

CAUSE FOR OPTIMISM

A Review of the Labor Situation That Should Stir Every I. W. W. to Action.

A fellow worker writes from an eastern city: "The war seems to have knocked the tar out of everything. Even the labor movement seems to be temporarily shot to pieces. The only question people seem to be interested in is the war, present and prospective."

Many more workmen and women can be heard talking in a similar strain. Too many of them seek to justify their own lack of activity by apparently bad conditions. Happily, the fellow worker quoted above is not of this type, for he sticks to the task of agitation and organization, wait or no war.

And there is every reason why he should. For the war shows no signs of relegating the class struggle to the rear. On the contrary, even in England, where the war rages more pronouncedly than here, the class struggle raises its head, to confound the plans of the military dictators and to press the demands of the workers for more pay and greater social recognition to the fore. The miners, in their demands for a war bonus, the London tramway workers, the Woolwich arsenal carpenters, the munition workers, and the steel and iron workers in their demands for more wages, in which the transport workers, both on rail and boat, have also successfully joined, show that even where flourishes, the class struggle will not down; in fact, goes on more virulently, despite it. No wonder King George is elevating a trade unionist to a high official position. There's a reason.

Just to indicate how the class struggle rages in England, despite war, read what the London correspondent of "The Iron Age" writes in his paper:

"Steel and iron wages are rising almost every day, but there is no satisfying the workers, and the entire industrial situation is steadily becoming one of the utmost gravity. Within the last day or two the government's committee of production has refused the Cumberland and North Lancashire blast furnacemen's claim for a war bonus in addition to the 22 1/2 per cent increase to which they recently became entitled under the sliding scale which is in operation in the hematite iron producing districts. The committee states that since last July the men have received advances aggregating 25 1/2 per cent."

Regarding these wage increases, Solidarity's Wall Street correspondent, "John D." writes:

"Wall Street" is busily damning the English attitude toward the workers.

Why? Possibly "our" capitalists fear the example here shown, and similar pressure on the part of domestic labor looking toward more wages and greater social standing. What is more, there is every reason to believe that conditions will tend to make it possible for labor to exert such pressure, in the not very remote future. European and South American dependence on this country for war munitions and finances, is gradually changing the labor situation here. As we write this, we have before us news items reflecting these facts: the big orders to the Bethlehem Steel Co., the American Locomotive Co., the Baldwin Locomotive Co., etc.; the New York conferences with the South American financial and commercial representatives, etc. Couple with these, the big exports of foodstuffs and metals, especially copper, and there is no doubt that labor is in greater demand now than it was during the past winter. And the prospects are that employment will be still more the rule in the future than it is now.

Especially is the demand for labor likely to grow with the entrance of Italy into the war. Already has the war shut off the supply of cheap Hungarian and Slav labor. The prospects are that Italian cheap labor will also be shut and drained off, especially when the reservists depart for "their" fatherland. The New York World discusses the unusual situation in these words:

"A LABOR SHORTAGE"

"As a result of Italy's entrance into the war, a transformation in the labor market as swift as that in foreign exchange seems impending.

The outbreak of war found the United States a debtor to Europe in immense sums, with the machinery of exchange in disorder and the stock markets of the world closed. A few months later the situation was almost magically altered, and the New World has a huge credit balance in the Old.

"Last winter unemployment was a common complaint in every industrial community. Idle men were a sad spectacle in all our large towns.

"Now another sudden change is predicted; there is talk of a 'labor shortage' if Italian reservists are called home. Business is increasing, factories are going up and metal, especially copper, and equipment and making improvements, the high prices of farm produce have accelerated sales of textiles and farm machinery. Only a sudden call from Europe for the Italian reservists is needed to set employers bidding for the services of employees, instead of the reverse.

"Of the two conditions, this is the one we should all rather see prevail."

Herein may be found domestic labor's golden opportunity to raise wages, improve conditions, and advance.

We need not wait for the future, however, for the class struggle to break here. The indications at this writing are that greater New York will soon be in the midst of another big garment conflict. The protocol between the cloak makers' associations and unions has been terminated and a strike seems impending. A gang leader, acting obviously for the bosses, is causing the arrest of union leaders in other needle industries; so that, taking it all in all, it looks as if the class struggle will break out once more in the metropolis; and that with a virulence heretofore unknown. Other struggles between capitalist and labor are either on or impending. Even the European war cloud may have a silver lining for domestic labor; there is no cause for discouragement. The war may be, superficially, making the class struggle impossible; but really it is laying the grounds that make it inevitable and successful.

(Continued On Page Four Cols. 1 and 2)

SOME I. W. W. EXPERIENCES IN IMPERIAL VALLEY

Authorities Plot to Drive Out Organization From That Section of California. An Appeal for Assistance.

(Special to Solidarity)

Brawley, Calif. In the latter part of February the constable of Brawley township shot a posse came to the I. W. W. headquarters and arrested every man who was there at the time some 17 in number, took them to jail and brought them before the city recorder. They were charged with no crime, but nevertheless were given the alternative of taking 60 days more of the jail or leaving town, all except four left town, but returned, some of them being released, that escorted them out, the other four remaining in jail two days of their release.

A week or so later they arrested another member, Smith by name, and gave him a sentence of 30 days on the chain gang. The next morning they took him out to work, but he refused; the marshal then chained him to a log and beat him, later taking him to the jail and chaining him to a cell with his hands above his head, and putting him on a diet of bread and water.

Right after this occurred, a member found out that the detective who was tracking the party in the murder case, were going to try to fasten the murder on some member of the I. W. W. It made no difference whom, just so he was a member of the organization.

Knowing the financial condition of most of the members owing to the industrial depression, the members of this local decided to send a call to some of the locals in this state for their aid, by concentrating those who were out of work and making a display of our strength. At this point, we could avoid a legal fight and its consequent expenses.

The day the telegrams and letters were sent out, a stool pigeon was beaten up, this same stool pigeon had been at the hall the day before and told some of the members to start something in behalf of Smith, thinking no doubt that we would try to fill their filthy jail. But to their surprise we did start something. Casey a Jeweler, and a former organizer for the Socialist Party, had Miles, the marshal arrested on a charge of inhuman treatment of a minor, the minor being Smith, thus forcing the district attorney of this county to prosecute Miles.

The night following the beating of the stool pigeon, the writer was arrested at 12 o'clock and taken to the assistance of seven detectives, taken to jail and given the maximum degree of three months for a day and released the next morning. Upon being released the writer stated to the writer that the detective, Marston, of Los Angeles, who had me arrested, had left town, but I found out later that he had been arrested on a felony charge.

The morning after the writer was arrested they arrested another fellow worker charging him in conjunction with another member who had been previously arrested, with felonious assault. At their hearing their trial was set for a week later. When the trial came up the stool pigeon was the witness for the state could not be found. Then the writer was arrested on a charge. When the trial was due the second time, neither the attorney for the prosecution or for the defense appeared in an appearance until 6 p. m. when the attorney for the defense dropped the charge against Miles, the district attorney was released and dropped the charge against the other two.

It may seem strange to the reader that we could force the powers that be to release our members. It is that one charge against Miles, but we had other evidence of a more serious nature against the stool pigeon, witnesses to convict him, so the district attorney said. Owing to the circumstances that one of our members in question was facing trial on a charge for which if convicted would receive a sentence of six months and he having a wife and three babies to support, he was put in case drop; but the marshal was forced to resign two days later.

Three weeks ago a young member of this organization was framed up on and sentenced to 30 days with out being given a jury trial when he asked for it; consequently he gave the judge his opinion on the matter in general and was given costs. (Continued On Page Four)

PREACHERS DESCRIBE COLORADO MINE CONDITIONS

Show How The Rockefeller Coal Company Dominates Life of Slaves and Other Residents.

Washington, May, 19. Militant ministers of the gospel familiar with conditions in Colorado and Wyoming, where the properties of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company are located, started today's session of the Commission on Industrial Relations, with the result that John D. Rockefeller, Jr., who has been here waiting two days to go on the witness stand, will not testify before noon tomorrow. The Rev. Daniel S. McKelvie, in charge of a Presbyterian mission at Sunrise, Wyo., did not conclude his statement until the commission adjourned this evening.

Dr. Eugene S. Gaddis, of the Methodist Episcopal church, formerly a camp minister in the Trinidad, Colo., district and later superintendent of the sociological work of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company, told the commission of conditions that would make him a "fighting parson." He said he did not believe in the miners' fight for resorting to violence.

"I would not punish the strikers who resort to violence," he said. "If I had the say they would go free. I have never known of a more despicable, more damnable than they had to meet. It's all right, but it's not right in fighting Colorado and justice under present conditions there is out of the question."

A MILLION SPENT IN STRIKE

At the conclusion of the fifteen months strike, Dr. Gaddis said, the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company had a surplus of about \$4,000,000, more than a million in fighting the strikers, while hundreds of thousands of miners and their families were actually suffering hunger and cold.

Dr. Gaddis charged the mine operators with compelling the miners to live in unsanitary places, multi-story tenements, and company stores, profiting indirectly through the saloon business, interfering with the management of the schools and playing politics "all along the line."

"The management of the mine companies endeavored to coerce the miners politically," Dr. Gaddis said.

"Well, I had an experience myself. Last fall I was told that if the Rockefeller company carry the election somebody would be out of a job, I don't think there is any doubt but that the Rockefeller company is the one of the officers of the mining company made the statement that, 'when the Rockefeller company is elected to chastise the American people he gives us a Democratic administration.'

Dr. Gaddis was discharged as superintendent of the company's sociological work early in February, he said, of the reports he was making on conditions in the mining camps.

"If investigating committees can be kept out of Colorado for six months," Dr. Gaddis said, "the shackles will be so riveted on the Rockefeller company that they will have a free fire of another strike to loosen them."

STRIKE IS A VICTORY

However, the witness said that while the last strike had been long and technical speaking, he felt that in reality a great victory had been won for the miners. He said that their return to the ground and were careful not to do anything to arouse public opinion against them.

A WOMAN REBEL DIES

Mrs. Lloyd, wife of Harry Lloyd, a well-known speaker of the I. W. W. who was arrested in the vicinity of Seattle and vicinity, died about 6 p. m. Monday, May 17th, of pneumonia probably contracted while on the general tour place at 4 p. m. on the 19th, about 150 attending at which the Red Flag and "Marshall's" were sung. An impressive talk was given by James P. Cannon, whose feelings were so intense as to almost cause him to break through the ranks of the crowd. He realized the imperative necessity of carrying the propaganda to the women of the working class, and was looking forward with eagerness to the next meeting, which was to be the Flynn meeting also, so it becomes known to us to get busy developing all the propaganda that we can get. Mrs. Lloyd was a rebel who worked, when ours is done.

THOMAS WHITEHEAD.

EMPLOYERS KNOCK OUT PROTOCOL

Protective Association Repudiates "Perpetual" Peace Terms, and Repetition of Battle by 50,000 is Feared.

(N. Y. World)

The protocol which went into effect in the cloakmaking industry in this city Sept. 2, 1910, and has become the model for industrial agreements all over the world was sent by Chairman Charles Heineman of the Executive Committee of the Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Protective Association to Benjamin Schlesinger, President of the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union, and to Elmer Rosenberg, President of the Board of Directors of the Cloakmakers' Union.

The manufacturers charge the union with bad faith and with picketing and shop strikes, in violation of the protocol. It was said last night that the employers are seeking an alliance with the United Cloak, Suit and Skirt Manufacturers' Association. This, it was said, might cause a repetition of the strike of 1910, which preceded the protocol, in which 50,000 garment workers were involved seven weeks.

MORRIS HILLKURT, COUNSEL TO THE CLOAKMAKERS' UNION, SAID LAST NIGHT:

"The protocol was intended to operate as a perpetual truce of peace between the manufacturers and workers in the cloakmaking industry. Under its provisions a joint board of sanitary control was appointed, composed of representatives of the manufacturers, the union and the public, and a method was provided for the adjustment of all disputes arising between employers and employees.

"The supreme instrument for the adjustment of disputes was a standing Board of Arbitration, of which Louis D. Brandeis was Chairman. The arrangement has worked smoothly five years and has been adopted by many other trades in this city and elsewhere. It has received the warm commendation of the United States Department of Labor, which has described its working in several special bulletins.

"The Protective Association, which has now terminated the protocol, consists of about 240 of the largest manufacturers in this city, who employ about 10,000 workers. The union numbers more than 50,000 members.

ARBITRATION MEETING OFF

"It is not expected that the termination of the protocol will immediately affect the relations of employers and employees in the industry.

"A meeting of the Board of Arbitration was to be held in the rooms of the Bar Association, this city, on the 23rd of this month for the purpose among others of passing upon disputes. Whether or not the board will meet will largely depend upon the determination of its members."

The correspondence leading to the annulment of the protocol was begun May 17, when the employers wrote, charging that the union had questioned the right of the employer to select his staff, to hire and discharge freely on the basis of efficiency, and to discharge for insubordination.

The employers also charged that the strike of A. Schwartz & Co.'s employees was in violation of the protocol, as was also the picketing there.

The union denied all charges except as to the Schwartz strike, and asserted that it had not sanctioned that strike and picketing. The union charged that the employers, in violation of the protocol, union the right of a discharged worker to complain against an unfair dismissal.

To this the employers responded yesterday, severing protocol relations.

TO SPEAK, OR NO TO SPEAK?

Workers of Detroit:—

A bad winter for the workers has passed, and a summer with plenty of work at good wages is supposed to have come. The work is plentiful there is no doubt (for those who are employed) but how about those for whom there are no jobs? Are we waiting for the year to end this year; and if we take into consideration that the cost of living is getting higher, the purchasing power of our few dollars is really lower at this time than at present. True, we have since the adoption of Eastern time more daylight to work in for the benefit of our employers—but where do we come in? We shall have, we are told, a ten hour workday in Detroit with pay corresponding to this low standard of proach unionism, respectively.

Fellow workers, what are you going to do about this? Be satisfied, contented, and depend upon the generosity (?) of your bosses to hand you something? To be sure, and you something? Taylor systems and hurry up and wait are all things as well as profit sharing systems that only work so that the company not only has more profit, but also has a better labor force. While profit sharing is a little more money it is not equal to the amount of energy and life time spent by them.

We believe that in this 25th cent. the workers have progressed to that extent where meek submission is no longer their general atti-

tude, and in accordance with this belief we propose to inaugurate among the workers of this city a movement for a universal eight hour workday with a corresponding increase in wages and generally improved working conditions, thus eliminating the overwork, premature breakdowns, depressing insecurity of employment, and the many other evils that are so prevalent. A healthier and more enjoyable life than is possible at the present time is to be attained only if we must get together into One Big Union, and like the strong cat men and the labor union in the car strike, we must act with the understanding that the I. W. W. talk unionism in the interest of one another.

In order to make it possible for the great mass of Detroit workers to organize themselves into a powerful union, we must be able to preach unionism on and off the job. In the past we have been denied the constitutional right to talk to our fellow workers in the open air. We put the question before you: Shall the I. W. W. talk unionism in the open air, at factory gates and at street meetings? Are you willing to listen and have us come to an understanding and mutual agreement of how to act in procuring more of the good things of life via the One Big Industrial Union rule? We are willing to be on our feet, as you wish us, or do you prefer to watch and wait in passive meekness for something to happen? We hope that most of you are men and men and not mummies. Let us know your views.

The temporary headquarters of the I. W. W. are at 445 Edward St.

