

I Have Come to Girard:
Open Letter in the *Appeal to Reason*
(February 1, 1907)

Girard, Kansas, Feb. 1, 1907.

Comrades and Friends:—

The approaching trial of Moyer, Haywood, and Pettibone, involving not only the lives of these worthy fellow workers, but other issues of the gravest concern, is of deep and vital moment to every man, woman, and child, and its outcome may determine the destiny of a nation.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this case and the effect of its outcome, and so deeply does it affect me as a comrade of the accused and as a fellow worker in the ranks of labor — so certain am I that their innocence of crime is as absolute as their loyalty to labor, and that in fact this is their only crime — that the conviction has been forced upon me that it is my duty, a duty I dare not shirk, to go to the aid of my comrades and stand by them unflinchingly, and thus prove my fealty to the cause. To do less than this would be to desert my comrades and prove a wretched recreant to the whole working class.

In pursuance of this line of duty I have cancelled all other engagements that I might devote my whole time to this case and give it precedence over all other matters.

Through the kindness and cooperative spirit of Comrades Wayland and Warren, the columns of the *Appeal to Reason* have been placed at my disposal, and I have come to Girard to make the best possible use of its extensive circulation in reaching and awakening the people to a realization of the historic drama being enacted before their eyes.

Knowing well how loyally the supporters of the *Appeal* have always responded to its calls, I feel no hesitancy in addressing upon a subject so vital as the conspiracy which menaces the cause they love and serve so well.

The socialist and labor press is the most powerful agency of the working class, and in this crisis a duty so great and a responsibility so grave rests upon it that no words can give it adequate expression.

The *Appeal*, having by far the leading circulation, is in the forefront and must set an example that will be an inspiration to the rest and swell the volume of protest into an irresistible torrent that shall sweep midnight conspirators into oblivion and bear our comrades in triumph to freedom and their loved ones at home.

Comrades and fellow workers, the *Appeal* must be made to talk to the whole nation. The crisis demands it. Our cause is on trial and the lives of our comrades are at stake. The millions must be reached with the awakening and inspiring message the *Appeal* has for them.

In thirty days the trial begins. Every day, every hour, every minute between now and then must count. The circulation of the *Appeal* must be raised, and at once to the highest possible point.

Let each of us take hold — each of us — right now. There is not one of us but can help — not one but can get at least one subscriber.

Let every comrade, every friend, every man, woman, and child, unite in one supreme effort to add another hundred thousand to our circulation in the next thirty days.

I see, in fancy, the workers at their task, and I have no fear of disappointment.

Eugene V. Debs.

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