

GETTING BACK TO FACTS IN THE BIG STEEL STRIKE

American Public Policy as Now Defined Approves Recognition of Organized Labor.

By Chester M. Wright.

Judge Gary, chairman of the Finance Committee of the Steel Trust, says, concerning the strike:

"I believe our corporation is under great obligation to the general public concerning the issues involved in the present strike."

He also said:

"I will say for myself that questions of moral principle cannot be arbitrated nor compromised, and in my opinion such questions are included in the present unfortunate struggle."

And he added:

"I will only say that you know what the questions involved mean. You know full well that if the strike succeeded, it might, and probably would, be the beginning of an upheaval which might bring upon all of us very grave and serious consequences."

That was quite a lot for Judge Gary to say. It was quite a lot of words; also quite a lot of what is called sophistry. Bluntly, it was quite a lot of bunk!

"Under great obligations to the general public..." There is a REAL OBLIGATION to the general public—dear old General Public, which seems so often to be a general whose orders are not obeyed! But that REAL OBLIGATION to the public seems to mean nothing to the steel trust.

The real obligation is not what the judge has in mind. What he means to say is that the steel trust owes it to the public to fight trade unionism. He wants to convey the idea that the steel trust is under some kind of a sacred obligation to maintain a state of disorganization among working people.

There is no record that the American people have ever instructed the steel trust to fight the effort of the workers to unite and form unions. There is no record of any pledge asked of the steel trust to refuse to deal with organizations of workers.

And there never was any such pledge asked, of course.

And if the general public ever did ask the steel corporation to pledge itself to a certain line of conduct in dealing with labor, the steel corporation would do as it pleased, anyhow. It will doubtless continue to do as it pleases until it is COMPELLED to do otherwise.

Now, as to public policy in connection with organized labor, what does the record show?

It shows that Judge Gary is wrong, decidedly wrong.

Nothing that could be called a public policy was ever formulated in this country until—

(1) The Clayton Act became law, and

The British government does not consider it immoral to deal with labor unions. An agreement with union labor was about the first thing that the British government sought when war began.

The French government does not consider it immoral to deal with labor unions. It sought the co-operation of union labor long ago, and seeks it still.

The International Peace Congress at Versailles did not consider it immoral to deal with labor unions. It called upon labor to join in the work of formulating the treaty almost at the start.

The peace congress set up a special commission on international labor legislation, and President Gompers of the American Federation of Labor was appointed one of the American members of that commission. He was elected to be its president. A special labor section was inserted in the treaty of peace, the result of the work of this commission.

If Mr. Gary is right, then all of these governments have been highly immoral, and they have been so with the consent of the civilized peoples of the world. If he is right, then in the peace treaty there is to be found the crowning immorality of all—a special section dealing with labor and providing for regular international labor conferences, in which representatives of union labor of all the allied countries are to sit as accredited members.

But it will scarcely be contended by even Mr. Gary's most ardent defenders that his special moral code is right and the whole world is in error!

The world approves trade union organization. If there is a moral principle involved, it is established by the overwhelming opinion of civilized peoples.

U. S. ADMINISTRATION SEES MERIT IN BILL

Puts in Force Law Advocated by Union Labor Which N. C. Legislature Refused to Acpt.

(Special Correspondence.)

In the report of the Legislative Committee of the North Carolina Federation of Labor, made to the State Convention at Raleigh in August, attention is called to the defeat in the Legislature of what was known as the "Train Crew Illiteracy Test" bill. Labor people who are familiar with the facts, know that union labor was trying to protect the train crews and the public by securing a law requiring train operators to be able to read and understand train orders. The bill was the same as heretofore before the legislature for the past four sessions, being uniformly defeated by the railroad lobby. The bill was endorsed by all labor organizations, including Locomotive Engineers, Conductors, Firemen and Trainmen, and endorsed by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction. The same railroad lobby of the past was present, with the sidetracks around Raleigh filled with private cars. The Legislative Committee, to which the bill was referred, under corporate influence, turned the measure down, with only one dissenting vote. When the bill came up in the House, the same influence was in evidence, and the bill was defeated. The merits of the bill being called to the attention of the Director of Operation, United States Railroad Administration, and he being convinced, after giving the matter mature consideration, that the measure should be enforced, issued the following:

Relative to bill introduced in the North Carolina Legislature, requiring that men employed in train service shall possess certain educational qualifications:

It has been decided to adopt the following rule on all railroads under Federal control:

"On and after September 25th, 1919, men entering the service to fill the position of brakeman, flagman, baggageman, switchman and fireman, must be able to read and write, will be subject to and required to pass uniform examination, and will comply with the regulations governing the use of standard watches."

Labor's compliments to Mr. Prince, General Council Southern Railway; Mr. James H. Pou and the Legislative Committee.

PRICE OF BREAD GOES HIGHER

Retailers Add One Hundred Per Cent.

Chicago, Oct. 6.—Retail dealers today increased the price of bread one cent a loaf. The present price is eleven cents a loaf or two loaves for 21 cents. The bakers raised the price one-half a cent a loaf and the retailers added a full cent to the price charged customers.

FAYETTEVILLE EDITOR DISPLAYS IGNORANCE

Claims There is Practically No Labor Vote in North Carolina, and Criticizes Attorney Ritch

In an editorial in the Fayetteville Observer, dense ignorance is shown of present-day conditions in connection with the labor union men in the State. The editorial is in criticism of Lawyer Ritch, attorney for the Textile workers. In its comments on Mr. Ritch's candidacy for Congress, in event Mr. Webb is not a candidate, the remarkable statement is made that "THERE IS PRACTICALLY NO ORGANIZED LABOR VOTE IN NORTH CAROLINA," and that "North Carolina, up to this time, has been blessed with immunity from the disturbing efforts of scheming political leaders."

The Observer claims to have been founded in 1817 and that E. J. Hale is President of the company that publishes it. One would suppose, that under ordinary circumstances, certainly under such educational facilities as the State has furnished in the last few years, that there would be more evidence of knowledge of present-day conditions displayed by the paper's editor. It is indeed surprising that such an astute (?) politician as E. J. Hale should remain asleep "at the switch," especially as Cumberland County has a brand new army camp, although it is realized that the county of Cumberland as well as Fayetteville, the county seat, is noted for its ancient history, and its paper is evidently of an ancient vintage, for it appears not to keep up with present-day events. If it did, its editor would know that there are some scared old-time politicians in the Ninth District, that now has more than 20,000 union labor members who hold in their hands the political balance of power, and can defeat either political party at will.

The editor seems to have located some scheming political labor leaders in the State. In this he is in a class to himself, for no other paper has announced such a find. Fayetteville and Cumberland County have a goodly number of union labor men, certainly enough to "shake up" some of "labor leader" kind, if they so desired. The editorial mentions the "good laws" the State has; presumably it means for the protection of the masses. If such is the case, Charlotte might be advised as to them, for days and weeks have passed since innocent spectators were killed and maimed, shot in the back, and the law is such, so it is claimed, that no investigation has been held to fix responsibility upon those that did the shooting. Some of this good law should be passed up to Solicitor Brock, for he and the numerous lawyers somebody is paying to assist him, have only progressed to the point where the promise is made to investigate the ill treatment of cotton mill operatives. This is as far as the "good laws" for the protection of labor people have gone in Stanly County, and in Charlotte these "good laws" have reached the point where Judge Shaw has "caught up" with Marvin Ritch in quoting the Bible.

Sleep on ye patriarchs, if you wish, for you can "cut no ice" if you were awake.

TEXTILE WORKERS' UNION WINS RECOGNITION

Shutting Down of Mills Failed to Scare Members Into Giving Up Their Cards.

Nashville, Tenn.—Two large textile mills in this city posted notices early in September that owing to unrest and the information that employees were about to join a newly formed union of the United Textile Workers, that the mills would remain closed until the unrest terminated, in the hope of preventing the formation of the union. This action failed to discourage the workers, who completed the union. An agreement has just been reached with the representatives of these mills that not only recognized the union but reinstated all employees who signed the charter application and those who have since joined the union. The fight of the textile workers was stubbornly contested and has resulted in a complete victory.

GOT QUICK RESULTS.

Detroit, Mich.—Quick results were obtained by the members of Sheet Metal Workers' Union No. 105 when all but two employers surrendered to their demands for an increase to \$1 per hour after two days' strike. The former scale was \$0 cents.

CAPITAL AND LABOR SIT IN CONFERENCE

Secretary Lane is Chairman of Industrial Conference Called by President Wilson.

Washington, Oct. 8.—The Industrial Conference called by President Wilson to meet in Washington this week has made little headway so far beyond perfecting an organization and appointing committees.

Secretary Lane was elected permanent chairman. In his speech of acceptance, he stirred the delegates, representing Capital, Labor and the Public, to great enthusiasm by declaring that the high purpose of the gathering made failure impossible in the effort to harmonize industrial relations in this country.

A committee of fifteen was named to recommend for or against all resolutions introduced, as follows:

Representing the public: Thomas L. Chubburne, A. A. Landon, H. B. Endicott, Charles Edward Russell and Miss Lillian Wald.

Representing capital: S. Pemberton Hutchinson, John W. O'Leary, John J. Raskob, Herbert F. Perkins and J. N. Tittmore.

Representing organized labor: Samuel Gompers, Frank Morrison, Matthew Wall, W. W. Mahon and L. E. Sheppard.

The employers' group was the only one ready, under the rules with any business, Frederick P. Fish, of Boston, offering a resolution declaring the need of the industrial situation was increased production, adequate compensation for services and just return on capital and that each delegate should be guided in his actions by the good of the country as a whole, rather than by the interests of his particular group.

Secretary Lane, in his address as chairman, said he was sure the gathering would be able to work out a solution of industrial troubles growing out of reconstruction.

"We will work out a way because it cannot be that there is no way," said Mr. Lane.

"I wish that it were possible that the President might have given you the stimulating influence not only of his presence, but of that true word which he always speaks," continued the chairman. "That is denied now, but possibly it may not be denied. The word comes to us fresh and cheering from the White House that before your deliberations are through it may be possible that you may yet hear directly from him. Whether that is so or not, you are to go on with your work in the spirit that I believe is in you."

"Men say that this problem of labor and capital is unsolvable. You cannot say that to me. In my department in the Bureau of Patents, and each year, as I read the reports, I see that in America we produce more inventions each year than the two largest countries of the world, and as I read those figures I say to myself: 'A people that have that practical imagination, that amount of genius, cannot be met with a problem that, in time, they cannot solve.'"

No Class in America.

"Men talk in this country of class and a class war. Why, gentlemen, there can be no class in this land. Who is to be the next President of the United States? Whoever he is, you will find that he is some boy that years ago worked for wages; and there can be no class where such a thing is possible.

"I look upon this conference as the greatest and most important extra-legal body that has been called in this country, certainly in our time. There are some here who have doubted its success. Why, gentlemen, this conference is bound to be a success. Its extent is not to be measured by resolutions that come from it by platforms or by program, or by bits of machinery that it may invent or reveal. The spirit of this conference is its justification."

"We will draft here a declaration of dependence, not of independence; a declaration that we are united one with another, and that we can not live in isolation; that we must join hands together not for our own sake alone, but for the greater sake of our country and of the world."

CHARLOTTE WILL VOTE ON RECALL OCTOBER 21

Incumbents and Candidates Both
Running on "Law and Order"
Platform.

signed petitions for the recall election only 655 were registered to vote.

Candidates for the three offices have not filed their notice of entrance into the race yet; but the law requires that this be done 10 days before the election. Mayor McTinch and Commissioners A. H. Wearn and George A. Page will stand together, and will be opposed by J. Frank Flowers, W. H. Hall and D. L. Kistler.

Those opposing the present commissioners have formed what is called the "citizens' law and order league." This is the first public move in the way of a campaign that has been made by either party. However, the present commissioners have announced that their platform will be the preservation of law and order; so that both sides claim that victory must be for them if law and order is to be preserved.

ENACTS ANTI-STRIKE LAW.

Montgomery, Ala.—The Alabama legislature has rewarded workers of this State who fought in the great war for liberty and democracy by passing a law against strikes. A penalty of \$1,000 is provided. Opponents of the law declare that if it is enforced to the letter it will be impossible for any group of Alabama workers to suspend work.

Section two of the bill is as follows: "Any person, firm or corporation, who enters into any agreement, combination or understanding with another or others that the party so agreeing shall not engage in or aid in carrying on public service, or who so agrees or conspires with others to prevent, retard or impede third persons from engaging in or working at any public service, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor."

WHERE IS RALEIGH'S FAIR PRICE COMMITTEE?

Reports From Other Points Denote Activity While Raleigh is Silent.

Asheville, Oct. 7.—The price of meat in Asheville has decreased from five to 10 and 12 cents per pound during the past few days and local meat dealers are announcing the fact to their patrons in special circulars sent out by mail.

In one instance a local dealer states that he has reduced the price of best grade breakfast bacon from 65 cents per pound to 55 cents per pound sliced. On hams, best grade, this dealer reports he is now selling hams which formerly brought 65 cents per pound, sliced, at 60 cents per pound, sliced.

Beef prices have also been lowered and the present prices are quoted at: Porterhouse steak, 40 cents per pound; sirloin, 40 cents; round steak, 35 cents; rib roast, 35 cents; rump roast, 30 cents; boiled ham, 75 cents.

Prices on many other articles of food have also been lowered in Asheville during the past few days. While the names of the federal fair price committee, recently appointed by the State food administration, have not been given out, it is believed that this committee has been at work for several weeks now, holding meetings with local dealers.

Baltimore, Oct. 7.—The following retail price list has just been issued by the Fair Price Committee, following a conference with 20 or more of Baltimore's leading grocers:

Lard	26 to 34c.
Lard Compound	27 to 30c.
Cabbage, 2 lbs.	2 to 4c.
Chuck roast	16 to 23c.
Whole cross rib	22 to 37c.
Cut cross rib	24 to 35c.
Shoulder	16 to 25c.
Sirloin steak	32 to 34c.
Porterhouse steak	35 to 38c.

MACON UNIONISTS CARRY CITY ELECTION

Anti-Union Candidate for Mayor, With Entire Ticket, Defeated.

Macon, Ga.—Advocates of the unionization of the city employees, including policemen and firemen, have scored in probably the first political contest in which this question was made a leading issue.

The candidate for mayor on a platform opposing unionization of the city's employees and his entire ticket, with one exception, were defeated.

CUMMINS' BILL WOULD HANDCUFF WORKERS

Under Provision of Measure, if Two Men Show Quit They Could Be Jailed. Conspirators! Conciliation Would Be Dead Letter.

(By Staff Correspondent.)

Washington, D. C.—Hearings on the Cummins railroad bill before the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee has developed that it is the most drastic measure ever proposed against labor. No analysis yet given publicity has brought out its most glaring features. Samuel Gompers startled the Senators when he declared in opposing the bill:

"When during the stress of war the government was compelled to take over the railroads their employees were free men. Now it is proposed that the railroads be given back to their private owners with the employees handcuffed."

Here are some of the most drastic provisions:

The bill provides that the government shall arbitrarily make the wages and fix the hours and working conditions for the employees of private companies. This is the method proposed:

A board of five members, to be known as the Railway Transportation Board, shall be appointed by the President. This board has the final say in all matters concerning wages, hours and working conditions. The eight-hour day can be changed at will by this board. A committee on wages and working conditions is provided for to be composed of an equal number of representatives of employees and officials. This committee (which is "annoyed" for the real purpose) will hear all requests for changes in wages and conditions. Whatever the members agree to is passed on by the board. It can veto or approve any recommendation of the committee. The board's decision is final. There is no appeal from its action. No provision is made for mediation, conciliation or voluntary arbitration.

After the decision is made the employees are "handcuffed," as President Gompers charges. If two or more of them object to the decision and agree to quit work each can be fined \$500 or imprisoned, or both, for conspiracy.

The Adamson law provided that railroad employees should have a basic eight-hour day. It is still the law. The Railroad Transportation Board, which will be the supreme court in all matters regarding wages and hours, can make any change at any time. There is no appeal. It is to be presumed that all members of the board will be anti-labor. Even if one represents labor he will be in such a minority he can make no successful protest.

The bill also provides for a "company union." A certain portion of the earnings are set aside in a fund to be known as the "employees' welfare fund." President Gompers testified that "welfare work" adopted by non-union employers was "Hell-fare work." He also charged that its intention was to encourage or induce employees to not join the brotherhood unions.

It was hinted several times in the hearings that the motive behind such a drastic measure was to force the labor people to agree finally to a compromise establishing compulsory arbitration. Senator Cummins, author of the bill and chairman of the interstate commerce committee, appeared determined to force the bill through, however. During President Gompers' entire time on the stand the Senator did not ask a question. He defended the bill, however, when President Gompers charged that no penalty was provided for officials going on strike.

The most dangerous part of the bill is the provision that the wages, hours and working conditions shall be determined by the board of five members. The decision of the board must be obeyed. There is no middle ground. It is the court of last resort.

"The bill if enacted into law will not stop strikes," said President Gompers to the committee. "It will be the cause of strikes." He then explained how New Zealand, the "country without strikes," has found its arbitration law, which forbids strikes, not possible of enforcement.

"Labor must be given the right to work out its own destiny," he said.

"The country is anxious that the danger of a general strike on railroads shall be removed," said Senator Underwood. "What should be done to make it impossible for such strikes?"

"Nothing," replied President Gompers.