



Speeches

Meeting of No-Conscription League Including Speech by Emma Goldman [Hunts Point Palace--8 P.M. New York, June 4th, 1917]



Transcript by public shorthand reporter Charles Pickler, employed by the Stenographic Service Company of New York City, contracted by the No-Conscription League. Copy of original transcript housed at the Tamiment Library, New York University. Permission to reproduce or quote in any form must be obtained from the Tamiment Library.

The transcript was seized by government authorities from the headquarters of the No-Conscription League on June 15, 1917, the day that Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman were arrested. Berkman's and Goldman's speeches at this event were introduced as Government's Exhibit 33 in the June-July 1917 anti-conscription trial of Berkman and Goldman. For transcript of court examination of Charles Pickler see "Goldman & Berkman v. United States: Transcript of Record, 1917 Sept. 25," pp. 163-67, 219-23 (*Emma Goldman Papers* microfilm, reel 59).

LEONARD D. ABBOTT, ESQ., (CHAIRMAN)

THE CHAIRMAN: My friends, I ask you to keep control of yourselves. If any party or parties try to make trouble, ignore them. We are here tonight to assert the power of an idea against the power of physical force. We are here tonight to assert the power of freedom as against the power of authority.

All through history free ideas have had to fight for their right to exist, and men and women have had to go to prison, and in some cases to lay down their lives, in order that freedom might go forward. We are fighting the latest engagement in this eternal war for freedom, in this hall tonight. We say to militarists who are trying to force Americans into the ranks of Militarists throughout the world, into the ranks of the same militarists that have made of Europe a shambles, and that are still slaughtering men and women and children there, we say to them, "Beware, you can go so far, but no further." We say to them, "Go to Europe to fight the Germans, if you want to, but don't try to drag us with you when we are unwilling to

go." (Applause.) We say to the militarists, "We are not interfering with you, but you are interfering with us, and if you try to take us by force we shall resist." (Great Applause.)

We hear a great deal about Anarchism in the present fight against Conscription. If Anarchists are prominent in this fight, it is because they have the courage of their convictions and are not afraid to express their convictions. Anarchists show their convictions and show their convictions in war times as well as in times of peace. They recognize that war is the very test of anti-militarist sincerity. It separates those who are sincere from those who are insincere. The man who declares himself an anti-militarist in times of peace and then abandons his convictions in times of war and danger is not an anti-militarist, he is a weakling. And the paradox of the present situation is that Anarchists, although they do not claim to be patriots, are upholding American principles. Conscription is un-American, is immoral, and as many people believe unconstitutional.

There is a provision in our Constitution forbidding involuntary service. If conscription does not mean involuntary servitude, then I don't know the meaning of these two words.

A year ago, our American Nation was unwilling to commit itself to the principle of Conscription and Conscription was at least a debatable question; now the authorities talk of inflicting the death penalty on those who oppose Conscription, in spite of the fact that the opponents of Conscription today take the same view that the overwhelming majority of the American people have taken before. A few months ago President Wilson said he had been unable to find out what the war is about. He intimated that it did not concern us in America. He said a few days ago before the Red Cross in Washington that we had no special grievance against Germany. Two years ago the President was too proud to fight the Germans; now it seems the Germans are too proud to fight us--at least they have not made a formal declaration of war against America. Then, why in the name of humanity and common sense drag America into this war, or turn this country into an armed camp? Why follow the mistaken roads that all European countries have followed and pile up armament upon armament? Why send the flower of our young men to the trenches? Why don't the old men go? We can spare them better than our young men. This is not our war. This is not a war in which social revolutionaries can have any real interest. The war has been a mistake, it seems to me, almost without exception. The Russian Revolution is the only good thing, the only decent thing that has come out of it. (Tremendous Applause.)

Do not forget that the present Conscription Law is only the thin edge of the wedge; don't forget that it is merely the beginning of the large opening that will bring the military monster into our homes, and as it grows stronger it will become more greedy, and the love for conquest will take possession of it, and the next thing that we will be required to do will be to conquer Mexico. That is the natural progress of militarism. If you believe in this war, go ahead, but don't force us. We have as much right to our principles as the militarists have to theirs.

I honor that great American Henry D. Thoreau, who wrote of the duty of Civil disobedience, and we are following him and his doctrines. We believe the time will come when the highest conscience of humanity will be shown in civil disobedience to unrighteous requirements of the powerful few.

Militarists talk of giving patriotic service to the nation. But there are two kinds of service, and there are two kinds of nations. Which nation do they mean? There is a nation composed of exploiters, capitalists and the militarists. And there is a nation of exploited working men, of persecuted labor bodies. The first, the capitalists, we regard as our enemies. To the second class, the workers, the labor leaders, we pledge our deathless loyalty. We join hands with our comrades throughout the world. One of the inspiring circumstances of the times is the formation in England and elsewhere of workingmen's councils, such as

there were formed during the Russian Revolution, the sole object of which is to work for the people's peace.

We say that we are men without a country, but in saying that we assert kinship with all in all countries. Yes, my friends, as our young Anarchist, Louis Kramer, said a few days ago, "We are citizens of the world, and we are the true patriots and the true lovers of all the people, and we do object to militarism and enforced servitude." I say to you, my friends, that a country must have a guilty conscience, when it arrests young men on no other grounds than giving out hand bills for this meeting, and fixing their bail at \$7,000.00. A country must have a guilty conscience when it arrests young college boys and girls, when their only crime is that they are sincerely against militarism. (Applause.) I say to you that a country must have a guilty conscience when men and women are arrested on flimsy or no charges, when meetings are broken up on flimsy pretexts or without any pretext, when radical papers are suppressed and when radical headquarters in many cities are raided. If these are the first fruits of militarism, what will be the complete harvest?

I don't know how many young men will refuse to register and be conscripted tomorrow, but I do know that the young man who shakes off the bloody paw of militarism when it is laid on his shoulder, who refuses to be shipped to the trenches of Europe, I do know that young man is doing something that is of unquestionable value, not only to himself but to all humanity and to all posterity. (Applause) The young man who out of a keen sincerity and idealism refuses to take arms in a cause which he does not believe is stronger than any or all the governments that ever existed. (Tremendous applause) Down with militarism. And down with the state that cannot maintain itself except by forced service. (Tremendous Applause)

We have a number of speakers here tonight, some of them young men of conscriptable age, and some few others. Some of them are beyond the conscriptable age, and are not themselves liable, but who fight in this issue just as if they were liable themselves. The first speaker is a young man of conscriptable age, the headmaster of a modern school at Stony Ford, New York. I take pleasure in introducing Mr. Robert H. Hutchinson, but before I close I want to say that Anarchists are not afraid to go on the firing line. That is not the reason. The reason is our underlying principle, the very foundation of our belief, that this is wrong. We are against it now and we always will be. (Applause)

MR. ROBERT H. HUTCHINSON: My friends, if we go into this war to beat the German armies we may be successful, but we are liable to be conquered ourselves by a much more insidious power than armies. Let me recall to your minds how it was that the Roman Empire in the second century B.C. conquered the little country of Greece. The army of that little country went down to destruction against the Roman fighting machine, but in the end it was the Greek Civilization that conquered the Romans. The Romans took over the Greek Government; Roman writers imitated Greek literature; Romans imitated Greek architecture. But when Rome had run her course and the barbarians from the North came down and made themselves possessor of what was left of the Roman Empire it was Roman civilization that reconquered the barbarians. Now, is history repeating itself? Is it possible that the United States will go into this war against Germany and beat the Germans by arms, and in the end be conquered by Germany? When I say Germany I do not mean the mass of people within the confines of the German Empire I mean the type of civilization which the ruling classes there have worked out. I mean Kultur. What does "Kultur" mean. There are two sides to it. On the one hand there is the idea of a kind of state socialism in which the State enters into every phase of human life for the purpose of eliminating waste and making the people act more as a single unit. This can best be translated by our word efficiency. The other idea involved in the conception of kultur is that of absolute, unquestioned obedience to authority. In one sense Kultur means a system, an efficiency, which the ruling classes of Germany have worked out for the increase of their own power. That is not the kind of kultur we want here in America. What difference is there between what we

hear nowadays around such places as this, what difference is there between our modern Americanism and this kultur? What difference is there between German efficiency and American efficiency?

What difference is there between the Subordination of individual liberty, whether it is in Germany or the United States? If we here really believe in freedom and democracy, if we really hold that the rights of the individual are important, let us not fight against a German organization, but let us fight against this kultur, both this side of the Atlantic and the other side of the Atlantic, everywhere. Let us stir up the people to fight for real freedom that democracy means, let us stir them up to fight for more than the mere word; let us stir them up to fight so that freedom and democracy be made facts and maintain as facts, not merely words. (Applause) Let us not be fooled, and let us not permit others to be fooled. We are not in danger of the German Armies; we are in danger of this kultur. It has conquered England and France, and it has now taken possession of America, in a way. It is a great invasion of individual rights. We don't want guns and bullets; we want propaganda and education. We don't want poisonous gases, we want fresh air. And neither do we want that word Liberty to remain a word; we want it to become a fact. (Tremendous applause)

Therefore I ask you to join me in demanding that this Conscription Law be repealed, (Applause) or at least that some kind of an amendment will be made to it that those who are conscientiously really against war of any kind will be allowed to follow out their principles unmolested and in freedom. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: The next speaker will be a young mother, Mrs. Ballantine.

MRS. BALLANTINE: My friends, it is comparatively easy for me to come here and speak to you because I have a son who is only fifteen months old. When I think of mothers here whose sons have to be sent to these bloody battles, with which they have no sympathy, it just horrifies me. I don't see how they do it. To me the whole subject of motherhood has become so terrible, that I cannot think of my little son with equanimity. He is a perfect physical specimen, and when I think I may bring him up to perfect manhood to be taken away without his consent or mine I think I have committed a crime against humanity. They say that this is going to be the last war, to placate people whom they know are opposed to them. There is a book which has just come out, written by some French poillou, the French word for soldier, in which he describes the conditions at the front, and the conditions that meet the soldiers there in the trenches. He describes the way they live, in water up to their waists, cold and freezing weather, the consequence of diseases, and the vermin with which they are covered. Have I to give my son for that? I would rather he die. And I say to women, "Don't breed. Don't have any more children if that is what you are bringing them up for." (Applause)

That is not what we give life for. Life should be a beautiful thing, a thing to develop and flower, instead of a thing to be a mass of wounds and sores and horrors, left on some battlefield. I make my protest as a mother, and as an individual to mothers--don't, don't, don't, don't give your children. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: The next speaker is a young man of Conscriptable age, Peter Kane, Jr.

MR. PETER KANE, JR.: My friends, you will have the police soon. My friends, great sacrifices have been made this evening to get you here. I would like to tell you a great many things, but America does not permit me. (Applause)

A VOICE FROM THE GALLERY: You had better go back to Russia.

MR. KANE: I am going back there if you don't go with me, soon. My friends, two noble boys were arrested at Madison Square Garden getting you here this evening, and I beg to say in spite of that there is

a standing army on the outside, with their protest, telling President Wilson how much they love
Conscription. (Applause and Cheers)

I am a free born American Citizen and it is my duty to preserve those institutions of democracy that mean
liberty of principle of conscience, (Applause and Cheers), and I am willing also to give my insignificant
life to preserve those institutions that the forefathers of America fought for. If our dear country is fighting
a war for democracy my dear brethren, we should have this democracy at home first. (Applause and
Cheers) Any attempt to violate the laws of true democracy should be crushed by the will of the people
who love democracy (Applause), and tomorrow on June 5th you will have your opportunity to crush those
laws that destroy democracy, and I for one, my friends, will side with your dear patriot, Patrick Henry. As
for me, gentlemen, give me liberty or give me death. (Many hurrahs and great applause)

A VOICE FROM THE GALLERY: Three cheers for the Stars and Stripes. (Applause)

MR. KANE: If that individual who made our dear Star Spangled Banner could see us today, she would
say, why did I ever say Liberty? I may be brought to task for saying these things, my friends, but don't
fear that, for I am a Democratic American Citizen, who has the belief, at least, that I have the right to
speak what I think. I cannot allow any law to interfere with the freedom of my conscience, and I am not
going to allow any sect to provide any law under a democracy that stands for a representative
Government to drive me to the slaughter of my fellow man. I refuse to become a murderer under any
pretense whatsoever. (Applause) Laws exist only by the belief of a people in their necessity for the
achievement of the Liberty of Justice and Righteousness. We believe that any law odious to democracy,
endangering the preservation of freedom of thought and conscience, is tyrannical and fit for autocracies
only. We liberty-loving American citizens want this body governed by militarism crushed and we cannot
and will not tolerate any attempt to Prussianize America under any pretense whatsoever. (Applause and
something, evidently an electric bulb, thrown from the gallery and striking at the feet of the speaker.)

MR. KANE: Will the law and order committee provide that I speak safely? (Laughter) We, the people,
make governments and are the final judges as to what shall be enacted as laws. Our representatives voted
for war, it is true, but we, the people of America, know the horrors of war, and we did not and do not want
war. Indeed, our representatives did not represent us. We therefore repudiate a declaration of war until the
American people, the masses, the workers, who do the fighting and pay the taxes for a war are given the
right that true democracy guarantees, the right to decide by a referendum whether or not they want war.
(Great Applause and hurrahs.) Taking advantage of the Government machinery that can be manipulated
to suit those people who our representatives seem to be considering more than the people, a law was
railroaded through Congress in some manner declaring a war that the people do not want to. And I say
here to you now, my brothers, that I, for one, will not uphold any law that does not come within the
written Constitution of the United States of America. I will take no steps and leave it to the conscience of
every man who wants democracy, who understands what this country fought for to get democracy, not to
uphold that law. (Applause) It is in your power. Do it.

THE CHAIRMAN: The next speaker is not only a mother, but a grandmother. I ask Mother Yuster to step
forward. Mother Yuster is a Rumanian and asked me to translate some of this to the audience.

(A lady stepped forward and stood by the Chairman while he proceeded.)

THE CHAIRMAN: I am now speaking for her. I come here tonight with my heart full of sorrow. I want
to say these few words to the audience; as my vocabulary is limited in English and my voice is weak. We
mothers have not given our lives to bring up strong, healthy fellows to make of them murderers and
slaughterers of their fellow men. (Applause) We thought we brought our sons into a civilized world where

they could be used for members of society and make the world better and not worse. I know that I voice the feeling of plenty of other members when I voice my feelings, that we will never allow our sons to be conscripted. We have put our lives in danger by giving birth to them; we are willing to give our lives to save them. Let those go who want the war; no one stops them. Mothers wake up. Realize what this means. Don't allow your sons to go to the war. (Applause)

THE CHAIRMAN: The next speaker is one you all know, a life-long fighter, not only against militarism, but against everything that crushes the human spirit, a man who went to prison for fourteen years in the fight for liberty. I present to you Alexander Berkman. (Great Cheers.)

ALEXANDER BERKMAN: Comrades, friends and enemies (Great Applause) and everyone who believes in freedom of thought and liberty. We had a demonstration here a moment ago as to who believes in free speech. The militarists, the false patriots and the others have mass meetings tonight. They have mass meetings this evening. They have meetings tomorrow. We did not send our men to disturb their meetings. (Great applause and hurrahs.) Who believes in liberty? Do we believe in liberty or do they? We say to you, and I mean all of you, I mean these detectives, these Federal men, soldiers and sailors, we say to all of you, if you want war, go ahead. We believe in liberty, but you can go ahead. (Applause and cheers.) But we say further to you, if you believe in liberty, if you pretend to fight for liberty and democracy how can you force us to do what we don't want to do? (Great applause and cheering.) I see a few, or rather quite a number of young men in uniform in this audience, and I want to know when they look into their own consciences if they do not think that I am not making a florid speech, but that I am talking common sense. That should appeal to you, if you really have a sense of justice.

America says we are going to fight Germany. Why? They say we are going to fight Germany because we want to give them liberty and democracy. If you believe that you can give a people liberty and democracy from the outside, if you believe you can give a people or a nation liberty at the end of a bayonet or with bullets, go ahead. We don't object. We shall not interfere. But if you are so generous with liberty as to carry it to Germany across the sea, why don't you retain liberty right here in this country. (Applause.)

A VOICE: Are you a citizen?

A. BERKMAN: I have the floor just now. If you want the floor later, we believe in free speech and will give it to you. There is no greater boon in the world than liberty. There is nothing greater in the whole universe than freedom of conscience, freedom of opinion and freedom of action, in short liberty. But it is we who are fighting for liberty, and no one else, not those who oppose us. We have been fighting for liberty for many years, and even for the liberty of those who oppose us. (Great Applause.)

A VOICE: You know what Rabbi Wise said?

OTHER VOICES: Shut up, shut up. (There were many boos and great confusion. Someone threw something at the speaker.)

A. BERKMAN: I want this man to speak out what is in his heart. That is all right. I say this is a solemn moment. Men and women and soldiers and others, do not make light of this. You are the sons of mothers, even if you are in uniform. You want to go to the front. Alright. But consider what you are doing and consider whether you have the right to suppress those who do not believe as you do. Consider well, especially if you pretend to fight under the banner of free speech and liberty. Consider that. Take that home with you to your barracks. Think it over. You have never heard patriots talk to us like that. We talk to you like that. We don't throw glasses or bricks at you. We say to you consider, look into your own hearts and do what you think is right. But you can't think it is right to suppress the other fellow because he

thinks differently. You can't believe it in your own hearts or you would have less to say in opposition to us, and you would be less, much less than human. We are here to say what we believe, just the same as you are in a hundred and one halls all over the City, in thousands of halls all over the country today to say what you believe. That means liberty of speech, and for liberty I am the first to fight. (Great applause.)

This is a most serious moment. Let me tell you, if you know what is happening in the country today, that you know that this is one of the most tragic moments in the life of this country. Don't make light of it, because it is the most terrible and tragic moment in the life of the country. Conscription in a free country means the cemetery of liberty, and if conscription is the cemetery then registration is the undertaker. (Great applause and cheers and boos, and something thrown at the speaker that looked like a lemon.)

All right, I am talking now; you can talk later. (Someone in the gallery threw something at the speaker and said something the stenographer could not understand.) Those who want to register should certainly register, but those who know what liberty means, and I am sure there are thousands in this country, they will not register. (Many hurrahs and great applause.) There have been many black days, many black Fridays, and black Sundays in the history of this country. Black days for labor when those who feed you were shot down on the streets because they were for better conditions of living. There have been many black days for labor. But there is going to be a blacker day, not a black Friday, but a black Tuesday. (Great applause) And I believe that those who realize the full significance of forcing a supposedly free country into an armed camp, those who realize that should put on mourning tomorrow. They should mourn the loss of the country's liberty. It is not a day for rejoicing. You rejoice over something that brings you happiness, joy, freedom. But something that means your further enslavement, something that means the coercion of you to do things against your conscience, against your nature, against the dictates of everything that is fine in you--things like that should be mourned and wept over, and not made a holiday of. It is a tragic moment to me, because I love the American people more than those who want to enslave them towards the profit of Morgan and others. (Applause) Neither the soldiers of this country nor the workers have any enemies across the ocean. The soldiers and the workers and all those who really have to work mentally or physically, for their bread and butter, they have no enemies there. They have an enemy right here in this country; (Applause) they have an enemy that makes money, millions and billions of it, out of your blood, out of small children and widows, by putting them in sweat shops, by working them all hours, (Great Applause) (Someone in the gallery threw something at the speaker which broke the glass on the table in front of him and the rest of the remarks to finish the sentence were not heard.) Those are the enemies we have.

A VOICE: You are the enemy.

A. BERKMAN: I have no more love for these exploiting American enemies than I have for the German Kaiser. (Someone in the gallery shouted, "go back to Europe where you belong. You are not an American citizen anyhow." Also someone threw something that broke one of the electric globes in the footlight row.)

A. BERKMAN: No, no, gracia. Hence, consider a certain country across the ocean. Look at Russia. There are workers and soldiers that know what they are about. (Great applause and confusion. Many voices from the gallery.) You believe in free speech, go and fight for your country. They are soldiers the same as we have in this country. They are workers the same as we have in this country. And let me tell you they know that eight hours is a working day there. (There was considerable confusion in the gallery, and evidently a struggle of some sort went on up there.)

No argument there (Referring to the gallery.) Sit down. Everybody keep their seats. (There was great confusion, people standing up around the hall.) Keep your seats. We know there are men here to break up this meeting.

EMMA GOLDMAN: One moment. There are United States soldiers here who are on duty. Soldiers--now, no argument there.

MR. KANE: Listen to an American citizen.

(Meanwhile there was great confusion throughout the hall.)

A. BERKMAN: I don't believe these soldiers are real Americans. My friends, do you know what is happening in Russia today? Do you know that eight hours work is what the workers want in every country? Do you know what is good for the workers? Do you know what the soldiers of Russia are helping the workers in that country to do? Do you know that after all the cause of the soldiers and workers is the same everywhere. (Great excitement, Emma Goldman takes the platform.)

MISS EMMA GOLDMAN: Please be quiet; please be quiet. (Great applause and cheers.) Friends and fellow workers. Friends, don't you know that the soldiers came here to disturb the meeting? (Many voices yes, yes.) I ask you all to keep quiet, no matter what the soldiers do. I demand of you to keep absolutely quiet. Let them disturb the meeting. We are not going to disturb the meeting. (Applause) Friends, workers, soldiers, detectives and police. (Laughter and hisses and applause) I am going to speak to you all. I am surprised that the police here don't stop the soldiers from breaking the lights. (Hurrahs and applause. Throughout Emma Goldman's remarks she was so frequently interrupted by applause that reference will not be made to the times.) Friends, please don't applaud, time is too precious. If the police don't stop the soldiers from breaking the law is it because the police are afraid of the soldiers? I hope that they will preserve order. Now, friends, if this meeting would not take place at all, I think you should know that there are twenty thousand people outside waiting to get into this hall, to prove to you more than anything that we can say that the people of New York who think, don't want war and don't want conscription and don't want militarism. At the same time we consider ourselves more consistent than those who believe in war and believe in militarism. We say that those who believe in war, believe in conscription and in militarism and should do their duty and fight. We have no objection against it but we refuse to be compelled to fight when we don't believe in war and when we don't believe in militarism and when we don't believe in conscription. Now, why don't we believe in war and in militarism? The good papers of this city have told you that because we are pro-German, we do not believe in war and we do not believe in militarism. That is an unbelievable lie. I am just as much opposed to the German Government as I am to the American Government--and why do I not believe in militarism? I will tell you why. When I was eight years of age my father had a government position, and every year compulsory military registration was required. The highest officials of Russia would come to our place, the heads, the representatives of militarism, and would there compel the youth of our land, the peasant boys to become soldiers. And at that time the mothers and the fathers of the whole community turned out in mourning and considered it a day of sorrow and of tears and of pain when their sons were taken away into the Army. It impressed itself with indelible power upon my mind and upon my conscience. Ten years later, when I came to America, I was told that this was the land of the free, that no man is compelled to be a soldier in America. I actually believed that this was the promised land, the land that rests upon freedom, upon opportunity, upon happiness, upon recognition of the importance and the value of the young generation. But since that day twenty seven years almost have passed, and I have come to the conclusion that when the law for conscription was passed in the United States the Funeral March of 500,000 American youths is going to be celebrated tomorrow, on Registration Day. I am opposed to Militarism because I have seen since my early childhood what it means to sacrifice a young man, who has hope and youth and a life of opportunity before him, on the altar of militarism. I, therefore, promised myself, even as a child, that as long as I lived, and as long as my voice carried, I shall cry out against compulsory militarism, against conscription. My friends, we are told that the people want war. If the people of America want war, if the people of New York City want conscription, how does it happen that this city is going to muster up not only the entire

police department, but the National Guard and a body of parasites known as the Home Guards, who have nothing else to do? Now, my friends, I ask you why do you have to muster up your police, soldiers, Home Guard and National Guard to celebrate your Registration Day? If the people want war, why so much police, why so many soldiers to compel them to become soldiers? If the people want war, why not give them a chance to say that they do? If you want to sacrifice their sons upon the altar of militarism, why not give the people a chance to decide? Those in power knew that they could not put the people to a test; they were afraid to put the American people to a test, and that is why they imposed war upon them, and barely six weeks later imposed conscription upon them. Therefore, I as an Anarchist who became an American out of choice, protest. You patriots, you born Americans, you became Americans because you had to. You were dropped on this earth. I had no choice whatever, but I came to America out of my free will, and I, as an American out of choice, say that if you force people into militarism, if you force our young men into the Army, please have the decency to say that you will Prussianize America in order to democratize Germany. (Tremendous applause.) You must realize that you will be making a laughing stock out of yourselves. Nobody believes you. Don't you suppose that the fact that you are breaking up meetings and causing disturbances and locking up boys and girls and disturbing and harming people, don't you suppose those things are known abroad? How much the Russian peasants and the workingmen must enjoy themselves when they hear of this wonderful democracy in the United States.

I understand, friends, that a meeting of Russian soldiers was stopped in this city tonight. I am glad of it. The Russian soldiers will go back to the Council of Workmen and Soldiers and they will tell them that when America says she is fighting for democracy she is telling the world a lie. She is not fighting for democracy. I say that those who sit in a glass house have no right to throw stones about them. Now, friends, I am here frankly and openly telling you that I will continue to work against Conscription. We are told that you have stenographers here to take down what we say, this is not the first time we are having stenographers at our meeting. And I have always said things that everybody can hear, and what is more important I want the police and the soldiers to hear what I have to say. It will do them good. They need education. Now, friends, if I do not tell you tonight not to register, it is not because I am afraid of the soldiers, or because I am afraid of the police. I have only one life to give, and if my life is to be given for an ideal, for the liberation of the people, soldiers, help yourselves. My friends, the only reason that prevents me telling you men of conscriptable age not to register is because I am an Anarchist, and I do not believe in force morally or otherwise to induce you to do anything that is against your conscience, and that is why I tell you to use your own judgment and rely upon your own conscience. It is the best guide in all the world. If that is a crime, if that is treason, I am willing to be shot. It is a wonderful death to die for your ideal, but I impress it upon the minds of patriots present, I impress it upon the minds of the police present, upon the minds of the soldiers present, that for every idealist they kill thousands will rise and they will not cease to rise until the same thing happens in America that has happened in Russia. Don't you know, friends, that there was a time when Russian soldiers locked up every idealist and sent them to Siberia and to underground prisons and suppressed free speech and assembly and tortured them to death. Yet today the whole civilized world, including the United States Government, is trembling in its boots before The Council of Workmen and Soldiers who are standing for liberty. And, friends, young men, soldiers, I am not afraid. I am not afraid for all you can do is to take my life--you can never take my ideals. Neither the police nor the soldiers, nor the United States Government nor all the powers on earth will take my ideals. My ideals will live long after I am dead.

Now, friends, I come to something else far remote from what I have to say tonight, and which is unfortunately always my luck. The newspapers were good enough to say that all of our meetings are paid for by the German Kaiser. Of course, they know better. They know that if the German Kaiser paid for this meeting, we could have the largest hall in town and invite the police. They know perfectly well that we are not paid by the German Kaiser. No, friends, you workingmen and working women, who are here tonight, you have to pay for tonight's meeting, not the German Kaiser. I am going to appeal to you, -- because this meeting has to be paid for by your money, and in the second place, to demonstrate to the

gentlemen of the press, present here tonight, to the soldiers and to the police, and to the detectives, that the money which you are going to give is hard earned American pennies, the amount of money your masters are good enough to give you in return for the amount of wealth which you are producing every day. And so, friends, I appeal to you tonight to give liberally, to give as much as you can, when the collectors go through to pay the expense of the meeting. We are very fortunate that we don't have to pay for our protection. We get that perfectly free. We are very grateful that the soldiers are present tonight. It is the only time in our life and their lives that they have heard the truth, and I am glad they are here, and so friends, when the collectors pass, please give as generously and as liberally as you can, and give only if you are opposed to war, and if you are opposed to militarism and conscription. I shall then have a word or two to say after the collection is over.

Meanwhile I call the attention of you soldiers to the fact that if you wish to demonstrate that you believe in American Institutions you will behave yourselves like gentlemen, not like ruffians. (There was considerable confusion throughout the hall and up in the gallery.) Now, after the collection, I shall have a few closing remarks to make, and I am going to stand here until you are through with the collection. (Someone asked for three cheers for Emma Goldman, and the response was tremendous. Cheers and applause, mingled with boos and also some cheers for Alexander Berkman.) Friends, don't please make a mistake. Don't shout hurrah for Emma Goldman or Alexander Berkman, because they are mere incidents in the history of the world. It is better to shout hurrah for the principles of liberty. That is better than one Alexander Berkman or one Emma Goldman, or one hundred thousand Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldmans. They will go, but the principle of freedom, the principle of self-possession, the principle of self-emancipation, the principle of social revolution will live.

Friends, the collectors can go on quietly and continue their work. (There was great confusion throughout the hall at the time and Miss Goldman quieted the audience. Every one became quiet again.) Don't forget friends, that the opposition to conscription only begins, it does not end tonight. Do not forget, also, that the work for Peace, for International Peace only begins. I know, friends, who are here tonight, that you will be glad to learn from the note just sent up that fully twenty thousand people are outside of the hall. Dear Friends, I congratulate the press of New York. The newspapers of New York have rendered our Anti Conscription work more service than a thousand Emma Goldmans could render. Of course, the press did not desire to have twenty thousand people at such a meeting. What the press wanted was merely to paralyze you into silence, to make you believe that you are going to be imprisoned for this and be shot on the spot. It is too bad that America cannot hang you and quarter you and shoot you all at once, for the press would be in favor of that. These blood curdling articles that appear are only for the purpose of paralyzing you. They don't know, the poor chaps, that if anyone has an ideal you can't terrorize him no matter what you do. So I am personally grateful to you--to the press. I am grateful to the police for having sent out so numerous an army, grateful to the young soldiers who really mean no harm. They are innocent boys. They have never yet faced danger. They think it is going to be a picnic; they think they are going to enjoy themselves, poor young gentlemen. I wish you could go to war and have a picnic. I wish you could enjoy yourselves, and I wish you could carry on your war as if it were a frolic, or as if it were a baseball or football game, but you are mistaken, as war means an entirely different thing. We know that war means the annihilation of every fundamental principle of liberty. We know that centralized militarism means nothing else but the carnal brutality of man, blood-shed and conquest in its most abominable aspect. We tonight of the Anti-Conscription League raise our voices to the very sky to tell you that you may fight your battles, if you believe in the trenches, but you are representing a losing cause. You represent the past and we represent the future. The Conscription Law has been the means of awakening the people of America. Before the Conscription Law was passed the American people used to think, why, we have freedom, we can do whatever we please, we can go to war if we want to and stay away if we don't want to. My friends, we are grateful to the Government for having passed the Conscription Bill for it will teach the American people that American Liberty has been buried and is dead and is a corpse, and that only our

voice is going to raise it up and revive it again, until the American people and all the people living in America will unite in one great mass and will throw out capitalism and Government by militarism.

It was our intention to have a number of other speakers here tonight. They are all here. I don't want you to think for a moment that anyone backed out, but we are not going to give the satisfaction to the patriots to break up this meeting. Therefore, friends, I want you to close this meeting with the singing of the International and to go out quietly. Your friends on the outside are waiting, and you will all raise one mighty voice that is going to drown militarism and government and capitalism. (At the close of the meeting an old lady was helped to the platform by someone on the platform and distributed some papers, taken from an envelope. The pamphlets were afterward taken up by soldiers and the old lady was arrested.)

MEETING CLOSED.