

## Quotations from Eugene Debs

Years ago I recognized my kinship with all living things, and I made up my mind that I was not one bit better than the meanest on the earth. I said then and I say now, that while there is a lower class, I am in it; while there is a criminal element, I am of it; while there is a soul in prison, I am not free.

### 1903, Speaking before the Western Federation of Miners:

The earth is for all the people. That is the demand.

The machinery of production and distribution for all the people. That is the demand.

The collective ownership and control of industry and its democratic management in the interest of all the people. That is the demand.

The elimination of rent, interest, profit and the production of wealth to satisfy the wants of all the people. That is the demand.

Cooperative industry in which all shall work together in harmony as the basis of a new social order, a higher civilization, a real republic. That is the demand.

The end of class struggles and class rule, of master and slave, or ignorance and vice, of poverty and shame, of cruelty and crime -- the birth of freedom, the dawn of Brotherhood, the beginning of MAN. That is the demand.

### Speaking to a reporter for Call from his prison cell in 1919 while serving time for making anti-war speeches.:

I told my friends of the cloth that I did not believe Christ was meek and lowly but a real living, vital agitator who went into the temple with a lash and a kroust and whipped the oppressors of the poor, routed them out of the doors and spilled their blood and got silver on the floor. He told the robbed and misruled and exploited and driven people to disobey their plunderers, he denounced the profiteers, and it was for this that they nailed his quivering body to the cross and spiked it to the gates of Jerusalem, not because he told them to love one another. That was harmless doctrine. But when he touched their profits and denounced them before their people he was marked for crucifixion.

### From a speech given at the founding of the Federal Council of Churches in Girard, Kansas, 1908

Am I my brother's keeper? [That frequently asked question] has never been answered in a way that is satisfactory to civilized society. Yes, I am my brother's keeper. I am under a moral obligation to him that is inspired, not by maudlin sentimentality, but by the higher duty I owe myself.

It is when you have done your work honestly, when you have contributed your share to the common fund that you begin to live. Then, as Whitman said, you can take out your soul; you can commune with yourself; you can take a comrade by the hand and you can look into his soul and in that holy communion you live. And if you don't know what that is, or if you are not at least on the edge of it, it is denied you even to look into the Promised Land.