
Statement to the Press, Evening of June 27, 1894

by Eugene V. Debs

Quote in the article “Knights of Labor to Aid” in *The Daily Inter Ocean* [Chicago],
vol. 23, no. 96 (June 18, 1894), pg. 3

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In the afternoon [June 27, 1894] President Debs had a conference with Messrs. Hannahan and Arnold, representing Grand Chief [Frank P.] Sargent, of the Locomotive Firemen’s association.¹ They said that while they were individually in sympathy with the American Railway Union in its boycott, they could not speak for their order and refused to make any statement that would commit it. Members of the Order of Railway Trainmen seen yesterday stated that their order was not in sympathy with the boycott and would not refuse to handle Pullman cars.

“We shall not attempt to cut Pullman cars out of trains,” said President Debs last night, “but we shall do all in our power to prevent them from being placed in trains. In this I speak for the order, but I cannot say what some of the more excited sympathizers throughout the country may do. I do not think that a Pullman car will leave Chicago today. Roads in the hands of receivers will cut no figure with us. We have the same right with those lines that we have with others. We do not intend to resort to violence under any circumstances, and if violence is attempted against the property of any railroad company we will send our own men to protect that property. Our men will quit, and if their places can be filled, all right, we have no objections, but we shall do all in our power to peaceably prevent the running of Pullman sleepers.

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¹ John J. Hannahan and Frank W. Arnold were the Vice Grand Master and the Grand Secretary and Treasurer of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, respectively.