

Soldiers, Slaves, and Hell **(March 14, 1914)**

Soldiers are recruited in all capitalist nations to keep down rebellious wage-slaves.

The soldier himself is a slave hired by the ruling class to shoot other slaves when they rise in revolt against their masters.

The talk about patriotism in connection with these hired man-killers is not only the rankest of false pretense, but an insult to the intelligence of even a slave.

The soldier under modern capitalism is not only the cheapest kind of a hireling and the cowardliest kind of a man-killer, but he is so detestably degenerate that for the miserable pittance of less than 50 cents a day he hires himself to the master class as a strikebreaker and a scab, binding himself to murder his own father, his own mother, and his own brother whenever they dare to strike against starvation and slavery.

It is these uniformed assassins who are now shooting unarmed workmen and their homeless, hungry wives and children in Michigan and Colorado.

It is these strikebreaking hirelings who are now standing guard over Mother Jones as if she were a wild beast, for sympathizing with the starving miners and having the courage to denounce the redhanded slave-drivers and their fawning lickspittles in public office for having made a hell of Colorado in which tyranny and corruption hold riotous carnival and resistance to slavery is the crime of crimes.

To rob and plunder the toilers and producers the capitalists require the service of legalized murderers and that is what the soldiers are. They are hired to hold up the workers while the capitalists go through their pockets. If the victims object or try to break away — ***kill them!***

Soldiers and slavery and hell!

They are one and inseparable, now and forever.

The whole scheme of militarism is to blind the deluded workers to its false glories that they may be used to prop up a despotic government and a rotten civilization.

Militarism is the arch foe of socialism for the reason that socialism is the arch foe of slavery.

Militarism is a survival of the black ages of savagery, superstition, and ignorance, and all the working hosts of the world should be aroused to grapple with and overthrow it.

Without the workers, who are at the same time its misguided supporters and its mutilated and bleeding victims, militarism falls to the earth and becomes a horrid nightmare of history.

Published in *Iron City Socialist [Pittsburgh]*, March 14, 1914, unspecified page. Copy on *The Papers of Eugene V. Debs* microfilm edition, reel 10.