

A Call to Montrose

With the Spanish influenza epidemic raging unbridled in our community, with between 75 and 100 deaths already, with five funerals in a day here, with six of our young and strong business men lost to us, with wives and mothers and children leaving us forever, and no telling from day to day where the epidemic will hit next and who it will take away—it may be your dear one or it may be mine—The Press begs of you people of Montrose to be up and doing to stamp out this terrible epidemic, this disease that is claiming such a heavy toll from our population, and The Press believes, in many instances, unnecessary toll.

The Press asks you to wake up and ACT—NOW—not tomorrow, but TODAY. It begs of you to take this thing seriously. If a band of bank robbers were to ride into town and rob a bank and shoot down one of the officials and perhaps in making their escape, shoot some more citizens, every man in town that had a gun and a horse or an auto would mount them and go in pursuit, and if they met up with the desperadoes they would shoot until they were laid low.

If a giant lion were to come into town and commence to devour every person he saw, likewise every man with the semblance of a gun would arm himself and go after that animal.

People of Montrose, listen! This influenza is a thousand times worse than bank robbers or lions. What are you doing about it—sitting serenely in your own homes waiting for it to strike you or your wife or your child. Yes, that's exactly what you are doing. And you cannot deny it.

The Press has tried to arouse you to the danger of this thing. It has appealed to you time and again to do something. Its appeals have been in vain. You have said, "O, isn't it terrible," when some one near and dear to you died, or some one of your friends passed on, and you have said, "Why don't they do something." But you, Mr. Citizen—what have you done?

The Press is almost discouraged—but as yet undaunted. We have tried to arouse you and it will try and try again until you do wake up. But meanwhile, the dead wagon is driving up to somebody's house every day in Montrose and removing the body of someone—five funerals in one day this week ought to make anybody THINK and ACT. We don't want the stigma of these deaths to fall upon our shoulders—we don't want a single other death to occur before we utter this solemn note of warning and CALL TO ACTION.

The Press believes it is high time that we are doing the very thing that has helped to control the epidemic in other places—THAT HAS SAVED LIVES. And here and now we want to see some things that in our judgment should be effectively carried out in Montrose AT ONCE to safeguard this city.

All public gatherings of any sort or kind should be stopped.

All schools should be closed.

All houses, residences and public places, where the disease is developed, should be tightly quarantined.

All business houses where a case of influenza is present should be closed until properly fumigated and the employees at that place placed in detention for a period of five days.

No person should be allowed to leave a residence where the disease is present unless they are properly fumigated, and one bearing must remain away until after the patient has recovered and the house has been properly fumigated.

Nurses should not be allowed to mingle with the public. Organize a visiting nurse department in charge of a trained nurse or nurses to guide the nurses in charge.

No person should be allowed to enter a store or other public place in Montrose without wearing a mask over their mouth or nose.

Any person coming into Montrose from the outside should be made to enter a house of detention for five days.

The people of the city should be ordered to remain in their own homes at night unless it is absolutely necessary to go out.

People should avoid crowds on the streets and when people are conversing on the streets or elsewhere they should remain three to five feet apart and be careful not to blow their breath in another's face.

These rules have been followed very largely in Gunnison and Delta, two of the towns in Colorado where there have been the smallest number of fatalities—Gunnison with two deaths at last accounts, and Delta with 20 at last reports.

These rules cannot be effective even if promulgated by the city authorities without the active backing and support of at least 50 men in Montrose—the backing of men willing to shoulder a gun if need be and make people obey—men willing to see that if the health officers arrest anybody for violating the regulations they will be backed up as one man in it.

In an informal way this matter was talked over by a bunch of ten men last night. They all agreed that the situation was desperate—that lives were being squandered here in Montrose—that something must be done NOW. Are there men enough in Montrose with BACKBONE, with NERVE, in the face of a desperate situation, men willing to go into the trenches and face the poisoned gas shot out from those who resist a proper and effective quarantine, to get back of the city authorities and push this thing thru TO SAVE THE LIVES OF OUR CITIZENSHIP.

And if the city authorities lag or are lax, to lead them in doing the thing imperative at this time.

There must be unity of action. The desperate character of the times demand it. Some rule or regulation may hurt you, may inconvenience you, may cause you to lose a little money for a few days—but it may save your life or that of some member of your family—or some other person's life just as valuable and precious to somebody.

The government valued in this war the life of a man worth \$10,000, and was willing to insure him for that amount. Was the lives of the six young business men who passed out a few days ago worth that amount apiece, or that mother, that wife or that son or daughter? If you lost one you would give all you have of this world's goods to bring them back to you.

If you and YOU and YOU believe it is worth while to stamp this disease out in this community, go to the court house tonight at 7:30 o'clock and there let it be known that you are back of some movement of this nature to the last ounce of blood, to the last dollar. Go with a determination not to let the death of another person be upon your shoulders. Go ready to put into effect some such rules as promulgated above—and back them to the limit of your ability.

You can help save lives tonight