

Daniel De Leon

Editorial: The Mills of the Gods Grind Slow, But They Grind Exceeding Small

Though tardily and imperfectly, justice is at last done to the martyrs of Chicago.

The group of workingmen, who in May, 1886, held on the Haymarket of Chicago, with the consent of the Mayor, an indignation meeting to protest against the murder committed by the militia upon the inoffensive McCormick strikers; who were brutally assaulted and dispersed by the police, in defiance of the Mayor's orders; who were then dragged before the Court upon the false charge of murder; who were prosecuted by a blood-thirsty capitalist attorney, convicted upon perjured testimony and sentenced by a perjured judge; four of whom—Parsons, Spies, Fischer and Engel—were judicially assassinated under the plaudits of a ferocious mob of policemen inside, and of capitalists outside, the jail; one of whom—Ling—though said to have escaped the fate of the above four by suicide, was, as it will surely yet appear, murdered by the police in his cell; two of whom—Fielden and Schwab—were sent to prison for life; and one of whom—Neebe—for 15 years;—that group of men stands at last vindicated. Although the murdered ones cannot be restored to life, the living ones are restored to freedom, and their good names are restored to all by the absolute pardon granted to the latter last week by the Governor of Illinois.

Every decent, freedom-loving person in the country was

Daniel De Leon

shocked by the judicial crime of November, and raised his voice in protest in and condemnation of that atrocity; despite the howl of the capitalist pack that tried to poison the public mind through their prostituted press, the protest and condemnation among the people grew and gathered strength; and finally, obedient to a vigorous public sentiment, Governor Altgeld did what amends he could, and restored the three imprisoned victims to their freedom and unqualified rights.

During all this period, since November 11, the condemnation of the indignant people of this country was based upon certain concrete charges:

1. The jury was packed.
2. The trial judge, the now infamous Gary, was bent on conviction, and ferociously and criminally broke the law to satiate his own and his paymasters' malevolence.
3. The District Attorney violated his oath of office in that he used testimony known to him to be false, and suppressed other known to him to be true.
4. The testimony in all respects was manufactured, the witnesses perjured.
5. The prisoners were proven, not only not to be guilty, but actually innocent.
6. The trial was a farce, an insult to decency and order.
7. The men, all of them, were martyrs, the victims of a conspiracy.

Against these charges stood the re-iterated assertions of the capitalist class; the latest contribution from that side being Gary's brazen article published in a recent magazine.

Well, then, this great historic controversy is now ended. The Governor of Illinois closes the book, and sets his seal upon it. The verdict of history is the one the people have long been pronouncing.

The mills are grinding, the process has but just begun.

The People, Vol. III, No. 14. Sunday, July 2, 1893

The Mills of the Gods Grind Slow, But They Grind Exceeding Small

*A De Leon editorial transcribed and edited by Robert Bills for the
Official Web site of the Socialist Labor Party of America.*

Uploaded October 2002