

Statement by Catharine S. Huntington,
66 Pinckney Street, Boston, Mass.
Charged with "sauntering and loiter-
ing" in front of the State House
on Beacon Street, Boston, August
22, 1927.

I would like permission to make a brief statement in explanation of my plea of not guilty to the charge which has been brought against me. The parade in front of the State ^{House} in which I took part yesterday was exactly like many other demonstrations which have been going on in Boston for a number of days. Many other defendants have been before this Court on similar charges. They have all been advised to plead guilty to the technical charges brought against them, pay the small fine and the incident would be considered closed.

I feel that it is time someone should protest against this legal subterfuge and make clear the exact status and the exact significance of the act for which I and others are here today. I entered that procession deliberately and with full knowledge that it would result in my arrest. I did not saunter. I did not loiter. I did not obstruct a public passageway. The cordon of police which surrounded the scene saw to it very carefully that the sidewalk in front of the state house was kept clear. When we started parading we were told politely that we had seven minutes. When the seven minutes were up we were assembled in front of the State House steps and then escorted by police officers to the Joy Street Station.

Under such circumstances, to plead guilty to the charge which the police have seen fit to bring against me would not only be false in fact but would deny the essential reason for the demonstration of which my act was an integral part.

I am an American citizen by inheritance. The name of my family appears on the Declaration of Independence. When the liberties which my ancestors established are endangered as they have been in Boston during these rece

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horrible weeks, I consider it peculiarly my duty to protest. The right of free assemblage is denied to citizens who wish to discuss a grave national issue. Boston Common is denied to those who would use it for the very purposes for which that Common was set aside and dedicated. Terrorism by the police replaces law and order.

Under these circumstances, I must exercise my rights as a citizen in the only manner which is left and make some demonstration of my sentiments in common with others who feel as I do.

If it is unlawful to walk in silence before the State House, carrying a card mutely voicing a great injustice then I am guilty. If it is unlawful to urge upon the public authorities in this manner, while there is still time to rectify a tragic mistake, the earnest wish of one citizen that the honor of the Commonwealth be saved, then I am guilty. It is is unlawful to hold an opinion which happens to differ from that of some of the public servants whose salaries my taxes go to pay, then I am guilty. If believing in the innocence of two brave and unfortunate men charged with a crime which almost the entire civilized world believes they did not commit, then I am guilty.

I don't believe that this is the sort of country which my ancestors tried to make, -- and that is why I walked in front of the State House yesterday.

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