DICTATED LETTER

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LAW OFFICES OF WEIL & THORP

821 FRICK BUILDING

PITTSBURGH, PA.

A. LEO. WEIL
CHARLES M. THORP
S. LEO RUSLANDER
MALCOLM GOLDSMITH

GEORGE K. WARN
L. PEARSON SCOTT
MEYER GREENBAUM
FERDINAND T. WEIL

March 30, 1917.

Miss Ida M. Tarbell,
132 East 19th Street,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Ida:

I have your very kind letter of the 28th congratulating Mrs. Weil and myself on the termination of the West Virginia proceedings against me. I am enclosing you herewith three newspaper comments, one from West Virginia, one from Milwaukee and another from Pittsburgh, giving different angles of the points of view. I hope you will have time at some near date to write the story from the purely impersonal side, on account of the lessons to be learned of how easily legal proceedings may be used for illegal purposes, and criminals protected through political influences such as have been exercised on behalf of Biddinger, who is still out on bail, his case now pending in the Supreme Court of the United States.

I have been making some investigations recently with the view of making an address before one of our national bar associations, perhaps the American Bar Association or the American Judicature Society, on the subject of the maladministration of the law. My own case would only be touched on very incidentally, but I am much impressed with the fact that in all of our larger cities the administration of the law does not obtain justice in perhaps a majority of cases. Ask any member of the bar who is well-informed - first, how many of the judges are

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honest; second, how many are capable; third, how many cannot be influenced by outside considerations, political or social; and when you hear the answers you will be impressed with the notion that justice administered by men sitting as judges of whom the bar has such an opinion cannot fail to fall short of accomplishing the main purpose of the administration of justice, namely, fearlessness and impartiality, courage and honesty.

Then, on the other side, ask any well-informed members of the bar what influences they believe affect juries, how juries are selected, and how they find verdicts, and you will again find just as great a want of confidence, and even much greater, in the jury than in the judge, and you will be unhesitatingly informed that wherever it is a case involving for example a public service corporation, or any large corporation, or any large financial interests, on the one side, and some poor unfortunate on the other, the jury will not consider the facts but solely their sympathies. Understand, I do not contend that the interests on the other side do not follow other means of protecting their interests, which perhaps to a considerable extent counterbalance the prejudices of the jury, but I am only criticizing both the judge and the jury as arms of the blind goddess, sometimes with her hands distended, sometimes with her fingers disjointed, sometimes with her fists clinched, but seldom held out uninfluenced and evenly balanced to receive the weight of the evidence and balance it accordingly.

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But I must not take up your time with this sort of clatter. I cannot help feeling, however, that I am talking to more or less sympathetic ears, and that your own investigations have perhaps led you to somewhat similar conclusions.

With great regard, believe me,

Faithfully yours,

A. Leo. Weil

Enc.

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