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THE LABOR WORLD.

FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, ECONOMIC REFORM AND POLITICAL PROGRESS.

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AWAIT WILSON'S DECISION ON RAILROAD CONTROL

ATTEMPTS TO RAISE WAGES OF POSTAL EMPLOYEES FAIL

No Provision for Increase Is Contained in Postoffice Appropriation Bill—Federal Workers Desire Legislative Action This Session.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Congressman Borland of Kansas City, whose hobby is the compelling of government clerks to work longer hours, brought up his favorite amendment in the house last week when the postoffice appropriation was under debate. Chairman Moon of the committee on postoffice and post roads, who had the appropriation bill in charge, declared that Borland's amendment ought to be rejected. It was.

On the other hand, all attempts to get a general permanent increase in the pay of postal employees, as part of this bill, were defeated by Moon and the administration leaders. They said that special legislation on higher pay for the employees ought to be brought in.

The National Federation of Postal Employees is asking that a bill introduced by Representative Clyde Kelly of Pittsburg, calling for a general increase of pay amounting to 25 per cent, be adopted. Some of the postal clerks and letter carriers, on the other hand, insist upon the Madden bill, which applies only to those two branches of the service but reorganizing the standard of wages, be put through. It is likely that Madden will re-write his bill, so as to take in the railway mail clerks and the rural carriers along with the city clerks and carriers, and to ask for a bigger increase in pay than his bill of last year proposed.

Government clerks in the other departments, organized as the National Federation of Federal Employees, are trying to get a general salary increase, their demands ranging from 5 per cent raise for the best paid men to 20 per cent raise for the men and women in the less responsible jobs. They will secure a list of the members of the house and of the senate who favor, and those who oppose giving the employees a living wage. Like the postal workers, they are anxious that their case shall not be put off by legislative tricks until the end of the session, so as to permit the members to escape a vote before the next election.

RAIL WORKERS FAVOR WARTIME CONTROL BY U. S.

Brotherhoods See Wage Increases While Investors Can't Lose Either.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—The brotherhoods of railway employees went on record Thursday in favor of governmental control of the railroads during the war.

A. B. Garretson, president of the Brotherhood of Railway Conductors, called at the white house, but did not see the president. He talked with Secretary Tamm, who made a memorandum of his remarks for Wilson.

"Contrary to popular opinion," said Mr. Garretson, "the brotherhoods are in favor of governmental control of the roads during the emergency."

The declaration of the brotherhoods follows closely upon the conference between the president and the vice-presidents of the four organizations Thursday. These brotherhood officers called at the white house convinced from what the president said to them that the railroad employees have everything to gain and nothing to lose in the establishment of governmental control.

The brotherhoods are satisfied that one of the first acts of the president after he takes control of the roads "would be to raise the wages of the employees, possibly to the full extent they recently demanded of the carriers."

Investors Won't Lose.
If the revenues of the roads under government control are insufficient to produce the guaranteed return to the stockholders the deficit will be made good by the government. In that way a part of all of the wage raise will be charged to government account as a war cost. Unless the rates are raised the wage increase will be a burden inherited from government control after the war.

It was disclosed, however, that the president contemplates raising rates whenever he deems such increases necessary.

Under the system of government control the interstate commerce commission would be subordinated to a government advisory to the transportation administrator principally on questions of rate making. The commission would investigate and advise for or against an advance of this or that rate. Then the administrator would act as he saw fit.

The railroads war board is going ahead with its plans for unification while awaiting impatiently the president's plan of government control. It is believed certain that the war board will be given a high place in the scheme of operation proposed by the president, probably closely associated with the federal administrator, so as to carry out the president's idea of private operation under government control.

TEXAS WAITERS STRIKE.
DENISON, Tex., Dec. 20.—Waiters and waitresses have suspended work to enforce a nine-hour day and \$6 a week against a work day of from 12 to 16 hours for \$4 a week.

BAKER OPPOSED TO UNIVERSAL MILITARY PLAN

Secretary of War Hopes Future Will Relieve Burden of Armament.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Secretary Baker's annual report for the war department made public Saturday constitutes only a brief historical review of the year, and so that it may be devoid of information for the enemy shows no recommendations, no detailed information of the transportation of the army to France or any army plans for the future.

Secretary Baker does say, however, that he does not favor universal military training as a regular national policy.

"The department has not sought and does not seek legislation on the subject," he says, "chiefly for the reason that the formation of a permanent military policy will inevitably be affected by the arrangement consequent upon the termination of the present war. Civilized men must hope that the future has in store a relief from the burden of armament and the destruction and waste of war."

"However vain that hope may appear in the midst of the most devastating and destructive war in the history of the race, it persists—perhaps because we are encouraged by the analogous substitution of courts for force in the settlement of private controversies; perhaps because all the perfections of nature teach us that they are the product of processes which have eliminated waste and substituted constructive for destructive principles.

"When a permanent military policy, therefore, comes to be adopted, it will doubtless be conceived in a spirit which will be adequate to preserve against any possible attack those vital principles of liberty upon which democratic institutions are based, and yet be so restrained as in no event to foster the growth of mere militarist ambitions or to excite the apprehension of nations with whom it is our first desire to live in harmonious and just accord."

CUTTERS INCREASE RATES.
CINCINNATI, Dec. 20.—Clothing Cutters and Trimmers' union No. 100 has raised wages \$2 a week. These workers are affiliated with the United Garment Workers.

WOULD CONSCRIPT WEALTH.
MIDDLETOWN, Ohio, Dec. 20.—Conscription of wealth was favored by Charles A. Hilt, in an address before the Ohio State Bankers' association. "The government would be right," he said, "in conscripting every bit of capital in this country necessary to win the war. When the government has the right to conscript young men to the army, often requiring the young man to give up his life there is no one who can deny its right to take the property necessary to carry the war to a successful conclusion."

WILL REPORT DIRECT TO PRESIDENT ON TWIN CITY STREET CAR CONTROVERSY

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn., Dec. 20.—The special labor commission which is investigating the controversy growing out of the Public Safety commission's order forbidding the wearing of union buttons by Twin City street car men will make no recommendation for a settlement of the trouble until after it reaches Washington, where a report will be submitted to President Wilson.

Labor leaders here believe that a complete settlement of the street car difficulties will take place in a short time as the result of the visit of the Federal mediation board. They expect a recommendation from the board that will bring about a virtual victory for them.

ARIZONA COPPER BARONS REPUDIATE AGREEMENT WITH LABOR COMMISSION

PHOENIX, Ariz., Dec. 20.—The Arizona Labor Journal says the copper companies in the Globe-Miami district with one exception, have failed to live up to any part of the agreement put into effect by President Wilson's mediation commission.

"There are hundreds of men idle in the district. The Inspiration company, at the last checking, had in its employ 443 men, against about 1,500 during normal times," says this paper.

The so-called "Loyalty" league is again working with the copper barons and it is impossible for a miner to secure employment unless he is a member of that copper-controlled organization.

Applicants for work are first asked: "Are you a member of the 'Loyalty' league?" If not the worker is told to sign an application blank. A known unionist is transferred to Miami, if he lives in Globe, and vice versa, in the hopes that transportation will discourage him and cause him to quit his employment.

AGAIN INDORSES CROSSER BILL

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Secretary of Labor Wilson, in his annual report, again indorses the Crosser colonization bill. This measure proposes that the returned soldiers and other workers who desire to earn their living from the soil shall be assisted to do so, by the development of agricultural land projects and land projects under the direction of the secretaries of agriculture, labor and the interior. Each project would be a separate community, and would be cleared, drained and improved of a wholesale plan by government forces before the farming operations were started. The forest projects would also be separate communities, arranged so as to let the men living there permanently do all the lumbering from the forest in their region, and having enough woods to give them steady work at this industry.

Crosser believes that by enabling the lumberjack to have a steady job in one place, at decent pay, the man will have a home and become active as a citizen, and the I. W. W. will not get a hold on him.

WOMEN CONVICTS BEING SOLD FOR 15 CENTS A DAY

Vicious Practice of the Dark Ages Still Obtains in Alabama.

BIRMINGHAM, Ala., Dec. 20.—Women convicts in this state are sold to contractors for 15 cents a day and are housed in filthy stockades while candidates for the governorship talk of the "gradual" removal of this glaring evil, declares the Monthly Bulletin of the Alabama state federation of labor.

This publication says: "Under a recent date line, Escambia county, state of Alabama, rises to remark that Escambia county has made a most advantageous contract with a certain employing concern, where the county has leased its women convicts for two years for the munificent sum of 15 cents per day. Such things make us wonder if we are still in the dark ages, with all the blind ignorance of human instincts, with all the intolerant cruelty of the old savage slave dealer and buyer, and this happened in the enlightened state of Alabama. Women sold into slavery to the highest bidder, to do whatever the bidder desires; work, slave, toil through the days; rest in stockades, filthy and unfit, for the nights; truly a picture upon which every Alabamian should look with pride; and candidates for the governorship favor the 'gradual' removal of convicted persons from the mines and lumber camps."

"For years and years labor has fought this system of slavery in the state. Governors have promised to abolish it; legislatures have promised to abolish it; the people have demanded its abolishment, but when it comes to weighing the human soul against the almighty dollar, the state wins every time. Poor, indeed, must be that state which has to sell its legal slaves into involuntary servitude that it may use the revenue thus obtained to pay its teachers, to pay its officers, to pay its expenses in other ways, to pay the jurors who send the unfortunate to the mines; to pay the judges who pronounce sentence.

"And not a man offers for office in the state but who will wink at this inhuman traffic in human souls; not one of them will come out flatly for the abolition of this traffic."

ORDER TO TAKE OVER ALL RAILROADS EXPECTED SOON

President Given Full Power By Act of Congress Last April—Transportation Congestion Result of Failure to Regulate Roads.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Will President Wilson give the order to take over the railroads and have them run under a single government control? An affirmative answer to this question is expected within a week, says Gilson Gardner, Washington journalist.

Private operation of the railroads has broken down. When most needed, the roads have ignominiously failed. The food, fuel, and war needs of the country are cut off by the collapse of transportation.

The competitive instinct, a desire for dividends and a general habit of inefficiency are responsible for the failure of railroad operations.

The managers continued to run the roads for freight receipts rather than for freight movement. They were true to their banker directors rather than to the public.

Ever since the war began—even before the United States formally entered it—the railroads have been confronted with the possibility of being taken over by the government and run under government control. This is what happened in the other warring countries.

Congress foresaw the necessity for reposing this power in the president and did so in the act passed last April.

The banking and investing interests in possession of the railroads have fought off this threatened government control. Their representatives have promised everything. There was no need, they said, for government intervention. They were patriots and were willing to do voluntarily what they did not want done to them by force of executive authority.

They would co-ordinate, pool equipment, exchange cars and rolling stock and work out a degree of efficiency which would meet every demand. They got together and passed resolutions and appointed committees which were to do the business.

WANTS SOCIAL INSURANCE BY GOVERNMENT

Favorable Report on London's Plan to Have Commission Report Next Session.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—Unanimous favorable report has been given by the house committee on labor to Representative Meyer London's joint resolution which provides for a Social Insurance commission which shall report next December. The advisory bill of the government establishing old age pensions, sickness insurance and unemployment insurance for the wage-workers of the country. The commission would consist, as does the secretary of labor, two representatives of organized labor and two employers. London believes that it would be able to report by the time the next session opens, and that its report would favor the immediate beginning of payment of old age pensions to the "soldiers of industry."

He argues that the government would do well to prepare, with some form of unemployment insurance, to share the burdens of the individual worker when the war is over, and when millions of men come back to claim their old jobs. If these jobs are filled in the meanwhile with women, someone will have to suffer before the readjustment is completed. The government, which called these men away from their jobs in the first place ought to help them to pay their board and lodging until they can get back to work.

OPPOSE CHINESE LABOR.

TACOMA, Wash., Dec. 20.—The executive board of the Washington state federation of labor has recorded its protest "against any and all proposed amendments to existing immigration laws that will admit of any greater freedom for entry of Chinese labor." The unionists also declare against any attempt to reduce present living standards.

CONGRESS SUBMITS DRY AMENDMENT TO STATES; SETS SEVEN-YEAR LIMIT

WASHINGTON, Dec. 20.—The constitutional amendment for national prohibition was Tuesday finally submitted by congress to the states for ratification or rejection within seven years. The senate completed congressional action by accepting the resolution as passed by the house, 47 to 8, without a roll call.

Senator Borah objected to accepting the house amendments, contending that congress had no authority to specify the time in which the amendment is to be ratified, and that the constitution gives no authority for providing that prohibition shall become effective within one year after being accepted by the states.

FIVE COMMITTEES NAMED.

As Judge McChord of the Interstate Commerce commission has pointed out in his report just made to congress, there have been five committees since November, 1915, appointed by the railroads and having headquarters in Washington with the supposed purpose of uniting rail transportation and securing an efficient use of the carrying agencies.

"The first two of those committees," says Judge McChord, "were given no real authority although the Interstate Commerce commission was advised by the executives that they had been given full power."

The failure of this first effort was set forth in an official report of the I. C. C. entitled "Car Shortage Investigation." That report points out that certain railroads were unwilling to take instructions from this board. A committee of railway officers of full power was recommended.

Had No Real Power.
The third committee to unit the railroads and solve congestion problems came to Washington in January, 1916, but it soon developed that this committee, like the others, did not have any real power.

In February a fourth committee took the place of this committee, but this committee did no better.

Then on April 11 the American Railroad association formed what they called a special committee on national defense with authority in an executive committee which they called the railway war board.

This committee promised everything and like the others did little or nothing. The local railroads continued to compete with one another and the big divisional systems did not do the one thing needed: Open up terminal facilities to other roads or interchange rolling stock and cars with other systems.

"Orders Pooling."
The only effort made to pool equipment came as late as Nov. 24 when this committee announced that it had "ordered a pooling of equipment on the eastern railroads only."

Conditions of traffic have become worse daily. Bad conditions have been aggravated by the division of governmental authority arising out of the various so-called "priority orders."

Under the law of April 11, the war and navy departments were given power to order their shipments ahead of all other shipments.

Then came the food law which gave Herbert Hoover power to put food shipments ahead of other shipments.

Then came the fuel control law, which gave Administrator Gledhill authority to put fuel ahead of other shipments.

Then came the car shortage amendment to the interstate commerce act, which gave the commission authority to order priority of any cars they might designate.

Then came the so-called priority legislation and the appointment of the Lovett Priority committee with authority to order specialized priority at the discretion of the chairman.

So altogether there were five separate and independent departments of the federal government each claiming authority under acts of congress to order priority of shipments. The result was congestion and confusion to the superlative degree.

The president is the only person who can help in this situation. He has full power.

Christmas---1917

THE ONE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND SEVENTEENTH anniversary of the birth of Christ finds the people of the United States engaged in a titanic struggle to preserve those ideals upon which this nation was founded.

The call to colors has been heard in many homes; the future response will affect many more, yes all, either directly or indirectly.

While as yet the grim realities of war have not crossed our thresholds, with the solemn realization that many Americans will be called upon to sacrifice their all for the cause of freedom, there is a foreboding at this Christmastide, unknown for many years, which emphasizes the close ties of kinship and brings a greater appreciation of the love for our fellow men.

Christmas of 1917 has a fuller, more comprehensive meaning than those preceding it. The practice of gift-giving has given way to a spirit of sacrifice; to sharing ours with the needy; to aiding those who are enduring more than their share of suffering and sorrow; to make known our faith in God's teaching that we are brothers, one and all.

The present is abundant with opportunities of self-sacrifice, of consecrating our lives to the service of humanity. Many have already taken advantage of these opportunities—and many will as they come to see the light of understanding.

Christmas cheer is more essential this year than ever before—the kind which lightens the burdens of those whose hearts are heavy because of the absence of loved ones from the firesides.

To those serving Our Country—and that should include all, either in military or civil pursuits—The Labor World extends its Christmas greetings, with the fervent prayer that Christmas, 1918, may find the dove of peace abiding on this mundane sphere.