

MR. ROOSEVELT'S REPLY TO "UNDESIRABLE" CRITICS

On April 23, Mr. Roosevelt made public a letter addressed to Honore Jaxon of Chicago, chairman of the Cook county Moyer-Haywood conference. The letter was in reply to criticisms made because of Mr. Roosevelt's reference in his public statement replying to E. H. Harriman to Moyer and Haywood as "undesirable citizens." The letter follows:

"Dear Sir: I have received your letter of the 19th inst. in which you inclose the draft of the formal letter which is to follow. I have been notified that several delegations bearing similar requests are on the way hither. In the letter you, on behalf of the Cook county Moyer-Haywood conference, protest against certain language I used in a recent letter which you assert to be designed to influence the course of justice in the case of the trial for murder of Messrs. Moyer and Haywood.

"I entirely agree with you that it is improper to endeavor to influence the course of justice whether by threats or in any similar manner. For this reason I have regretted most deeply the action of such organizations as your own in undertaking to accomplish this very result in the very case of which you speak.

"For instance, your letter is headed 'Cook County Moyer-Haywood-Pettibone Conference,' with the headlines 'Death Cannot, Will Not and Shall Not Claim Our Brothers.' This shows that you and your associates are not demanding a fair trial or working for a fair trial, but are announcing in advance that the verdict shall only be one way and that you will not tolerate any other verdict. Such action is flagrant in its impropriety, and I join heartily in condemning it.

"But it is a simple absurdity to suppose that because any man is on trial for a given offense he is therefore to be freed from all criticisms upon his general conduct and manner of life. In my letter to which you object, I referred to a certain prominent financier, Mr. Harriman, on the one hand, and to Messrs. Moyer, Haywood and Debs, on the other, as being equally undesirable citizens. It is as foolish to assert that this was designed to influence the trial of Moyer and Haywood as to assert that it was designed to influence the suits that have been brought against Mr. Harriman. I neither expressed nor indicated any opinion as to whether Messrs. Moyer and Haywood were guilty of the murder of Governor

Steunenberg. If they are guilty they certainly ought to be punished. If they are not guilty they certainly ought not to be punished.

"But no possible outcome, either of the trial or the suits, can affect my judgment as to the undesirability of the type of citizenship of those whom I mentioned. Messrs. Moyer, Haywood and Debs stand as representatives of those men who have done as much to discredit the labor movement as the worst speculative financiers or most unscrupulous employers of labor and debauchers of legislatures have done to discredit honest capitalists and fair-dealing business men.

"They stand as the representatives of these men who, by their public utterances and manifestos, by the utterances of the papers they control or inspire, and by the words and deeds of those associated with or subordinated to them, habitually appear as guilty of incitement to or apology for bloodshed and violence.

"If this does not constitute undesirable citizenship then there can never be any undesirable citizens. The men whom I denounce represent the men who have abandoned that legitimate movement for the uplifting of labor with which I have the most hearty sympathy; they have adopted practices which cut them off from those who lead this legitimate movement.

"In every way I shall support the law-abiding and upright representatives of labor, and in no way can I better support them than by drawing the sharpest possible line between them, on the one hand and, on the other hand, those preachers of violence who are themselves the worst foes of the honest laboring man.

"Let me repeat my deep regret that any body of men should so far forget their duty to their country as to endeavor by the formulation of societies and in other ways to influence the course of justice in this matter. I have received many such letters as yours. Accompanying them were newspaper clippings announcing demonstrations, parades and mass meetings designed to show that the representatives of labor, without regard to the facts, demand the acquittal of Messrs. Haywood and Moyer. Such meetings can, of course, be designed only to coerce court or jury in rendering a verdict, and they therefore deserve all the condemnation which you in your letters say should be awarded to those who endeavor improperly to influence the course of justice.

"You would, of course, be entirely within your rights if you merely announced that you thought Messrs. Moyer and Haywood were desirable citizens, though in such case I should take frank issue with you and should say that, wholly without regard to whether or not they are guilty of the crime for which they are now being tried, they represent as thoroughly undesirable a type of citizenship as can be found in this country, a type which, in the letter to which you so unreasonably take exception, I showed not to be confined to any one class, but to exist among some representatives of great capitalists, as well as among some representatives of wage workers.

"In that letter I condemned both types. Certain representatives of the great capitalists in turn condemned me for including Mr. Harriman in my condemnation of Messrs. Moyer and Haywood. Certain of the representatives of labor in their turn condemned me because I included Messrs. Moyer and Haywood as undesirable citizens together with Mr. Harriman.

"I am as profoundly indifferent to the condemnation in one case as in the other. I challenge as a right the support of all good Americans, whether wage earners or capitalists, whatever their occupation or creed, or in whatever portion of the country they live, when I condemn both the types of bad citizenship which I have held up to reprobation. It seems to me a mark of utter insincerity to fail thus to condemn both, and to apologize for either robs the man thus apologizing of all right to condemn any wrongdoing in any man, rich or poor, in public or in private life.

"You say you ask a 'square deal' for Messrs. Moyer and Haywood. So do I. When I say 'square deal' I mean a square deal to every one; it is equally a violation of the policy of the square deal for a capitalist to protest against the denunciation of a capitalist who is guilty of wrongdoing and for a labor leader to protest against the denunciation of a labor leader who has been guilty of wrongdoing. I stand for equal justice to both and, so far as in my power lies, I shall uphold justice whether the man accused of guilt has behind him the wealthiest corporations, the greatest aggregations of riches in the country, or whether he has behind him the most influential labor organization in the country. Very truly yours,

"THEODORE ROOSEVELT."

WASHINGTON LETTER

Washington, D. C., April 29.—When Mr. Bryan said to the members of the peace conference that he "wanted to make money contraband of war," that he wanted "to see The Hague conference so fix it that the financiers of one country can not wax fat over the misfortunes of another country," he raised a new issue and one that should fairly and rightly be considered. International law now prohibits the sale from any nation of warships, of submarines, of munitions of war. And yet it does not prohibit the lending of money, the buying of bonds. If Germany and England should blaze into war neither country could buy munitions of war in the United States, but either one could send their securities here and borrow money for the purpose of paying for the war material they needed. What is the difference? If some of our manufacturers of submarine boats can not sell their vessels here in the United States, but our financiers, our men of means can buy the bonds of foreign countries, and the money they contribute can be used to purchase boats of this sort, there seems to be no distinction. Mr. Bryan's point of view seems to be well taken. If we make ships, cannon, the ordinary mechanism of war contraband of war, why not make dollars contraband also? Mr. Bryan has presented a new note to the peace conference. He has suggested an entirely new idea. He had offered a suggestion which, if carried to logical conclusion, would do much to prevent the continuance of war. War is fought by boys. It is a matter of record that the soldiers who have offered themselves as food for powder are nearly all under twenty-four years of age. It is fought on credit, because the nation that makes war is compelled to borrow from other nations the money necessary for its enormous expenditures. It is worth while to think whether the suggestion which Mr. Bryan has made, namely that the borrowing of money, should be as illegal as the buying of guns and warlike material is not right and just and proper. I offer this merely as a suggestion, but it seems to me that it is worth consideration.

Now that the United States has allowed two telegraph companies, which in fact are one, to control the whole business of telegraphy it seems fair to contrast what is being done abroad and what is being done here. We think that we are the most progressive people; we think, and with some reason, that we are using the telegraph more than any other people on earth. But within one month we have found that we are the victims of a monopoly and that this monopoly is not merely over-charging us for its service, but it is killing our goose that lays for it the golden eggs. The Western Union and the Postal Telegraph company might do much; they are doing nothing, unless they are doing us. I have at hand a consular report which shows the difference between the use of the telegraph in Great Britain and in the United States. Like all consular reports, it is full of figures and would be uninteresting if I detailed it here. Therefore I summarize it. If anybody cares enough about it to wish for the original, a letter to me will bring it. Between 1870 and 1906 the population of Great Britain increased 32 per cent, and the population of the United States 121 per cent. In the same time the use of the telegraph in Great Britain increased 888 per cent and in the United States 788 per cent. The population of our country increased nearly five times as much as that of Great Britain and the business of our telegraph companies fell short of the increase there. Why? Because under the present system of telegraphy the people are compelled to pay extortionate prices and to question whether their messages are ever properly delivered. Business men know that a letter is always delivered to them and that a telegram is carried by a slovenly boy, and if the office happens to be closed a notice is left saying that the telegram may be had at the central office of the company. The mail service is so much better than the telegraphic service that it has come to be the fact that men are sending important matters by mail rather than by telegraph. That is what has resulted from the present domination of the telegraph companies. Some time the government will take

over the telegraph system and handle it as it does and should handle the postoffice department.

The vote in the Pennsylvania legislature last week rejecting by a large majority a resolution endorsing Theodore Roosevelt for a third term, is very significant. Coming as it does at a time when it is alleged that Senator Penrose, of conspiracy dinner fame, is going to declare with Senator Bourne, of Oregon, for a third term for Roosevelt, and when Senator Knox, close friend of the president, has objected to the use of his name as a presidential possibility, it points to the way the wind blows. That the two United States senators from Pennsylvania should be brought into line for Roosevelt at a time when a resolution endorsing the president for a third term is introduced into the Pennsylvania legislature, may be a mere coincidence, but I think not. Too many of these resolutions have been introduced into state legislatures lately, too many men in public life have shown a disposition to call in newspaper men and dictate long interviews endorsing Roosevelt for a third term, to be reconciled upon any theory of mere coincidence.

Why all these gratuitous interviews? Why all these requests from the president to numerous politicians everywhere to confer with him at the White House? Why all these resolutions endorsing Roosevelt for a third term introduced in state legislatures throughout the land? Why the political war in Ohio? Why the wholesale discharge of anti-Roosevelt men from the public service? Why the wholesale use of public patronage to build up a mighty Roosevelt machine. Why does Knox decline to allow his name to be used? Why is Penrose whipped into line by a threat that Henry C. Frick of Homestead strike and steel trust infamy, will be given a senatorial toga if he doesn't behave? Why is a foolish story of gigantic corporate conspiracy against the Roosevelt policies sedulously circulated from the White House? Why are all these things and much more done at the dictation of the president?

For Taft?

Or for Roosevelt?

WILLIS J. ABBOTT.