



Emma Goldman, *Living My Life*

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We defy law and presidential orders

sons. The letter was signed by Sasha and me, and we enclosed a special-delivery stamp for an immediate reply. But no answer came and no action was taken against us.

The arrested boys included Morris Becker, Louis Kramer, Joseph Walker, and Louis Sternberg. They were charged with conspiracy to advise people not to submit to the Conscription Law. Their trial took place before Federal Judge Julius M. Mayer. Kramer and Becker were convicted, the jury recommending clemency for the latter. The Judge's idea of clemency was a scurrilous denunciation of the defendants. He called Kramer a coward and gave him the limit of the law, two years in the Federal penitentiary at Atlanta and ten thousand dollars' fine. Becker received one year and eight months and was also condemned to pay a similar fine. The other two boys, Sternberg and Walker, were acquitted. Harry Weinberger had conducted their defense in his usual able way and he appealed their case. Louis Kramer, while in the Tombs awaiting transfer to Atlanta, refused to register for the draft and was sentenced to serve an additional year.

The June issue of *Mother Earth* appeared draped in black, its cover representing a tomb bearing the inscription: "IN MEMORIAM--AMERICAN DEMOCRACY." The sombre attire of the magazine was striking and effective. No words could express more eloquently the tragedy that turned America, the erstwhile torch-bearer of freedom, into a grave-digger of her former ideals.

We strained our capital to the last penny to issue an extra-large edition. We wanted to mail copies to every Federal officer, to every editor, in the country and to distribute the magazine among young workers and college students. Our twenty thousand copies barely sufficed to supply our own needs. It made us feel our poverty more than ever before. Fortunately an unexpected ally came to our assistance: the New York newspapers! They had reprinted whole passages from our anti-conscription manifesto, some even reproducing the entire text and thus bringing it to the attention of millions of readers. Now they copiously quoted from our June issue and editorially commented at length on its contents.

The press throughout the country raved at our defiance of the law and presidential orders. We duly appreciated their help in making our voices resound through the land, our voices that but yesterday had called in vain. Incidentally the papers also gave wide publicity to our meeting scheduled for June 4.

Our busy and exciting life was not conducive to Sasha's speedy