The Butte Daily Bulletin

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SATURDAY, AUG. 16, 1919.

SIGN UP!

Come down to the Bulletin office and sign a monthly pledge :-: :-: :-:

SEEKING A SCAPEGOAT.

Much exercised over the fact that the membership of the metal trades crafts turned down by an overwhelming vote a report by a committee favoring a certain form of settlement of the controversy over wages and working conditions, the company press is looking for some one or something to blame.

Reasoning as they always do, from the premise that workers blindly follow leaders and always adopt the recommendations of their officers, it is not to be wondered at that the company press has overlooked a very significant fact; a fact that is causing considerable worry to corporations who heretofore believed that it was only necessary to subsidize a few "labor-leaders" in order to control the membership.

The thing that has escaped the notice of the wiseacres of the capitalist press in their search for a scapegoat upon whose head they can pour the vials of their wrath, is the fact that the workers are today, in a large measure, doing their own thinking, and paying but little attention to the so-called leaders.

We are very much afraid that the company press will fail to find any one individual who carries the membership of the metal trades in his vest pocket, and that if there is any odium attached to the act of striking to enforce demands made on powerful corporations, such as the mining companies of this camp, the blame must fall on the men who are willing to make the sacrifices that a strike necessitates, the overwhelming majority of the membership of the Metal Trades council who voted to strike rather than accept a contract that did not meet with their approval.

The real reason for the insinuations made by the company press reflecting on the membership of the metal trades is not hard to find. It was expected that the hypocritical campaign conducted against the profiteers, the vociferous and oft-repeated cry of "reducing the cost of living" raised by the copper press would succeed in befuddling the minds of the metal tradesmen and befogging the real issue—the right of the workers to determine for themselves the conditions under which they sell their labor power.

The mobilizing of hordes of politicians, the publishing of page after page of slush about the efforts that were being made to reduce living costs, the threats of prosecution of profiteers—none of which have been fulfilled, the recitation of the methods by which prices are controlled in this state, without ever mentioning the fact that wherever one picks up the trail of the profiteer in this state it ends on the Sixth floor, all were attempts to make the workers forget the wage question.

The campaign having fallen rather flat, the only result being the almost complete disruption of the company political machine, someone is due to lose a fat job and we should not marvel if the courtesans of copper capital are seeking assiduously for someone to whom they can pass the buck.

In view of the pitiful wails that go up daily from the subsidized sheets, it is not too much to say that passing the buck is now the favorite indoor sport of many gentlemen with soft hands and hard faces.

ANOTHER BUNK INVESTIGATION.

Announcement has been made from the county attorney's office that Butte is to be invaded by a third investigating committee, which, like its predecessors, will probably sit around for a few days, use up many columns of newspaper space telling what they intend to do and then depart, having failed to do anything except reassure the profiteers in the latters' efforts to grab all they can while the grabbing is good.

During the last seven months Butte has been treated to visits of two different investigating committees and, while the investigations served to further prove what the people already knew—that they were being robbed and jobbed right and left, frontwards and backwards, by a ring of baby-robbing, flag-waving, mercantile bandits—apparently the only result of the findings of the two committees has been a lot of oratory for political purposes and legislative action which further places the consumers in the clutches of the food and necessities pirates.

And now, within a few weeks of the departure of the latest investigators, who, after being shown conclusively that the people of the city were being held up by the food jobbers, through exorbitant prices, reported to the special session of the legislature that they had "found nothing," the people of Butte are to have another, and probably equally inocuous investigating committee foisted upon them.

With a blare of trumpets the advance notices of this coming "vodeville" investigation state that the investigators are empowered under the new law to investigate conditions, and to fix prices. If any person in Butte is simple enough to believe in the new market commission's power to fix prices, then it can be said that there is at least one person out of Warm Springs who should be there.

That the profiteers themselves realize that the new market commission, the membership of which, by the way, is the state public utility commissioners, is without power to force down prices provided the profiteers desire to hold them up, is already evident from the fact that the dealers of the state have announced they will refuse to testify before any hearings of the commission.

But suppose the commission, under the supposed power granted it by the new law, is permitted to subpoena and force the profiteers to appear before the commission? What then? Surely no law has ever been invented that will prevent a witness from lying, and since the commission is not a court of law or of the commonly accepted form of justice, although the commission and those present may know positively that the profiteering witness is lying, he cannot be tried for perjury. And that such profiteers as do appear before the commission and testify will lie, is a foregone conclusion, since a man that will steal bread from the mouths of babies will not hesitate one minute about lying in order to continue robbing and in order to perpetuate his ill-gotten gains.

It is our guess that if the market commission, after its investigation in Butte sets any prices, the prices will be perfectly satisfactory to the profiteers, since, in the commissions' action as public utility officials in permitting the Butte Electric Railway company to twice raise its fares in a few months is any criterion, it is a practical certainty that the market commission will do nothing but accede to any requests the profiteers may make.

Let's have an end to this official bunk! Let's have some action by the housewives of the city.

THE PROFITEERS SPEAK.

According to the local capitalistic press, Secretary Austin of the Butte chamber of commerce is in receipt of a letter from the chamber of commerce of the United States which shows that the membership of that organization voted against federalization of railroads by an overwhelming majority, only 11 of the clubs out of 1,432 voting favoring government ownership.

The fact that the national chamber of commerce is against government ownership presents nothing surprising; the real surprise comes in the fact that there were 11 chambers of commerce which favored government ownership.

And now that the chambers of commerce—organizations of profiteers, all of them—have decided they do not want government ownership of railroads, we suppose the inference is that the people generally will play "good doggie" and abide by the profiteers' decision.

It seems a pity that members of the lower house of congress intervened yesterday and prevented Representative Hardy of Texas from "rubber stamping" the physiognomy of his fellow representative, Blanton, also of Texas. Blanton called Hardy a "mere rubber stamp," and perhaps he is, but it is hardly possible that Hardy could be any more of a failure as a representative of the people than Blanton. Again, we say, it's a pity they didn't let Hardy go to it.

We have been unable to verify the rumor that the A. C. M. officials, through Jawn D. Ryan and his friend, Woodrow, had secured the parole of Lieut. "Hardboiled" Smith and that the lieutenant was now on his way to Butte to take the place in the ranks of company gunmen made vacant by the recent retirement of Ed Morrissey. Frankly, we don't believe it. Smithey's brutality might have been all right for the army, but it's too mild for a really accomplished Butte gunman.

Mooney Strike Reaffirmed

By CASSIUS V. COOK.

No one knows until Sept. 1 whether the Mooney protest strike of July 4 has failed. It will be a success, if Tom Mooney and young Billings go free before Sept. 1. If they are not freed, a still-larger section of organized labor will strike again and again. The second Chicago Mooney convention re-affirmed its decision to strike Sept. 1 to Sept. 5.

Such was the unanimous decision of the delegates who met in Chicago Aug. 10 at the call of the Chicago Mooney Defense league. This convention was held in the fine hall of the new $40,000 property of the Machinists' union at 113 South Asbland street.

Delay since July 4 in giving justice and fair trials to Mooney and Billings has added still more fuel to the flame of discontent. Mr. Dunsmore, the department of labor official, has appeared before congress with his dictaphone report. It was held unprintable because of the foul language of Attorney Fickert, who prosecuted Mooney and Billings by frame-up methods.

But there are more in prison than Mooney and Billings. Labor is interested in fair trials for all. Debs is serving 10 years for expressing his ideas. Haywood too is in for 20 years, for the same reason. Thirty per cent of organized labor in Chicago has decided to demand freedom for all class-war prisoners—Mooney, Debs, Haywood and all others.

One lone speaker in this convention sounded the strident note that there must be no more protest strikes for Mooney unless the majority of all organized labor would strike . . . . Boos and cat-calls! The whole convention seemed to arise to its feet to explain that all lost causes are won by the militant minority—to act—not by waiting for the majority.

Labor's international officers have abandoned the Mooney case to the "higher-ups in the labor movement" was charged. The Mooney convention was itself represented almost entirely by the rank and file—300,000 workers in all, of which 100,000 are in Chicago. This growing section of labor proposes not to rest until all unjustly imprisoned are free. And this regardless of their union affiliation or political beliefs. Social consciousness is surely growing in labor's ranks.

The One Big Union proposition pushed to the front by the Winnipeg strike and present day industrial developments, was discussed and a resolution adopted for investigating and presenting to organized labor the means and methods by which this idea can be effectuated. United solidarity is an ideal that American labor, divided into 113 craft unions, does not now present. The merchants' and manufacturers' chamber of commerce always show a solid front against labor—hence the necessity—it was argued, for the One Big Union.

The Mooney case has fathered international complications, so says President Wilson. This three years of delay in giving justice to Mooney and Billings bids fair to see formidable national questions "brought to the bat."

The Chicago Mooney defense forces in convention assembled now demand freedom for all class-war prisoners and urges labor everywhere to increase their demands likewise. They endorsed also a resolution looking to the practicalization of the One Big Union idea. They condemned the presence of allied troops in Russia and interference with the governments of Russia and Hungary and demanded that the allies cease such interference.

They protested against race riots and programs instigated by the dominating class. Chicago decided to strike Sept. 1, and will surely join in the one-day protest on Oct. 8 and again in November if Mooney and others are not freed meanwhile.

Whoever has complained that the issues in the Mooney case were "not big enough" may now contemplate the foregoing formidable developments. Labor now demands freedom for its own and self-determination for the nations of the world.

Such was the second Mooney convention held in Chicago Aug. 10.

SENATORS FAIL

(Continued from Page One.)

the treaty is what the democrats must concentrate their efforts on.

At the president's suggestion therefore, Hitchcock will begin a drive next week in a speech to the senate against acceptance of the amendments. While it has been generally recognized for weeks that there are not enough votes in the senate to make general textual amendments, the president is said to feel that the slightest possibility of amendments to any section must be removed before he will consider reservations.

The president's attitude broke off virtual negotiations which promised to develop into a compromise on the "milk reservations." Negotiations were begun by some of the democrats without consulting Wilson.

Senator Lodge said if it becomes apparent that a majority of the senate are willing to accept the "milk and water reservations," he will vote for a rejection of the treaty, rather than accept such a program.

TURKEYS AND

(Continued on Page Four.)

open up.

The mayor promised meat for the market by 1 o'clock. He made good.

Mr. Dietsel failed to get his butcher, but the Independent Market stepped into the breach and rushed a supply of fresh beef and two cutters down to Mercury street, where they have worked busily ever since weighing out and wrapping up meats.

No definite explanation has been found for the disappearance of the vegetables which were on the way to Butte last evening. Many surmises are made, of course. One man stated that the loaded trucks were intercepted by agents of the profiteers and the whole stock of vegetables bought up at fancy figures. He said that he knew this to be true, but refused to mention any names.

BODY TO PHILLIPSBURG.

The body of Patrick Loughrin, who died here as the result of an operation in a local hospital, was transported to Philipsburg yesterday. Brief funeral services were held in the chapel of Duggan's undertaking parlors by the Rev. Father Leschner.

The End of a Perfect Day

The Farmer and the High Cost of Living

FROM NONPARTISAN LEADER.

News dispatches from Washington state that government officials, working at the high cost of living problem, have decided that the profits made by farmers of the northwest are at the basis of the entire problem. The plan that is now being discussed, it is reported, is to buy the entire wheat crop at the guaranteed price of $2.30, to sell it again to the millers at $1.50, the government pocketing the loss, as is being done in Great Britain, and to expect that reduced bread prices, brought about by this method, will bring down the cost of living sufficiently to end the problem.

If this plan is carried out the wheat growers of the northwest will have been made to bear the brunt of price-fixing for the second time. In September, 1917, when the price was fixed on wheat at $2.26, wheat was selling in the open market at $3 and in some cases for higher figures. The southern wheat, having been harvested earlier, had sold around the $3 figure, but when the northwestern wheat came on the market the government price was established and it ruled as a maximum as well as a minimum.

Much the same course seems likely to be followed this year. As this is written No. 1 northern is selling in Minneapolis for $2.75. It appears probable that the bulk of the southern crop will change hands at around this price. But if the government plan is followed the northwestern crop will be bought in at a forced price of $2.30, or 45 cents a busel below the fair market.

Northwestern grain growers did not protest against the lower price fixed in 1917. At their monster convention in St. Paul in September, 1917, they passed resolutions commending the plan of price-fixing, to hold down the cost of living and reduce war profits. They demanded, in addition, only that prices be fixed on the articles that the farmer buys as well as what he sells.

But the farmers have been disappointed in expecting the cost of living to be held down by general governmental price-fixing. Today the fixed price for wheat, considering all conditions, averages about the same as two years ago. But mill feeds have gone up 25 per cent as compared with 1917. Bread is higher. Steel has increased in price, carrying with it increased prices for every kind of farm machinery. The farmer's necessary "flivver" automobile is higher, and difficult to get at any price. Rents have increased, both on farm and city properties. Meat is enormously higher.

Producing Cost Now Over Price.

Is $2.75 wheat in the Minneapolis market a figure giving the average farmer a large profit?

Two years ago a group of representative farmers worked out the cost of an acre of wheat in North Dakota at $23.95. Here are their figures:

Seed (1½ bushels at $3)	$ 4.50
Discing	1.00
Plowing	3.00
Harrowing twice	.70
Drilling	1.00
Twine	.33
Cutting and shocking	3.00
Threshing	1.05
Hauling	.25
Taxes	.32
Insurance	.80
Fertilizer	4.00
Interest (8 per cent on $50)	4.00
Total	$23.95

In planting the 1919 crop, seed wheat possibly was procured at a slightly lower figure, but this saving would be more than counterbalanced by increased prices for labor in all items.

That the acreage cost above is close to correct is shown by the fact that actual costs on the big Cloverlea farm in eastern North Dakota, which has had an accounting system kept as accurately as a bank's for a long term of years, were $22.47 per acre, while Commissioner of Agriculture Hagan of North Dakota reported $26.56 as the average cost.

The average yield in North Dakota, over a long term of years, has been slightly more than seven bushels to the acre. At seven bushels to the acre the cost per bushel would be $3.82.

Taking a yield of 10 bushels per acre, the cost per bushel would be $2.39. This is just about what the average farmer in North Dakota is this year getting for his wheat, after deducting from the Minneapolis price freight and handling charges and considering the fact that the average North Dakota wheat will grade between No. 2 and No. 3 rather than No. 1 northern.

North Dakota's crop probably will not average above seven bushels to the acre planted. Drouth-stricken Montana will not average as much as seven bushels to the planted acre. The average farmer in both of these states, even under present prices, when all cost elements are taken into consideration will lose.

What will be the probable result of holding wheat down to the minimum? Our wheat farmers will be short of money. They will not be able to buy as they should. Next year they will plant less wheat because of this year's losses, and fundamental conditions will be more disturbed than now.

We cannot afford to decrease farm production. In fact, we have soaring costs of food largely because we have prevented the farmer from producing all that he might.

On many commodities the farmer gets about 35 cents of what the consumer pays; on others he gets as high as 50 cents out of the dollar; and in general he would not average 40 cents.

The immediate remedy for food prices lies, then, not in attacking the farmer's 35 cents, or in government subsidies, by selling wheat to the millers at less than it cost to produce, but in tackling the other 65 cents which goes to bring farm products from the farm to the people. We must completely reorganize our distribution system so that it will operate efficiently and at cost or near cost. Unless we do this even the raid on the farmer's 35 cents will do the consumer no good because the middleman will take it up.

Farmers' Share in Loaf of Bread Less Than Half.

According to studies made by Dr. E. F. Ladd, the well-known North Dakota expert, a barrel of flour will make 300 loaves of 14-ounce bread. If the farmer received an average of $2 a bushel for his wheat in 1917 and 1918, his share of the proceeds of this 14-ounce loaf of bread was 3 cents. The consumer, on the other hand, paid 8 to 10 cents. If the farmer were to get as much as $3 a bushel for his wheat, his share in the cost of the loaf would be less than 4½ cents.

It is thus evident that the proposed reduction in the price for wheat to the farmer of 45 cents a bushel would make little appreciable difference in the cost of a loaf.

The following figures show the big margin between farmer and consumer even more strikingly:

300 loaves of bread at 10c	$30.00
Mill feeds in four bushels, 30 pounds of wheat	1.50
Total	$31.50
Four bushels, 30 pounds of wheat at $2.75	12.37
Margin	$19.13

In this margin lies the immediate possibility of relief from high cost of wheat products and the same holds true of other farm products. We must increase production rather than diminish it and we can do that only by making production profitable to the producers.

The wheat farmers are not profiteers. The real profiteers, who are responsible for the high cost of living in effect today, are companies like these:

Armour & Co., average profits before the war, $4,746,632; in 1916, $20,100,000; in 1917, $21,295,563; in 1918, $15,247,838.

Standard Oil of Indiana, average pre-war profits, $14,687,696; in 1916, $30,043,614; in 1917, $25,408,931; in 1918, $23,263,879.

United Fruit company, average pre-war profits, $4,978,043; in 1916, $11,226,208; in 1917, $13,037,955; in 1918, $14,953,074.

The Central Leather company made an average of $3,472,804 before the war; last year it made $6,476,434.

The United States Steel corporation made before the war an average of $63,585,777; last year it made $125,318,368.

OPEN FORUM

This column is conducted for and written by Bulletin readers. If you have any suggestions to offer for the betterment of conditions in which the public in interested, the Bulletin offers you this opportunity for their expression and interchange of comment with your neighbors and friends. Properly to protect this Open Forum, all communications must be signed with the name and address of the writer, but anonymous signatures will be used in the column if requested. Address all communications to the editor of the Bulletin and please be brief and to the point.

To Bulletin Readers: Frequently contributions for this column are received by the Bulletin, but cannot be published because of the fact that the writer has signed an anonymous signature, but has withheld his true name and address. Oftentimes these communications bear on subjects of grave importance that are of great interest.

It may be stated here that no communications which do not bear the signatures of the contributors will be accepted for this column. The fact that we require all contributors to sign their contributions with their true names and addresses does not necessarily mean that the signature will be printed. An anonymous signature for publication of the Bulletin and as an indication of good faith we require that the writer make his or her identity known to us.—The Editor.

THE AMERICAN LEGION.

Editor Bulletin: This is just a little tip. It may be an old one, but, nevertheless, it is a good one.

Why not look up the American Legion and the interests that are behind it? It claims to be an organization for the benefit of the returned soldier.

But after reading several of the American Legion weeklies, the pages of which are rife with propaganda for the suppression of I. W. W.ism and bolshevism, I, for one, think that there are deeper motives than the benefit of the soldier behind it.

A RETURNED SOLDIER.

Butte, Mont., Aug. 16, 1919.

ABOUT BABY ROBBERS.

Editor Bulletin: My friend happened on a pretty illustration of the results of the activity of the profiteers, or "baby robbers," as the Bulletin calls them. He was riding on a gardens car one Thursday afternoon and the car was filled with children. Taking out a bag of peaches, he proceeded to enjoy the luscious fruit, but he was not able to do it. So many envious eyes were turned in his direction that he passed the bag around and he was only sorry that he did not have a big sack full with him. Evidently those children very seldom got more than a smell of fruit, which is not surprising, when the high prices charged for that "luxury" are considered.

In later life, among the pleasant recollections of childhood, looms large the mangificent appetite enjoyed and the royal taste of the edibles that disappeared in large quantities to satisfy that magnificent appetite, and to lay the foundation for the development into healthy, vigorous manhood. Of this the profiteer deprives them in his insane race to pile dollar upon dollar. But then, business is business; and a dollar made is always a dollar. Yours,

A SYMPATHIZER.

Debs' Daily Message

"Workingmen are in an overwhelming majority in every township, county and state in this nation. You declare you are in favor of united action, but still you don't unite. You unite under certain conditions within your union, you get together upon the economic field to a limited extent, but you have yet to learn that before you can really accomplish anything you have got to unite in fact as well as in name. The time is coming when workingmen will be forced into one general organization. The time is coming when they will be compelled to organize on the basis of industrial unionism."

So-called war profits taxation has not prevented these concerns from pocketing enormous war profits. No move has yet been made to attack these excess earnings, but again the farmer is about to be penalized.