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SPEECH AT THE MITCHELL, DARROW, LLOYD RECEPTION, 1903.*

THERE are many here to-night who can contrast this assemblage with the meeting held in Chicago eight or nine years ago, at which the workingmen of this city met to welcome Debs after *his* cruel war was over. It was a meeting like this, but not like this. The Pullman strike was not won, though it deserved to be. But to-night we come together again in this greater meeting to welcome a victor and a victor in a greater contest—John Mitchell—first in strikes, first in arbitration, and first in the hearts of the workingmen.

Things have changed a good deal in these eight years. That meeting was held in the dim and dingy old Battery D. This Mitchell meeting finds itself perfectly at home in this, the

* Address at the reception given to John Mitchell, Clarence S. Darrow, and Henry D. Lloyd, at the Auditorium, Chicago, February 16, 1903, by the labour organizations of Chicago, to celebrate the arbitration of the anthracite coal strike of 1902-1903.

finest and largest assembly room in America, which is still not large enough nor fine enough.

Because it interrupted railway transportation the railway strike of 1894 made the public, blind with prejudice, wild with terror, throw themselves against it like a cyclone. The strike of 1902 likewise interrupted transportation and production of coal; but the public opinion of 1902 filled its sails with the favouring breezes and filled its pockets with the contributions that made its success certain.

Public opinion has learned something since 1894. It knows now that, whoever may be responsible for these interruptions, it is not the men, who only ask for reason and arbitration. But there is one thing which is not different from what it was eight years ago. By the side of both those leaders, the leader of 1894, the leader of 1902; by the side of the successful and the unsuccessful, stood the same steadfast champion of the rights of the people, Clarence S. Darrow, that rare bird, a lawyer whose first love is love of justice, and who remains true to his first love.

Debs came to his reception from jail; a jail

which set him free but keeps prisoner forever, in durance vile, the memory of the Federal executive and the Federal judiciary who put him there. But Mitchell comes to us respected and honoured even by his opponents, with his hands pressed not by handcuffs, but by the hand-shakes of the White House.

The strike of 1894 was broken by the President of the United States, a President who tore the Constitution of Illinois in two to make a gap through which to march his Federal troops. A President who by that act, in one mouthful, swallowed all the domestic rights of forty-five states; a President who talked about the "communism of pelf," while he fattened on the communism of self — himself. The strike of 1902 was likewise broken by the President; a President who also in his turn broke through the precedent, but not like the other, to bind the people hand and foot for their oppressors, but to deliver them.

There was a louder cry in Pennsylvania in 1902 for Federal bayonets than in Illinois in 1894; but the cry was unanswered, the troops did not move. There was a soldier in the White

House, not a corporation lawyer, and the soldier knew what the proper uses of soldiers are. But the soldiers might have gone into Pennsylvania if the coal monopolies had persisted for forty-eight hours longer in their piratical policy of famine and defiance; but they would not have gone there to drive the miners back into the mines. They would have gone there to keep the peace while Federal judges, acting upon the initiative of the United States, took possession of the mines by due process of law, and invited the miners, in the name of the people of the United States, to mine coal for the people of the United States.

Where Cleveland gave us military usurpation and government by injunction, Roosevelt gave us arbitration, the most novel, the boldest, the greatest stroke of recent statesmanship — a short-cut across lots in real American style. When the American people helped John Mitchell and his miners, they were helping themselves. The whole people have before them in the immediate future the same fight, with the same would-be master. The same master seeks to fasten his fetters upon them

as upon the miners, and pray God that in our time of need the people may find as good a leader as the miners found.

That affair in the valleys of Pennsylvania was the first real uprising of the American people against the monopolists, but it was only the first, and there, as always, organized labour furnished the forlorn hope of victory because it was organized. The same men who claim to be masters of labour in the coal industry claim to be masters of the consumers, of the people, of us. They mean to be masters of all the labourers, of all the consumers, of all of us in all markets. They are all the same men. It is all one great conspiracy, and the conspiracy has gone so far that the more prosperity the country gets, the less we see of it. They advance your wages 10 per cent. with one hand, and then with the other they take it all back, and more, by increasing the cost of living. Well, Mr. Mitchell and his miners gave that conspiracy its first black eye. They whipped it to a finish, and with their starving bodies built a wall around all of us.

The sweetest words that any lover of justice

ever heard were the words that we heard George Baer utter last Thursday before the Arbitration Commission in Philadelphia: "We surrender." It was not George the Third, it was George the Last, as Darrow calls him. Had Mitchell and his miners surrendered — but they never would — there is not a monopolist in any of the markets, there is not a corrupter of politics anywhere, there is not an oppressor of the people in all the world, who would not have gone down on his knees to give thanks to his God, Baer's God, the God who, "in his infinite wisdom has given the control of the property interests of the country" to them.

If those men had broken the miners of the East they would next have attacked the miners of the West; they would then have attacked, one after the other, all the organizations of labour, and would have been able, at their leisure, to dispose of all the organizations of labour, and would have had at their mercy the unorganized masses of the people. For it is accurately, scientifically, alarmingly true, that between the people and the money-monopoly power — that most dreadful of all tyrannies —

there stands to-day but one organization that can hold the fort while the people rally, and that is the organization of labour.

The bosses of both political parties are in the pay of the enemy, those corporations who make campaign contributions to both political parties at every election. Watch the farce to-day of anti-trust legislation in Washington. See the confectionery-makers of Congress moulding their pretty little candy castles to imprison the giant tyrants of the trusts. The best friends the people have to-day are the unions of the workingmen. We must keep them from being destroyed. We must learn the lesson they teach us, the people itself must organize if it would survive.

A very beautiful United States Treasury note had to be withdrawn from circulation a few years ago. It was discovered that its most decorative feature, a majestic American eagle, had been engraved so that when it was turned upside down it became a jackass. It is said that the engraver was an Englishman. If the American people allow themselves to be stood on their heads much longer by the monopolists,

their national bird will look like that eagle. Mitchell and his miners have taught the eagle to stand on his feet, with his feet on the monopolists. Let us remember how it was done, and go and do likewise—all of us, everywhere.