

To the Readers of the *Rip-Saw*, Greeting (February 1, 1914)

Having concluded an arrangement with the publishers of the *Rip-Saw* under which I am to serve it, editorially and otherwise, beginning with the March [1914] issue, it is with much pleasure that I present myself to its many readers to voice my greeting and to ask their consideration and cooperation.¹

The *Rip-Saw* has forged to the front during the last few years as a powerful exponent of the principles of socialism and industrial democracy and as a fearless champion of the working class in all their struggles, economic and political, for emancipation. Its name is known and its columns are read wherever the struggle of the workers and producers is being waged on the American continent, and its many thousands of loyal and active supporters, who are at the same time among the most militant, energetic, and tireless labor unionists and socialists, constitute a tremendous force in the American struggle to rid the world of capitalism and wage-slavery and make way for the industrial commonwealth and the socialist republic.

But this revolutionary force, organized and developed by the oppressed, robbed, and degraded workers, can be greatly increased and improved and it is to this great task that I have been invited and to which I shall devote all the zeal and energy at my command.

Giving full credit to the *Rip-Saw* and its management, including its staff of able and experience writers, for having already placed it among the foremost revolutionary publications of the day, it can be said without the slightest reflection or disparagement that there is always room for improvement, a fact candidly admitted by the management in expressing the desire and determination to make each succeeding issue clearer in aim, higher in purpose, more steadfast in spirit, and more advanced in method, thereby proving its fitness and worthiness to serve the people as an instrument for the overthrow of capitalist tyranny and the achievement of industrial and social emancipation.

Day by day, as the struggle proceeds, the need of a powerful press is borne in upon us and we can no longer hope to cope with the enemy — powerful, insolent, lawless, and corrupt as never before — with any hope of escaping defeat, without a press adequate to the crying demand of the American labor movement.

Papers there are in plenty, but either circulation is limited and they are barely able to support themselves or they lack class-conscious clarity and revolutionary vigor and enthusiasm. There are exceptions, of course, and the *Rip-Saw* will be glad to note that these exceptions receive the loyal support they deserve and in due time become the rule.

The historic struggles now being waged in Colorado and Michigan; the abject subserviency of the governors, sheriffs, and other executive and administrative officials to the brutal power of capitalism which rules with despotic sway in those states and in all other states of the union; the murderous and cowardly assault upon and deportation of President Moyer; the infamous arrest and outrageous incarceration of Mother Jones; the shameless seizure of Adolph Germer and the dastardly insult to his wife by military blackguards; the atrocious crimes perpetrated upon strikers, too numerous to mention, and visited without any more mercy than would be shown by hyenas upon helpless women and starving children — all these cry aloud for a press that shall have the power and the nerve to expose the monster of capitalism, arouse the workers of the nation to the frightful menace that confronts them, appeal to them to unite and make common cause against the enemy, and not only point but *lead* the way to victory and emancipation.

The *Rip-Saw* will stand staunchly for the organization of the working class along the lines of industrial unionism and socialism, and its policy will be to uphold the workers, organized and unorganized, in all their struggles to increase wages, lower working hours, protect life and health, and better their condition and strengthen their position generally.

The *Rip-Saw*, realizing the vitally essential need of education, will use all its influence to spread the truth among the workers to the end that they may be organized in powerful industrial unions, as well as in their own revolutionary political party, that the maximum efficiency of their class power may be developed and brought into play, not only to fight their battles in the struggle now being so fiercely waged, but that they may be fitted by self-imposed discipline, self-restraint, and the cultivation of the social and cooperative spirit, to operate the industries of the nation when they shall have been wrested from the ownership and control of the capitalists exploiters now in power.

Upon the basis of these principles and this policy, briefly outlined, we appeal to the readers and friends of the *Rip-Saw* to join in making its name a terror to capitalism and its regime of crime and corruption, and a beacon of hope and strength and inspiration to the toiling and producing masses.

Eugene V. Debs.

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¹ The *National Rip-Saw* was a FOOTNOTE HERE