

BEGIN INDUSTRIAL DRIVES TO OBTAIN SCHOOL CHILDREN

Florence Kelley Protests Attempt to Lower Educational Standards.

NEW YORK, May 30.—The industrial forces that were fighting child labor legislation before the war are now mobilizing to push down the legal standards protecting children, and they plead patriotism and military necessity.

Their attack takes various forms. In some states they are attempting to put through a three-semester school year so that the children may be driven through school some years faster and put to work in the factories before the usual time. In other states they are attempting to shorten the school year. The attempted demoralization of education by converting the school children into labor power before their time is almost universal.

Farm Work Pretext. "No sooner did the United States enter the war," writes Mrs. Florence Kelley, national secretary, Consumers' league, in The Class Struggle, "than bills were introduced in state legislatures to exempt children, boys and girls alike, from school attendance in the spring and fall from the 12th birthday on, ostensibly to work on farms, the summer vacation being prolonged for this purpose to cover the months from April 1 to Nov. 1.

"In the propaganda for thus robbing the children of the birthright of school life which is theirs as future American citizens, eminence was achieved by John Finley, commissioner of education, New York state, who, in May, 1917, supported an evil bill to so exempt children, and sailed for France soon after Governor Whitman had signed it, delegating to subordinates the task of drawing up the regulations for the guidance of local school authorities and the safeguarding of the children which the new law itself made his duty.

New York Schools Demoralized. "In consequence of the agitation in this matter and of ambiguous instructions from state officials, schools in rural sections of New York were generally demoralized. The standard of elementary education was lowered for great numbers of boys and girls, and many educational authorities of the richest and industrially most highly developed state in the Union were revealed as the enemies of the children.

"The younger the children whose educational opportunity has been cut off, the most irreparable, of course, is their loss."

RAILROAD WAGE RAISE REGARDED REALLY AS CUT

Chicago Federation of Labor Wires Protest to Secretary McAdoo.

CHICAGO, May 23.—The recent finding of the railroad wage commission, according to reports, which gave a wage increase of \$285,000,000 over the scale of 1915, is not satisfactory to union labor.

This fact was made manifest Sunday at the meeting of the Chicago Federation of Labor, where, upon motion of a delegate from the railway machinists, a strong protest was adopted against putting the report into effect.

During the discussion it appeared the railway unions are opposed to the scale embodied in the report. Their contention is that wages and the cost of living have both increased so greatly since 1915 that wage increases based upon the 1915 scale are not, in fact, increases at all.

Means Lower Pay. It was asserted that the award, based upon 1915, would in actual fact grant more classes of railroad workers, especially the lower paid, a

LABOR'S ATTITUDE IN WARTIME

By JOHN D. BARRY, in The Milwaukee Leader.

"Don't you agree with me that now is the time of all times when labor ought to be loyal to the country?"

"Labor is loyal. The workers are as loyal as any other class. In fact, they are far more loyal than the men who are taking advantage of the situation to put additional burdens on the people."

"What men?" "The men in big business, of course and some of the men in small business. Virtually all those who have a chance to do exploiting. They see that the people at large are at their mercy and they show no mercy. It is this situation that is making labor sorer and sorer."

"But we are all suffering from it, aren't we?" "Some people can afford to suffer. In fact, to call the sacrifices they have to make suffering would be absurd. Their surplus is a little less, that's all. It is the workers that do the hardest suffering, those who live close to the margin of danger all the time. Do you wonder that we are furious?"

"But some workers are making much more money now than they did before the war broke out, in fact, a large number of workers." "So they are. But in most cases the increase in wages is outstripped by the increase in prices. This fact is so plain that the workers see it, every one of them, and they feel that they are being fooled. They say: 'What is the use of getting more wages and being sped up to the limit when the money doesn't buy as much as our smaller wages used to buy?' Before the war those things were so cleverly managed, they were so subtle in their operations and the competition for jobs was keen that only the more intelligent workers understood. Now they are talking about it to one another and sneering and getting mad when they see their employers making fortunes out of the war. And they don't feel any better when they are told that the war is going to be won by labor. If it really is to be won by labor then let labor receive the proper consideration."

"But that consideration is a matter of adjustment, isn't it? If the workers would agree not to strike—"

"And thereby give up their most effective weapon, the weapon that represents their solidarity, the source of their strength? Yes, that would be a fine idea!" "You must admit that in some parts of the country labor is making a very, bad showing just now. It can't help being prejudicial. It looks very selfish and inconsiderate."

"What I want to tell you something that you don't understand and that those people don't understand. The workers to a man would be willing to work for \$30 a month if all the other workers were put on the same basis."

"What do you mean by all the other workers?" "I mean the people who are not generally considered workers and who profit by the work of others, the exploiters, the men of big business and small business, the profiteers. Cut out profiteering and labor will go to the bat."

"But you are asking for something unreasonable. It amounts to a revolutionary change in the social organization at a most critical time." "Yes, the time is altogether too critical to be the means of making the rich richer and the poor poorer. The war is too serious and too much the concern of all to be used as a means of exploitation of the many by the few."

"The government may be driven to conscripting labor." "What do you think the result would be?" "It would bring the workers to their senses."

"I suppose a good many people like you think so. Let me give you a pointer. Conscription of labor would simply make the workers more discontented and more rebellious than they now are. It would drive them into sabotage. It might even drive them into open revolt. However, there is a kind of conscription that would make a big hit with the workers."

"What is that?" "Conscription of wealth, which means conscription of the enormous labor products that have gone to capital in the past and that are going in staggering amounts to capital in the present as a result of the war. They have resorted to this kind of conscription in Canada and in England. Why shouldn't we profit by the example? We are surely coming to it and the sooner the better."

INDORSE WOMAN SUFFRAGE. PITTSBURG, Pa., May 30.—Woman suffrage was indorsed at the annual convention of the Pennsylvania state federation of labor.

President Maurer was re-elected. In his opening address he stated that Pennsylvania has to its credit fewer strikes proportionately than any other industrial state.

F. B. LOWE PASSES ON. DETROIT, Mich., May 30.—A. B. Lowe, former president of the International Brotherhood of Maintenance-of-Way Employees, died in Windsor, Ont., opposite this city, after a long illness. Deceased was president of the maintenance-of-way in a territorial from 1908 until 1914, when he resigned because of ill health.

smaller wage than they are receiving at present. It was also asserted if the finding should be adopted by Director General McAdoo, most skilled machinists now employed by railroads would leave for other and better paid fields.

The resolutions of protest, wired to McAdoo, also asserted if this scale were put into effect it would mean acute labor disturbances in the Chicago district. They charged the purpose was to discredit government operation of the roads. The protest demanded that increases be based upon the 1917 scale.

Blow to Living Standard. The telegram to Mr. McAdoo stated the plan proposed was a "blow at the standard of living of the workers in the railroad and all other industries."

The message also said: "It will bring the whole proposition of government control into disrepute and force the employes to work for the return of the railroads to private control."

Resolutions were adopted calling upon the American Federation of Labor convention at its session in June to arrange for the organization of the employes of the steel industries. William Z. Foster, leader of the agitation, was elected a delegate to urge the adoption of the plan.

The meeting called upon Senators Lewis and Sherman to aid the passage of the equal suffrage resolution.

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WORKERS AGAINST STRIKES. WASHINGTON, May 30.—The federal department of labor reports that for the week ending May 13 three strikes and 10 controversies were adjusted and that labor conditions are steadily improving. "Conciliators for the department everywhere report," it is stated, "that men are anxious to use the machinery of the department so as to avoid stoppage of work and the sentiment is strong for the adjustment of disputes by arbitration without the stoppage of work."

PROBE CONDUCTORETTES. NEW YORK, May 30.—District Attorney Lewis of Kings county has started a grand jury investigation into the conditions which surround the women conductors employed by the Brooklyn Rapid Transit company. The charge is made that working conditions and the long hours are undesirable and that men can be secured for this work.

FRANK RIST IS DEAD. CINCINNATI, May 30.—Frank Rist, editor of the Cincinnati Chronicle, died in a local hospital, after several weeks' illness. Deceased was one of the foremost labor editors in this country and was steadfast in his adherence to the principles of organized labor. He was well known in the councils of labor and served in numberless capacities to further the cause of trade unionism.

Scene from "The House of Glass," at the Lyceum All This Week.



SOLDIERING IS SAFE, COMPARED WITH BEING BABY

Casualties Are Greater Among Infants Than in Allied Armies.

NEW YORK, May 30.—Being a baby in the cradle is more dangerous than being a soldier in the trenches, according to S. Josephine Baker, director of the Bureau of Child Hygiene of the New York Health department.

"There are four casualties in the allied armies out of every 100 men engaged in the course of the year," said Dr. Baker at a meeting of the health committee of the mayor's committee of women on national defense, opening the campaign here for Federal Children's year which aims at aid in saving the lives of 100,000 children in the United States.

"In the United States, 12 babies out of every 100 die in the course of the year," she added. "So that one way of putting it would be to say that it is three times safer to be a soldier in the trenches in this horrible war than to be a baby in the cradle in the United States."

"It is not only a necessity but a patriotic duty to see that our children are well cared for," she continued. "We are spending our manhood in the war but we cannot afford to lose the next generation. The children of this

generation will take up the affairs of the world in the period of reconstruction and carry it on.

"In Europe they have seen fit to save more babies and to devote more time and money to child welfare work, than to anything else except fighting."

Conservation of child life in the allied countries is aided by their systems of maternity insurance, it is being pointed out. Health insurance, as proposed in the United States and now being officially considered in nine states with a view to legislation as a need accentuated by the war, includes maternity benefits with medical, nursing and obstetrical care and cash benefits to safeguard motherhood and childhood against suffering, impaired strength or fatality.



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