
Crimes of Carnegie:

“Protest Against Condoning Crime in the Name of Philanthropy,” says Eugene V. Debs.

by Eugene V. Debs

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Many thousands of misguided people are applauding the alleged philanthropy of Andrew Carnegie and of these by far the larger number are workingmen. Manifestly they have forgotten, or they have never heard of the horrors of Homestead — or perhaps they are too ignorant to understand or too cowardly to profit by the bloody lesson.

The reckless prodigality of Carnegie with the plunder of his victims brings into boldest prominence the crimes he committed when they protested against his monstrous rapacity. Then what? An army of 300 Pinkerton mercenaries were hired by this bloody benefactor to kill the men whose labor had made him a millionaire. He did not have the courage to execute his own murderous designs so he commissioned another monster, Frick, by name, with bloodless veins and a heart of steel, to commit the crimes while he went to Europe and held high carnival with the titled snobs there until the ghastly work was done. It was one of the foulest conspiracies ever concocted against the working class and the very thought of its atrocities, after nearly 10 years, fires the blood and crimson the cheek with righteous indignation. Not only were the Pinkerton murderers hired by Carnegie to kill his employees, but he had his steel works surrounded by wires charged with deadly electric currents and by pipes filled with boiling water so that in the event of a strike or lockout he could shock the life out of their wretched bodies

or scald the flesh from their miserable bones.

And this is the man who proposes to erect libraries for the benefit of the working class — and incidentally for the glory of Carnegie.

Will the workingmen of this country accept any gift from the hands of Andrew Carnegie, red with the blood of their slain comrades? That some of them have already done so is to their everlasting shame. The employees who a few days ago received, with expressions of gratitude, the bonded booty, to be held in trust for them until they become paupers, have debased themselves beyond expression. They may have to work for Carnegie, but they are not compelled to recognize as a gift the pennies he throws them in return for the dollars he stole from them, and when they do they are guilty of treason to their murdered brothers, and are better described as spineless poltroons than as self-respecting workingmen.

Some years ago, when Carnegie endowed the first library for the alleged benefit of workingmen, I objected. And I object now with increased emphasis.

Such a library is monumental of the degeneracy of the working class. It is a lasting rebuke to their intelligence and their integrity.

The workingmen of New Castle have led the revolt. Let their splendid example be followed wherever a Carnegie library is suggested. Let mass meetings of workingmen be held and let the horrifying scenes of the Homestead massacre be pre-

sented to stir them to a sense of indignation at the vulgar and insulting display of the spoil exploited from their class.

Let honest workingmen everywhere protest against the acceptance of a gift which condones crime in the name of philanthropy. Let them put themselves upon record in terms that appeal to the honor of their class and the respect of all mankind.

We want libraries and we will have them in glorious abundance when capitalism is abolished and the workingmen are no longer robbed by the philanthropic pirates of the Carnegie class.

Then the library will be as it should be, a noble temple dedicated to culture and symbolizing the virtues of the people.

Eugene Debs.

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