

The Demonstration Was a Great One:
Letter to Morris Hillquit
(May 21, 1907)

Girard, Kansas, May 21, 1907.

Morris Hillquit,
New York City.

Dear Comrade Hillquit:—

I want to thank you for your kindness in procuring a copy of the bill, or rather law, signed by Roosevelt which made possible the now notorious Alton swindle.¹

I also want to express in this poor way my appreciation of the flattering tribute you paid me in your noteworthy address at the recent Moyer and Haywood demonstration.² I am deeply sensible of your words, not because of their personal importance but because of the spirit of comradeship which prompted such generous recognition of very small service. I read your entire address with a great deal of satisfaction. It was clear and ringing and full of inspiration. The demonstration was in every way a great one and the comrades are to be congratulated heartily upon its unqualified success. In no part of the country is such a demonstration as effective as in the East where the money changers have their lairs,

I hope you are well and that all beneath your roof are happy.

Yours always,

E. V. Debs.

[P.S.] Maily has written me of your business. Just preparing to leave for Boise.³

¹ Reference is to an amendment to chapter 386 of New York law, passed by the legislature and signed by then-Governor Theodore Roosevelt in February 1900, changing the form of securities which could be held by deposit savings banks. This change was exploited by the Chicago & Alton Railroad Company, largely owned by Edward H. Harriman, in a subsequent \$62.6 million bond sale. Bonds initially sold at a low price to railway owners were marked up during the sale of a branch railroad to a larger entity owned in part by the same ownership group, with the difference — amounting to millions of dollars — pocketed by the conspirators.

² A massive demonstration was held in New York City on Saturday, May 4, 1907, in support of William D. Haywood, Charles Moyer, and George Pettibone. Two marches were held with no fewer than 20,000 people demonstrating in twin parades starting at Yorkville and Rutgers Square, uniting into one great body on Fortieth Street. After the parade a great gathering was addressed at Grand Central Palace, with speeches delivered by William Coakley of the Central Federated Union, and prominent socialists Joshua Wanhope and Morris Hillquit. The speeches of Hillquit and Wanhope were reprinted in *The Worker*, vol. 17, no. 6 (May 11, 1907), pp. 1, 6.

³ The matter about which William Mailly, then an associate editor of *The Worker*, wrote to Debs is unclear. His letter has not been preserved.