and clothes, cleaner and better lighted homes, and more education and opportunity for the children of the workers. And by the same token, every merchant in Chicago would know that there was an increase in his trade and every tooth carpenter would have more teeth to fill and would get more money for his work, so that all business and professional men not implicated in monopoly would be the gainers, and the welfare of the whole community would be advanced. (Applause.) And because this is true, there is not a business man nor a professional man that—unless he enjoys some special privilege or monopoly—is not just as much interested in the purchasing power of the group of toil as any member of a workingman's union. And let me say here that if organized labor in every city of this country were to devote one meeting a month to explaining the great industrial and social values that result from demanding union conditions in industry, for business and professional men, as well as for themselves; then that large class of people in every community who are used even against their own best interests to defeat the demands of labor, would not be as numerous in this country in the future as they are this afternoon. (Applause.)

#### Eight-Hour Day Increases Wealth.

Labor organizations demand an eight-hour day for the working people of this country. Is this a just demand?

Let us examine the facts from two points of view. First let us consider the question as a matter of political economy and the production of wealth; and second as a matter of social economy and the production of men. For, strange as it may seem, manhood and womanhood, as well as railroads and factories, are of moment to the state.

The most careful inquiry that was ever made into the effects of hours of labor upon the production of wealth, justifies the conclusion that for a period of five years without change in the workers an eight-hour day will produce more net material wealth than a ten-hour day. The increased production flows from the increased efficiency of the labor power, and the reduction in the losses due to broken machines and wasted material. Both of these losses show an extraordinary increase after the eighth hour in production. (Applause.)

#### Short Hours Aid Citizenship.

What are the social consequences of long hours upon the life of the group of toil and the general welfare?

Here again the most careful inquiry ever made into the cause of intemperance proves that the greatest amount of drunkenness prevails among that group of laborers that work the longest hours. And by the same token, here you find the least regard for childhood and the home, for education and religion, for justice in the state and general advancement in the life of man. And how could it ever have been thought to be otherwise? Let any of you work 12 hours a day steadily for some months and find out what it will do

to you. I am not dreaming—I have worked 12 hours a day in the mine and lived by it for months at a time. You leave your work and go to your cabin or tenement home, eat your supper wearily, too tired to care much about anything, and then you will do just one of two things; either you will pile into bed and sleep as a horse, or you will go down to the saloon, throw a couple of beers under your belt, and try to be happy under the influence of that artificial stimulant that is helping to break down your manhood every time you use it. (Applause.) Will a man who has worked 12 hours come home at night and talk to his wife about the little economies of their daily life, will he gather his children around him and ask them about their lessons and the hopes of their young lives, will he seek out his friends and discuss with them the questions of government and social progress for himself and his fellows? He will not. He hasn't enough juice left over from his day's toil. For the larger hope of the world, for the better interests of mankind his weary body and mind have no place. (Applause.)

If this room was full of preachers instead of workingmen, I would like to say to them: "Gentlemen, if you will make a demand for shorter hours and better wages for the group of toil and stand by it, then they may have time and interest enough to come into your churches." (Great applause.) Then the clergymen would understand why their churches are empty of workingmen, and they would know why working people have small faith in the religion of those who say on Sunday, "Now be good and you will be happy," while they help exploit these same working people the other six days in the week. (Applause.)

So it now appears that an eight-hour day is good economy for both the production of wealth and the production of men. And because this is true, in spite of the stupidity of the group of plunder and the ruling class of this country, it will yet become the maximum day in every occupation and in every trade throughout the land. (Applause.)

#### Labor the Mudsills of Finance.

But what of the share of labor and the workers in the financial system of this country? Surely here mere working people are of small account. The great bankers, the proud magicians of high finance, they at least do not need the help of the group of toil. These wise men who lend out the savings of the working world and clip for themselves the difference between the 3 per cent they pay and the 6, 8 and 10 per cent they get, surely they are head and tail and the "whole thing" of our national system of finance. Well, let us see. A little while ago we had some trouble with our financial system in this nation. Our people had been working and saving and putting their good dollars into the care of these great men in the savings banks. And these wise men had been loaning out our savings on one kind of security and another—mostly water—when one fine day in last October a big trust company in New York went to smash and other big banks began to tremble. Working people went to the banks to get their good dollars and these wise gentlemen did not have the dollars. They gave the working people little paper slips, or told them to go away and come back some other day. Then what happened? Why, all over the country the newspapers told us how sound these banks were that couldn't pay our deposits, and how foolish we were for wanting our money. And one of the great metropolitan newspapers in New York came out with a little notice all bracketed on the front page so that everybody would see and read it, and this notice was printed in five different languages, and when you translated it, it meant just this, "Mr. Hodcarrier and Mr. Ditchdigger and Mrs. Scrubwoman, for God's sake don't take your savings out of the banks or we'll all go to financial smash." (Applause.) In other words, the financial pillars of this Republic rest upon the labor power of the group of toil, upon the real dollars that represent the wealth produced by labor, and not the spurious wealth, the watered securities, the monopoly debts, that are piled up in the banks and trust companies and safety vaults, and are not worth the paper they are written on if the wheels of industry cease to turn round. (Applause.) Land and labor, the power of God in the living, working earth, and the living, working men produces all the wealth and all the real security for wealth, that there is anywhere in all the world. (Applause.)

#### Labor Casts the Majority of Votes.

We are all familiar with the fact that the working people are the political foundation of this nation. The politicians won't let us forget it anywhere around election times, even though these same politicians forget it the day after election. (Applause.) Even the Manufacturers' Association loves the working people on election day. There is not a privileged plunderer in Chicago, no matter how much he hates the union label, but who will contribute his money to either the Republican or the Democratic party with full knowledge and consent that every poster and every publication sent out with his money, will bear the label of the Allied Printing Trades.

Yes, the labor group is the big group on election day, and the only people that have not found it out are the labor people themselves. (Applause.) Abraham Lincoln said, "Workingmen are the basis of all governments for the plain reason that they are more numerous," and when we learn this truth and get together, there won't be any more scab labor employers Supreme court decisions. (Great Applause.)

#### Labor Holds the Moral Resources of the Nation.

What of the share of labor in the moral power and progress of mankind? What is the reaction of the often ignorant and always despised toilers in the moral heritage of the race? Can it be maintained that in this exalted realm the working people are of any special consequence? Let us examine the facts.

Now a man's moral influence in a community rests not upon what he knows, but upon what he does; not upon the way he talks, but upon the way he acts. What group in the community acts the best upon the moral issues of our industrial politics? Every thoughtful writer and thinker for the past twenty years has declared that the average workingman acts and votes most surely right of all the classes in our country. Now is this because workingmen, as such, are more honest than business or professional men, as such? Not at all. The reason is found in the fact that they are not getting a "rake off" from any social wrong, that they are not profiting by any of the industrial injustice of the present arrangements, in other words, **they are not implicated in the steal**. Think of what this means in the realm of active morality. And remember that morality is dead that is not at work on the job. A business or professional man becomes interested in public morality and social justice, he starts in to help right some manifest public wrong, and finds to his astonishment that in some obscure way he profits or may hope to profit personally by this wrong, if he will just be good and attend to his profession or business, and let politics alone. I have known many men of this sort to start out finely and then weaken over night. Now these persons were just as honest, just as well intentioned as the average workingmen, but they were subject to pressure, and they were pulled off.

But the group of toil is not subject to this sort of pressure. No man who gets up early in the morning, eats his simple breakfast, goes down to the shop and works until noon, eats his cold lunch, works until night and then, returning, climbs up the stairs to his tenement home, is getting any gain from any social or industrial wrong. Everything he gets out of life he earns. He eats his bread in the sweat of his own brow. Now this man may be stupid or prejudiced, he may be ignorant or foolish, but if you can really get him to understand that this man or that measure is right and helpful, and the other man or measure is wrong and hurtful, he will go to the polls and vote for the man or the measure he believes to be right. He is free from obscure pressures and hidden selfishness and unseen pulls. (Applause.)

Among all classes there are individuals who stand the strain, men of the hero and martyr type, and they are the eternal glory of the race—but they are too scarce to carry an election. The average man in this world is just the ordinary garden variety of the genus homo. The moral tests of life must strike him evenly, they must come to him on fair terms—or he will fall down. We all bear a family likeness to that Irishman who said he could stand anything in the world "but temptation." (Laughter and applause.)

We have now finished our review of the part of labor in the drama and heritage of civilization. We have discovered that the foundations of our

common life rest upon the common man. Industrial and political, financial and moral, all the wonderful structure of this modern social order finds a common foundation in the group of toil. Our inquiry has vindicated the truth of Abraham Lincoln's declaration that "Labor is superior to capital and deserves much more consideration." (Applause.)

#### Labor Disregarded in Legislatures and Courts.

Let us now inquire what is the condition of labor? Does labor enjoy that superior consideration in the halls of legislation and the decisions of courts that Lincoln said it deserved? Let us examine the facts.

There are two kinds of infants in this Republic. There are infant industries and infant laborers. Most of the infant industries are rather husky and well grown, while many of the infant laborers are not so husky or well grown. The federal Congress has found it both constitutional and wise to protect infant industries and to tax all the people for their benefit. Yet this same Congress finds it unconstitutional and unwise to protect the infant laborers of Pennsylvania from the exploitation of the interstate group of plunder that has its headquarters in New York. (Applause.)

There are two kinds of mothers in this Republic. There are mothers of dollars and mothers of laborers. The federal Congress has found it constitutional and wise to protect mothers of dollars in the form of timber tracts and mineral lands and to tax the people to irrigate and reclaim vast deserts in the West. Yet the same Congress finds it unconstitutional and unwise to protect mothers of laborers from exploitation in sweat shop, and laundry and factory and mine. (Applause.)

There are two kinds of fathers in this Republic. There are fathers of dollars and fathers of laborers. The federal Congress has found it constitutional and wise to protect the fathers of dollars in the form of national banks, in times of panic, by issuing bonds for millions of dollars. Yet the same Congress finds it unconstitutional and unwise to protect the fathers of laborers in times of panic, by providing work or any other aid, even though these same fathers die of starvation and their children perish from cold. (Applause.)

There are two kinds of interest in this country. There is the interest on Capital and the interest on Labor. The legislatures and the courts have found it constitutional and wise to protect the interest on Capital in the railroads and other public service corporations of this country in the enjoyment of an irrefragable right, to suck 6 per cent interest on watered stock from the industry of this country. Yet these same legislatures and courts find it unconstitutional and unwise to protect the interest on Labor from overwork and underpay, from being crippled and killed without remedy, or forced to starve through the deadly blacklist without right of relief. (Applause.)

There are two kinds of protection in this country. There is the protection of the rights of property and the protection of the rights of men. Presidents, governors and mayors have found it constitutional and wise to use federal troops, state militia and deputy sheriffs, city police and Pinkerton detectives to protect the rights of property. Yet these same presidents, governors and mayors have found it unconstitutional and unwise to use any force whatever to protect human beings from insanitary tenement diseases, sweat shop infections, Monongah mine explosions, or the countless other infringements of the rights of Labor. (Applause.)

The other day a workingman, No. 63, died in the warehouse of the Pioneer Paper Stock Company. Neither the company nor the coroner have found out who No. 63 was. You couldn't lose a dollar that way in this Christian city of ours. (Laughter and applause.)

My friends, the point in all these illustrations is just this. **Property is better protected in this country than is labor.** Now I have no stone to fling at the protection of wealth. I believe in law and order. I believe in the protection of property rights, but I believe also in the protection of human rights. A just social order will protect a man's hand or his labor power, as well as a dollar. When a man loses his life in industry a wise public policy would secure to his wife and children the value of his labor power, charging this cost against the whole consuming public, just as an injured or broken machine is charged. If dollars can be protected, why not human beings. (Applause.)

#### Trades Unions the Only Friend of Labor.

Now amid all these legal and judicial discriminations that reverse Lincoln's rule, and seek to make capital superior to labor, what power amid the industrial, political and social powers of this country has advanced the rights of labor? The trades unions. What have they done? They have educated and organized two million working men and women into a great industrial brotherhood, working together to obtain just wages, fair hours and healthful working conditions. Union men have done more to pass child labor laws, laws limiting the hours of work for women, protected machinery and anti-sweat shop laws, and other factory and mine legislation than all other forces in the community. Organized labor has gone forward ever defending and ever advancing the rights of men, women and children in the industrial struggle. (Applause.)

How has labor done this great work? By education, by organization, by strikes, by urging the purchase of union goods, and by the sympathy of the community through the growing social consciousness of all mankind.

But it is charged that sometimes union men are brutal, that they violate the laws and are led by unprincipled men. Yes, union men have about as much human nature as other people. Yet union men haven't any monopoly of these characteristics. The packers and mine owners and railway magnates are brutal and lawless and unprincipled enough to deserve some of your condemnation. And it should never be forgotten that these captains of industry are tempted only by boundless greed and lust for power, while the workers fight for their homes and their daily bread.

Lincoln said that he was glad that labor could strike if it wanted to. So am I. I don't like strikes. They are always wasteful, often hurtful, but many times necessary. And men, when you do strike—stick, stick, **stick to the bitter end!** (Applause.) For a strike is never wholly bad. It educates the workers to a sense of solidarity and brotherhood, and it educates men who have only a financial conscience to a point where they are willing to consider a union organization if only for the purpose of saving a few dollars.

In the matter of corrupt leadership, it is well to remember that the trades unions are not as much under the control of vicious leaders as are the political parties in this country, and when the critics of organized labor drive out the political crooks from their organizations it will be time for them to make a noise about labor crooks. (Applause.)

#### The Danbury Hatters' Case.

Such, my friends was the condition of labor in this country when the Supreme Court of the United States handed down its decision in the case of Loewe vs. Lawlor on February 3, 1908.

This decision, under a statute that has been in force for nearly twenty years, sweeps away a right that has been exercised by organized labor from the beginning of its history; and denies our right to protect our own people from the use of goods made under conditions anti-social and destructive of the welfare of the working people. It assumes that to publish an "unfair list" is a conspiracy in restraint of trade. **Thus** is a statute passed to protect the people from trust control of commodities, wrested into a powerful weapon of the trust manufacturers to destroy trade unions and make scab labor national in this country. (Applause.)

#### Can the Supreme Court Be Criticised?

Now I want to be very careful, and first inquire whether I have the right to criticise a decision of the Supreme Court. If the Supreme Court of the United States is a sacred institution, if its judgment is infallible, if I become an enemy of my country by criticising this court—then I don't intend to do it. And here again I go back to the same great authority, to that tall, quiet man of a glimpse of whose very spirit you can catch from that wonderful statue down there at the entrance of Lincoln Park. I go back to him, trusting that he has been dead long enough not to be called an anarchist now, and that I cannot be justly censured for following his example to whom this generation builds statues, and inscribes a name high over all the great names of the Republic.

### Lincoln on the Supreme Court.

Just a little over fifty years ago this same Supreme Court rendered another decision that made a crisis in this nation. This decision was rendered in the case of Dred Scott. Abraham Lincoln opened a debate upon this decision that did not cease until the black man was free, and the poorest negro boy in all the South could look up into his master's face and say, "I am free," could look up into the blue heavens and say "the curse of slavery has been taken from my back forever." Mr. Lincoln began this discussion in this State of Illinois, in the city of Springfield, on the 26th day of June, 1857. I now quote from Mr. Lincoln's speeches in the course of that great debate:

"I have expressed heretofore, and I now repeat, my opposition to the Dred Scott decision; but I should be allowed to state the nature of that opposition and I ask your indulgence while I do so. What is fairly implied by the term Judge Douglas has used 'resistance to the decision'? I do not resist it. If I wanted to take Dred Scott from his master, I would be interfering with property, and that terrible difficulty that Judge Douglas speaks of, of interfering with property would arise. But I am doing no such thing as that, but all I am doing is refusing to obey it as a political rule. \* \* \* We let this property abide by the decision, but we will try to reverse that decision. Somebody has to reverse that decision, since it is made, and we mean to reverse it, and we mean to do it peaceably." (Applause.) **And organized labor in this country means to reverse the decision in the Danbury Hatters' case, and we mean to do it peaceably.** (Long and continued applause.)

Again Lincoln said:

"We do not propose to be bound by it as a political rule in that way, because we think it lays the foundation not merely of enlarging and spreading that out what we consider an evil, but it lays the foundation for spreading that evil into the states themselves."

This is just our case, it is on all fours with the power of scab labor employers under the Danbury Hatters' decision. (Applause.)

Further along Lincoln said:

"Jefferson said that judges are as honest as other men and not more so. And he said substantially, that whenever a free people should give up in absolute submission to any department of government, retaining for themselves no appeal from it, their liberties were gone. \* \* \* I believe the decision was improperly made, and I go for reversing it. \* \* \* I spoke of the Dred Scott decision in my Springfield speech, and I was then endeavoring to prove that the Dred Scott decision was a portion of a system or scheme to make slavery national in this country. \* \* \* In my judgment there is no avoiding that result, save that the American people shall see that our constitutions are better construed than our Constitution was construed in that decision." (Great applause.)

### Conspiracy to Make Trades Unions Illegal.

And I say to organized labor in Chicago, and throughout this country, that the decision of the Supreme Court in the Hatters' case is a part of a system or scheme to make trades unions illegal in the United States. And I say further, that there is no remedy against the approach of this scab labor employers' tyranny, that is waiting to exploit you and your wives and your children; except such intelligent use of the ballot as will secure a different construction of our Constitution the next time the rights of labor are before that high tribunal. (Great applause.)

### Intelligent Political Action Will Reverse This Decision.

We must be patient, we must be deliberate, but we must get together and we must act. If we permit this scab labor decision to go unchallenged until after the next election, then the next decision which logically follows will be upon us, and organized labor will wake up to find that the Supreme Court has decided that trades unions are a conspiracy in restraint of trade, and they will be outlawed in every interstate industry. All manufacturers, merchants or carriers engaged in interstate commerce can invoke the aid of this decision in event of a strike, by setting up the contention that the trade union is a conspiracy to restrain interstate trade, get an injunction against the strikers and subject the union to destructive fines and penalties. Waiting upon our indifference and dalliance, waiting upon our foolish divisions upon one unim-

portant question and another, until the next election shall have safely passed without effective protest, is another decision, following the logic of the last, and completing the scheme to make trades unions illegal throughout the states and the nation.

Men, do you remember what Mr. Dooley said regarding the decisions of the Supreme Court? Well, it was something like this: "There may be some question as to whether the Constitution follows the flag, but there's div'l a bit of doubt but that the Supreme Court follows the election returns." (Laughter and applause.) If you remember this, men, when you go to the polls next November, then you won't have a scab labor employers' Supreme Court at Washington after the next election. (Great applause.)

### The Reason for the Present Crisis.

Now, men and women, let us get at the point of view of the opposing forces in this great conflict. It is useless to disguise the fundamental conflict of ideas between the group of plunder and the group of toil. A clear grasp of the difference in idea of these two groups is of first importance at this time.

Let me read you a clear statement of the idea toward labor of the group of plunder. It was written by a representative and eminently respectable man, a gentleman, in fact, who I am informed is some \$30,000,000 respectable. This statement is from the last annual report of the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad, by its president, Mr. W. H. Truesdale. It was adopted by a very respectable and influential board of directors. Among the members of this board are William and John D. Rockefeller, Jr., both very pious gentlemen, I am informed; Messrs. Frederick W. Vanderbilt and William H. Moore, both recognized as railroad kings and leaders of society in New York; and Messrs. George F. Baker and James Stillman, both bankers of great repute, the latter president of the National City Bank of New York, generally believed to be the national headquarters of the group of plunder in this country.

It reads as follows:

"The service of the railway officials and employees of the United States is closely analogous in every particular, excepting in matter of compensation, to that of the country's army and navy. They must respond to the maximum requirements of the country's business for transportation service as willingly and quickly as the soldier or sailor in the time of war. In doing this they must, if necessary, work days, nights, Sundays and holidays, to the extent of their strength and ability."

Now I want to read to you a similarly clear and representative statement of the idea toward labor of the group of toil. This statement was made in the city of Philadelphia by John Mitchell, president of the United Mine Workers of America, and was made to his board of directors, the coal miners of this country.

It reads as follows:

"I was taught to believe when a boy that God loved all his people alike. I was taught to believe that he conferred no more power or favors upon one than upon another; and notwithstanding the declarations of the controllers of trusts, I am not prepared to abandon the teaching of my boyhood days. The coal miners of Pennsylvania are engaged in a life and death struggle, trying to secure sufficient wages to take their little boys and girls of tender age from the mines and the mills, and send them to school, where, as the children of American citizens they properly belong. I look forward to the time when the men who build the lightning express, and the men who build the beautiful Pullman palace cars, will not have to walk from station to station looking for work. I look forward to the time when those whose labor builds the beautiful churches whose spires point heavenward, will not have to walk past them, too ragged to enter. I look forward to the time when the workers of our country will take possession of their own land." (Great prolonged applause.)

### Property Idea of Labor vs. Citizenship Idea of Labor.

Here, my friends, we have discovered the fundamental conflict in this great crisis. And now for the last time in this discussion we go back to the tall backwoodsman from Illinois, to that greatest statesman that the democratic

purpose in civilization has yet brought forth. Of the great issue that made the social and political crisis of his generation he spoke as follows:

"Now these two ideas, the property idea that slavery is right, and the idea that it is wrong, come into collision and do actually produce that irrepressible conflict which Mr. Seward has been so roundly abused for mentioning. These two ideas conflict and must conflict."

Let us paraphrase Lincoln's statement and apply it to our own great issue: "Now these two ideas, the property idea of labor, that overwork and under-pay, child labor, women disinherited from maternity and men crippled and killed in industry, is profitable, necessary and right; and the citizenship idea of labor, that it is wasteful, unnecessary and wrong, come into collision and do actually produce that irrepressible conflict which Mr. Gompers has been so roundly abused for mentioning. These two ideas conflict and must conflict."

Now I say to you men and women most solemnly, **the conflict between the property idea of labor and the citizenship idea of labor presents the supreme issue of this generation.** (Great applause.)

You will find if you analyze all divisions of sentiment in every community upon the labor question, that the one sentiment is grounded upon the property idea of labor as being of first importance, and the other sentiment is built upon the citizenship idea of labor as of first importance, on the idea that a man is of more consequence than a dollar. (Applause.)

#### Can We Escape This Conflict?

Now is there any person within the range of my voice who is so foolish as to think he can escape this conflict! You cannot escape! Listen. For some eight years I have been studying a labor group in this country that has been little known and much despised—the unorganized casual labor group. I have been finding out how powerful this group is becoming as a strike breaking force to resist the demands of union labor. I have found it is increasing in numbers from year to year. Of more importance still, I have found out why! There are many secondary causes, but the primary cause is this—the free opportunity of the great western frontier has passed forever from the world. Some years back the feet of the pioneers met the waves of the Pacific. They turned about face for a little while and then went north, and I know something about the men of '97, for I was with them. We pushed on, hunting free opportunity, until we reached Behring Strait. I stood on a cliff overlooking the ice pack toward the West. The great cold of that atmosphere does the same magic that the great heat does down in the desert. The cliffs of the Siberian coast were lifted up higher than the icebergs, and pictured on the western horizon we saw the old East—Asia—the ancient human hive, the starting place of the western pilgrimage of mankind. We turned back from that great scene and fought our way through the valleys and over the mountains of Alaska, and we did not know then the significance of that wonderful mirage. But I know now. I know that those pictured cliffs marked the final closing of a century long outlet for surplus labor toward the West. It marked the closing of the last gate of free opportunity for enthusiastic young men with the old spirit of the quest in their hearts. Today, this afternoon, as you sit in this hall; the eager-hearted boy in the country town, on the farms, in the smaller cities throughout the nation and the old world; what is he thinking about? He is not thinking of the frontier any longer, for it has ceased to exist. What is he thinking about? He is thinking of Chicago, New York, St. Louis and San Francisco. They are coming, they are on their way as you sit here, to enter into the industrial struggle of Chicago; young, unskilled, eager for work, knowing nothing of the strain and struggle and suffering of labor, to get fair hours and wages; unorganized and undisciplined; willing to go anywhere and do anything; still believing that if they are good and work overtime for under-pay they will get promotion sometime. Under such a decision as this they will ultimately be used to destroy organized labor. Can you escape this conflict? At this very hour the strain increases; at this very moment the pressure of that group upon the union scale of hours and wages is felt in every trade in Chicago. It will not grow less. It will grow more intense. The tide has turned back upon us, from the new world and the old world they are marching toward the great cities of America—march-

ing toward Chicago. Can you escape this conflict? You cannot escape! You have got to meet the issue. You have got to solve the problem of universal organization for labor. You have got to do this to save your own freedom and the freedom of your wives and your children. You must undertake to advance the citizenship idea of labor, above the property idea of labor, in the laws of the land and the decisions of our courts, as Lincoln said was right and just. The men who believe in the property idea of labor will oppose and denounce us. They will lie about us in their subsidized papers, they will punish us in all possible ways; but we will beat them in the end, we will beat them—because we are right and there are more of us! (Great applause.)

#### Labor Can Win.

I am one of those who, knowing the power of the worst in our human life, believes firmly in the absolute triumph of the best. I believe that the love of freedom, justice and righteousness of the whole people, is safe against the machinations of the group of plunder, now and forever. The great true things rise up and take possession of the world. This is the old story of civilization, gaining, gaining, day by day and generation by generation, and century by century, some further recognition for the rights of man. But these gains come only through the co-operation and service and sacrifices of living men. The historic group of toil has always fed and clothed and housed the world. Disinherited from generation to generation, it has gone forward struggling for understanding and fellowship, and a share in the gains of the social order.

We are now engaged in the third great struggle in the life of this nation, the struggle for industrial freedom. We have more resources and more power of action this afternoon than was ever before held by the group of toil in all the history of the world. We are able if we are but willing, to realize that old dream of the race, not the dream of great men nor of great classes; but the dream of a great people, from the man who digs the ditch, up to the last exalted expression of intellect or genius; strong, free men and women entering into the labor and festival of life on fair terms, and bringing forth a heritage of useful service with untainted honor. Wise counsels will advance this cause, foolish counsels may retard it some. But ultimately we are going to win. We are going to win this issue for the whole industrial group, and we are going to win it on the political field. (Applause.)

#### The Resurrection of Labor.

Men and women, this is Easter afternoon. It is a great day in the religious life of mankind. It is held sacred by many millions to commemorate the final victory of a poor carpenter's son who gave his life for the group of toil. He was the greatest radical, and the most far-reaching and successful agitator the world has ever known. He said that he came that we might have more life, and that we might have it more abundantly. He said that we should know the truth and that the truth would make us free. He said that we were all brethren. He suffered and died for the poor and the disinherited. He was persecuted and crucified by the group of plunder who were the masters of Jerusalem in his generation. Yet today, millions have bowed their heads at the mention of his name and all the ceremonies of the day symbolize him as the risen and eternal Lord. And I believe with all reverence that when the group of plunder read this decision in the Hatters' case they said in their hearts: "This is the death of organized labor," but I say to you, meeting as we are today in every city in the land, the earnest minded and lion-hearted workers of this country know that this decision, instead of being the death of organized labor, marks the resurrection of organized labor. (Long and continued applause.)