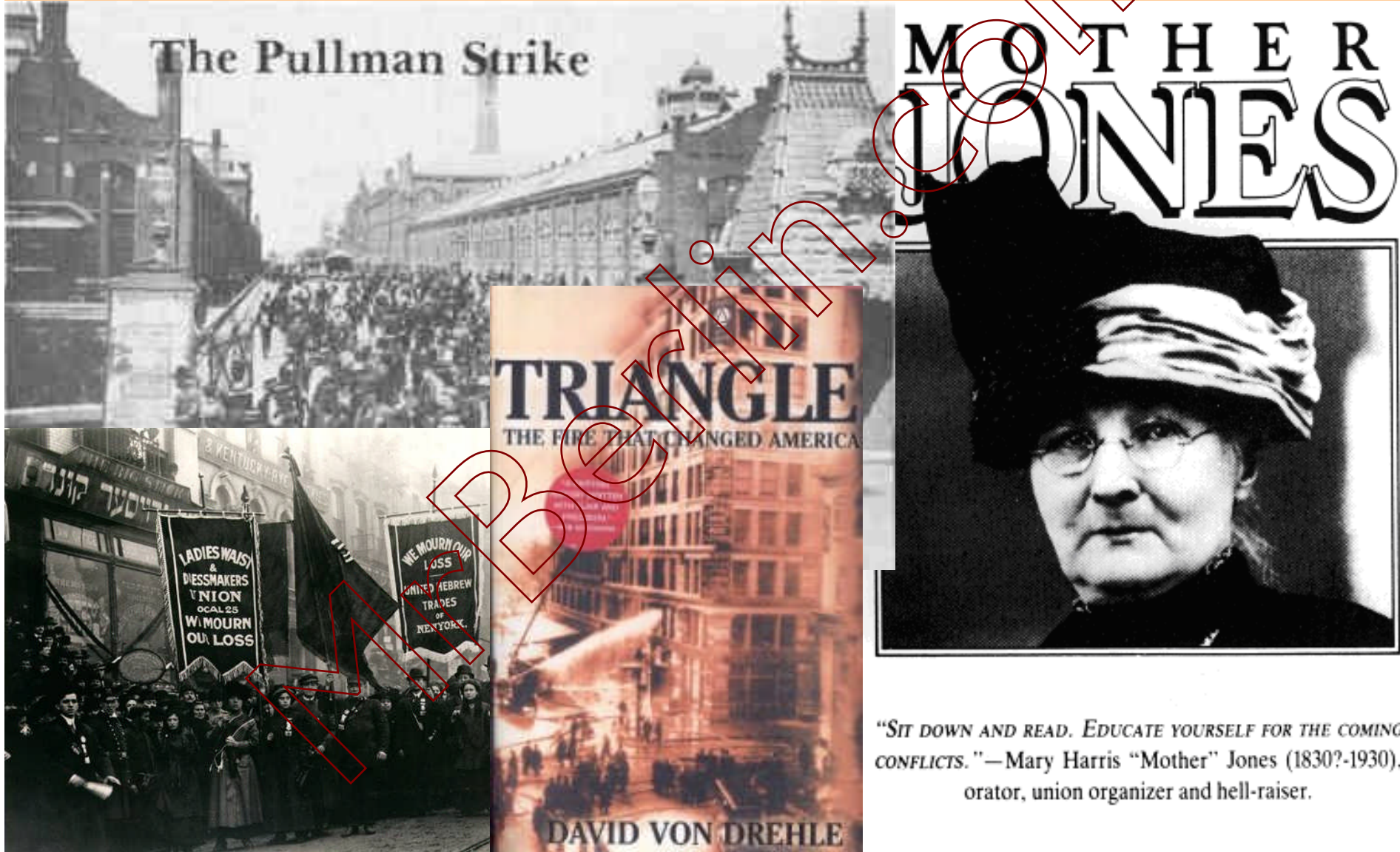


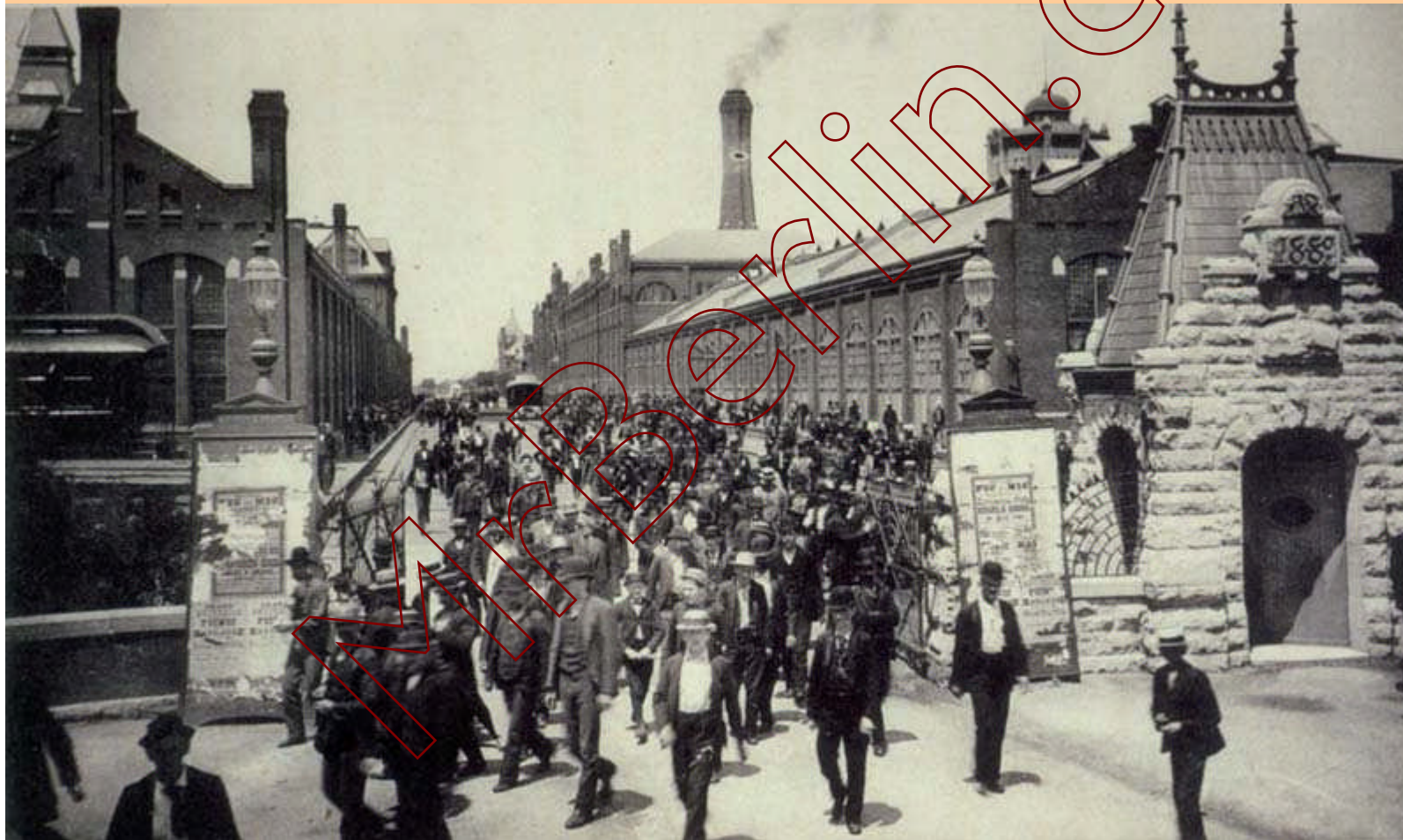
Objective: To examine the Pullman Strike, women in the labor movement, and the Triangle Fire.



"SIT DOWN AND READ. EDUCATE YOURSELF FOR THE COMING CONFLICTS."—Mary Harris "Mother" Jones (1830?-1930), orator, union organizer and hell-raiser.

Pullman Strike – (1893) George Pullman cut the salaries of his workers at his railroad car factory.

- However, the rent in company owned houses remained the same.
- Therefore, the workers went on strike.



Pullman workers walk the short distance to their nearby Pullman-owned homes and apartments after a day of work.

Jennie Curtiss, a Pullman worker for five years wrote:

My father worked for the Pullman Company for ten years. Last summer he was sick for three months, and in September he died. At the time of his death we owed the Pullman Company about sixty dollars for rent. I was working at the time and they told me I would have to pay that rent, give what I could every pay-day, until it was paid. I did not say I would not pay, but thought rather than be thrown out of work I would pay it. Many a time I have drawn nine and ten dollars for two weeks' work, paid seven dollars for my board and given the Company my remaining two or three dollars on the rents, and I still owe them fifteen dollars. Sometimes when I could not possibly give them anything [because her wage was cut from \$.90 to \$.20 per section of carpet], I would received slurs and insults from the clerks in the bank, because Mr. Pullman would not give me enough in return for my hard labor to pay the rent for one of his houses and live.

FIGURES SHOWING THE EXACT REDUCTIONS

Lot 1515.....	Oct., 1888	
Car-builder.....		\$13.00
Truck builder.....		.90
Truck labor.....		.31
Hanging brakes.....		1.20
Delivery forgings.....		1.05
Delivery lumber.....		.88
Framing.....		.40
Total.....		\$17.74

"The same car with latest improvements, in November, 1893.

Car-builder.....		\$7.00
Truck ".....		.60
Truck labor.....		.04
Hanging brakes.....		.65
Delivery forgings.....		.35
Delivery lumber.....		.21
Framing.....		.12
Total.....		\$9.02

Average wages in 1888.....		\$2.26
Average " " 1893.....		\$1.03

"I shall show figures of the car that we struck on, the Wickes Refrigerator, in 1889.

Car-builders.....		\$36.00
Truck ".....		.90
Truck labor.....		.32
Hanging brakes.....		1.20
Delivery forgings.....		1.31
Delivery lumber.....		1.46
Framing.....		.85
Total.....		\$42.04

"The same car, 1894, with the latest improvements.

Car builder.....		\$19.50
Truck ".....		.60
Truck labor.....		.10
Hanging brakes.....		.60
Delivery forgings.....		.56
Delivery lumber.....		.64
Framing.....		.26
Total.....		\$22.26

Reduction of.....		\$19.78
Average of wages 1889.....		\$2.00 per day
Average " " 1894.....		.91 per day

The entire financial burden was carried by the workers. There were no wage cuts for managers or personnel and there were no reductions in stockholder dividends. There was a rent reduction--for shopkeepers only. Yet, the Pullman Palace Car Company at the time of the strike had a \$27,000,000 surplus, capitalization of \$30,000,000 and a quarterly dividend of \$600,000 in three months.

1894 – A federal judge issued an *injunction* against the workers, forcing them back to work.

- Union leaders were jailed for violating the *Sherman Anti-trust Act.*



THE GREAT RAILWAY STRIKES—THE FIRST HEAT TRAIN LEAVING THE CHICAGO STOCK-YARDS UNDER ESCORT OF UNITED STATES CAVALRY, JULY 16, 1894
Drawn by O. W. Peters from a Sketch by G. A. Coffin.



Women in the Labor Movement

- By 1840, over 1 million women worked in factories.
- Mother Jones became a labor leader, helping to organize unions nationwide.

“Pray for the dead and fight like hell for the living.”

– Mother Jones

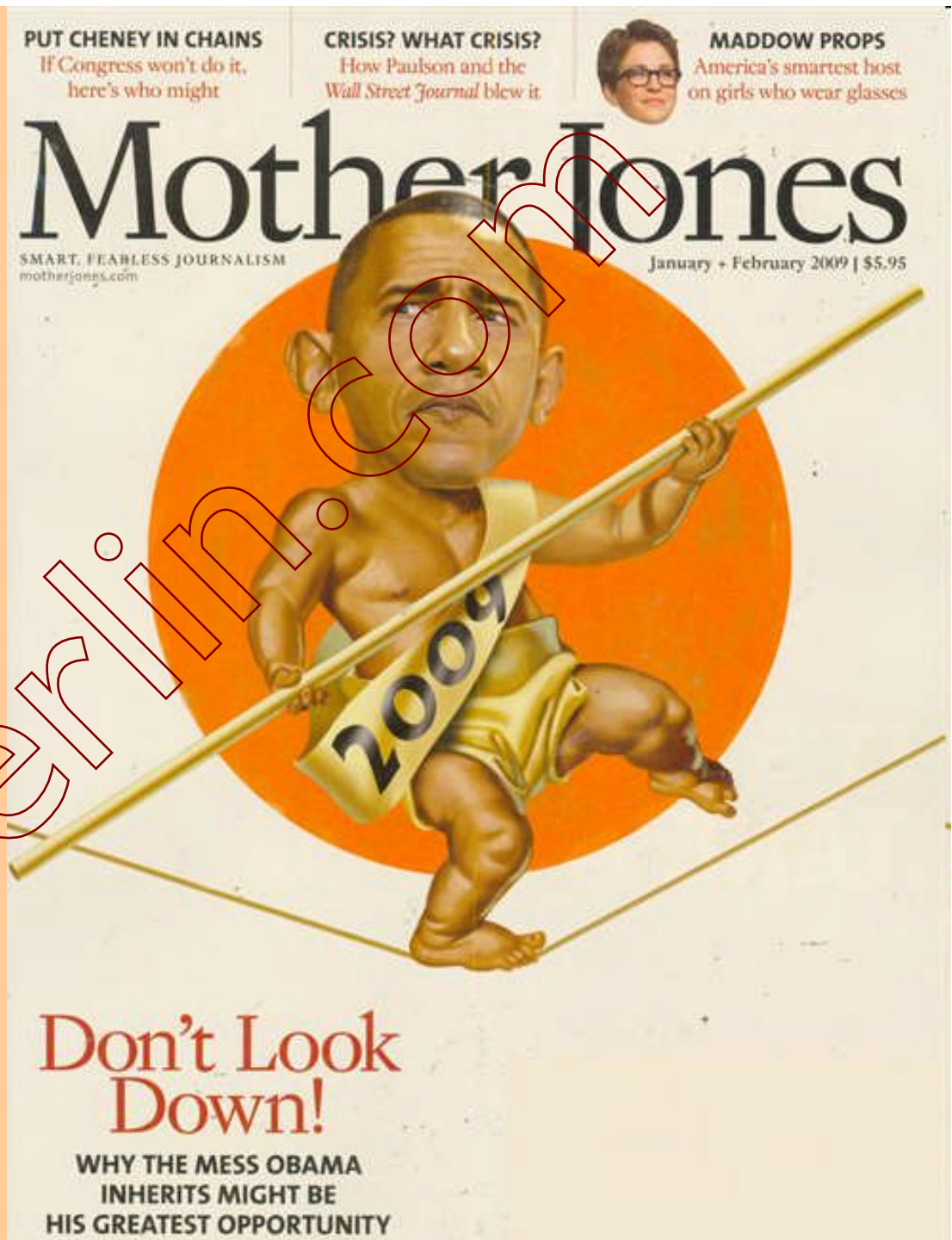
“There are no limits to which powers of privilege will not go to keep the workers in slavery.”

– Mother Jones

“I asked a man in prison once how he happened to be there and he said he had stolen a pair of shoes. I told him if he had stolen a railroad he would be a United States Senator.”

- Mother Jones

Quotations Source: [Mother Jones Autobiography](#)



Triangle Fire – (1911) One hundred and fifty people, mostly young women, died in a fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory in New York City.



Fire fighters arrived soon after the alarm was sounded but ladders only reached the 6th floor and pumps could not raise water to the highest floors of the 10-story building. Still the fire was quickly controlled and was essentially extinguished in half an hour. In this fire-proof building, 146 men, women, and children lost their lives and many others were seriously injured.



The 240 employees sewing shirtwaists on the ninth floor had their escape blocked by back-to-back chairs and workbaskets in the aisles. The 75-foot long paired sewing machine tables obstructed essential access to the windows, stairs, and elevators.



For endless hours, police officers held lanterns to light the bodies while crowds filed past victims laid out in numbered rough brown coffins. As the dead were identified the coffin was closed and moved aside. Forty-three were identified by sunrise on Sunday. Six days later 7 were still unrecognized.



Labor unions, religious communities, political groups and social reform organizations assembled to mourn the lost lives and demand real progress in worker protection. At times their differences in methods and priorities threatened to take back gains made in public awareness and the commitment to act.



Few of the terrified workers on the 9th floor knew that a fire escape was hidden behind iron window shutters. The ladder descended next to the building forcing those fleeing to climb down through flames as they struggled past other shutters stuck open across their path. The design had been deemed inadequate and the material from which it was made was insubstantial. After a few made their way down, the heat of the fire and weight of the people caused the ladder to twist and collapse dropping many who had chosen it as their lifeline.

Eyewitness at the Triangle

By, William G. Shepherd

I was walking through Washington Square when a puff of smoke issuing from the factory building caught my eye. I reached the building before the alarm was turned in. I saw every feature of the tragedy visible from outside the building. I learned a new sound--a more horrible sound than description can picture. It was the thud of a speeding, living body on a stone sidewalk.

Thud—dead, thud—dead, thud—dead, thud—dead. Sixty-two thud—deads. I call them that, because the sound and the thought of death came to me each time, at the same instant. There was plenty of chance to watch them as they came down. The height was eighty feet.

The first ten thud—deads shocked me. I looked up—saw that there were scores of girls at the windows. The flames

from the floor below were beating in their faces. Somehow I knew that they, too, must come down, and something within me—something that I didn't know was there—steeled me.

I even watched one girl falling. Waving her arms, trying to keep her body upright until the very instant she struck the sidewalk, she was trying to balance herself. Then came the thud--then a silent, unmoving pile of clothing and twisted, broken limbs.

As I reached the scene of the fire, a cloud of smoke hung over the building. . . . I looked up to the seventh floor. There was a living picture in each window—four screaming heads of girls waving their arms.

"Call the firemen," they screamed—scores of them. "Get a ladder," cried others. They were all as alive and whole and sound as were we who stood on the sidewalk. I couldn't help thinking of that. We cried to them not to jump. We heard the

siren of a fire engine in the distance. The other sirens sounded from several directions.

"Here they come," we yelled. "Don't jump; stay there."

One girl climbed onto the window sash. Those behind her tried to hold her back. Then she dropped into space. I didn't notice whether those above watched her drop because I had turned away. Then came that first thud. I looked up, another girl was climbing onto the window sill; others were crowding behind her. She dropped. I watched her fall, and again the dreadful sound. Two windows away two girls were climbing onto the sill; they were fighting each other and crowding for air. Behind them I saw many screaming heads. They fell almost together, but I heard two distinct thuds. Then the flames burst out through the windows on the floor below them, and curled up into their faces.

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The firemen began to raise a ladder. Others took out a life net and, while they were rushing to the sidewalk with it, two more girls shot down.

The firemen held it under them; the bodies broke it...Before they could move the net another girl's body flashed through it. The thuds were just as loud, it seemed, as if there had been no net there. It seemed to me that the thuds were so loud that they might have been heard all over the city.

The firemen raised the longest ladder. It reached only to the sixth floor. I saw the last girl jump at it and miss it. And

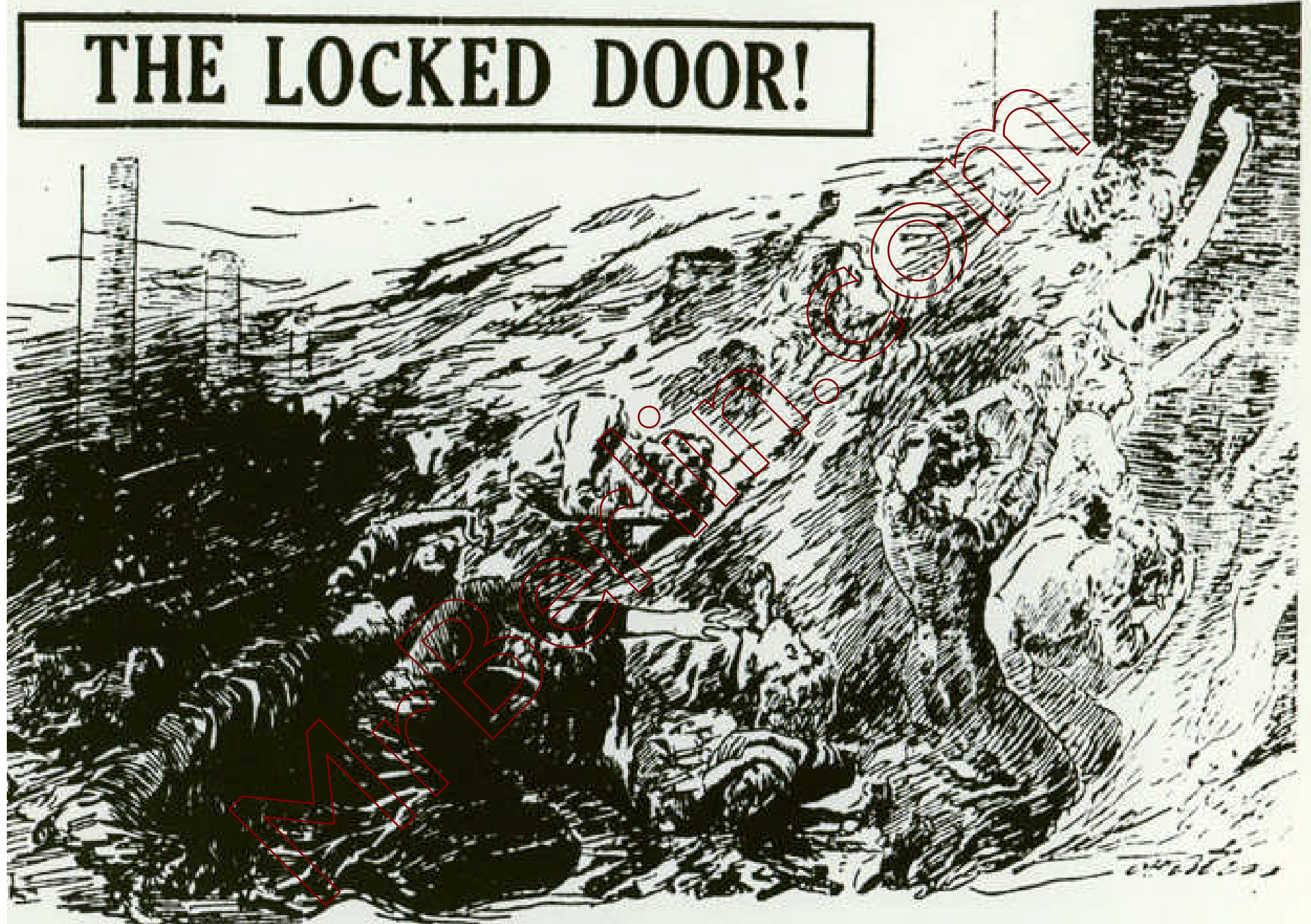
then the faces disappeared from the window. But now the crowd was enormous, though all this had occurred in less than seven minutes, the start of the fire and the thuds and deaths.

I heard screams around the corner and hurried there. What I had seen before was not so terrible as what had followed. Up in the [ninth] floor girls were burning to death before our very eyes. They were jammed in the windows. No one was lucky enough to be able to jump, it seemed. But, one by one, the jams broke. Down came the bodies in a shower, burning, smoking—flaming bodies, with disheveled hair trailing upward. They had fought each other to die by jumping instead of by fire. The whole, sound, unharmed girls who had jumped on the other side of the building had tried to fall feet down. But these fire torches, suffering ones, fell inertly, only intent that death should come to them on the sidewalk instead of in the furnace behind them.

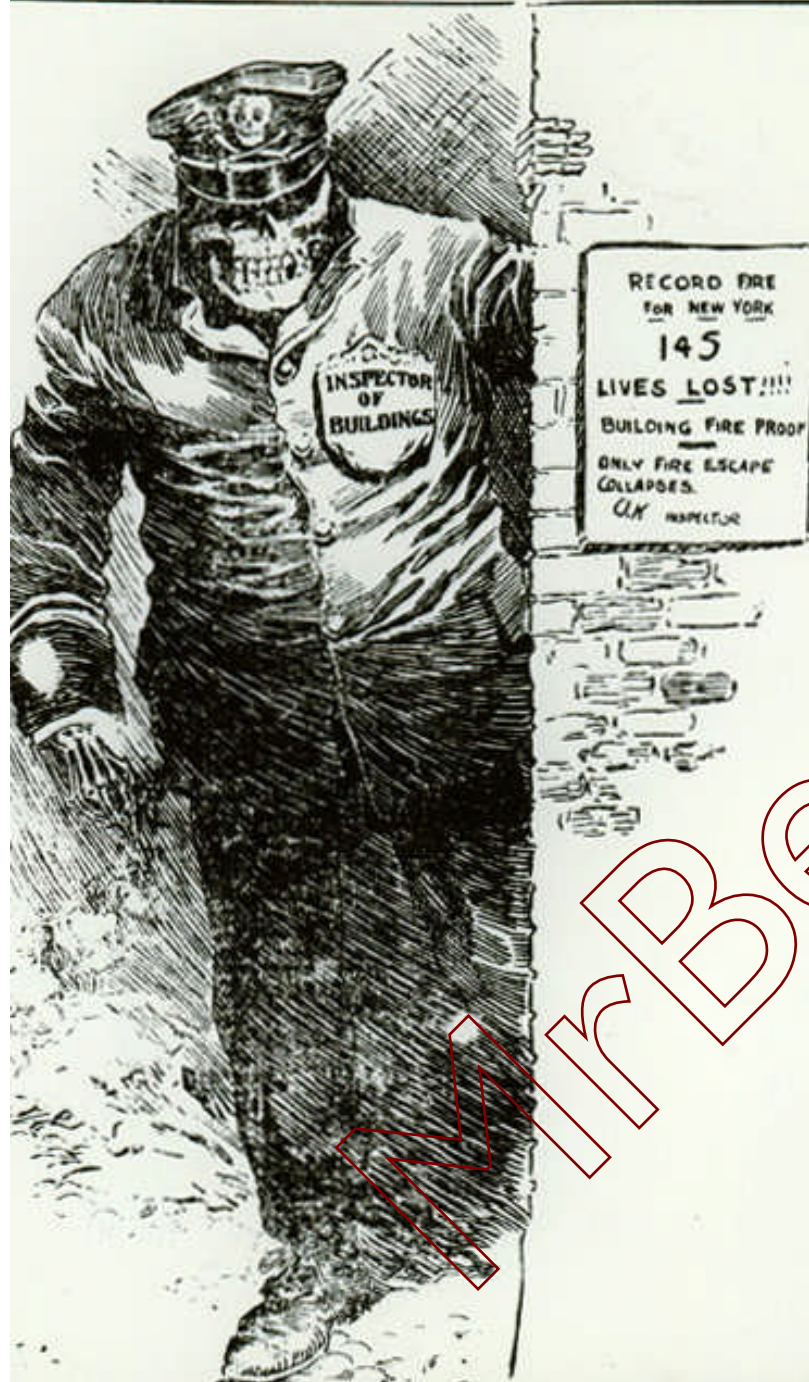
On the sidewalk lay heaps of broken bodies. A policeman later went about with tags, which he fastened with wires to the wrists of the dead girls, numbering each with a lead pencil, and I saw him fasten tag no. 54 to the wrist of a girl who wore an engagement ring. A fireman who came downstairs from the building told me that there were at least fifty bodies in the big room on the seventh floor. Another fireman told me that more girls had jumped down an air shaft in the rear of the building. I went back there, into the narrow court, and saw a heap of dead girls. . . .

The floods of water from the firemen's hose that ran into the gutter were actually stained red with blood. I looked upon the heap of dead bodies and I remembered these girls were the shirtwaist makers. I remembered their great strike of last year in which these same girls had demanded more sanitary conditions and more safety precautions in the shops. These dead bodies were the answer.

THE LOCKED DOOR!



INSPECTOR OF BUILDINGS!



- After the fire, new laws were passed to protect factory workers.

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