

# NEWS OF OLYMPIA LABOR ORGANIZATIONS

BY FRED HUDSON, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE OLYMPIA TRADES COUNCIL

## UNIONS AND SECRETARIES.

**American Federation**—Frank Morrison, A. F. of L. building, Washington, D. C.  
**State Federation**—Charles Perry Taylor, P. O. Box 1285, Tacoma, Wash.  
**Olympia Trades Council**—Fred Hudson, 503 Columbia.  
**Label League**—Mrs. S. E. Kohler, 208 West Fourth.  
**Allied Printing Trades Council**—F. L. Satterlee, 315 East Fourth.  
**Blacksmiths**—Wm. P. Elke, Bookbinders—Al Galloway, 315 East Fourth.  
**Carpenters and Joiners**—C. A. Gloyd, 212 West Third.  
**Clerks' Association**—Mrs. Bernice Kelly, 1114 Main.  
**Cooks and Waiters**—E. C. Fields, Olympia Cafe.  
**Electricians**—Claid Wolf, 1801 East Fourth.  
**Journeymen Barbers**—Paul Werner, 519 Main.  
**Machinists**—C. VanVlack, 354 Franklin.  
**Meat Cutters**—S. L. Kaler.  
**Musicians**—Elmer Jones, Postoffice.  
**Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers**—P. M. Kendrick, 315 Twelfth.  
**Plumbers and Steamfitters**—C. S. Ziegler, Hancock street.  
**Printing Pressmen**—H. L. Wortman, 503 Columbia.  
**Shoemakers**—C. B. Young, 115 East Fourth.  
**Shingle Weavers**—Morton Bissell, care Olympia Shingle company.  
**Shipwrights**—Ship Carpenters and Joiners—C. D. Adams, secretary, 102 Quince street; C. V. Ely, financial secretary; J. A. McCaughan, business agent, 702 East Fourth.  
**Stage Employees**—Al Galloway, 315 East Fourth.  
**Steam Engine Drivers**—A. J. Stocks, 417 Tenth street.  
**Teamsters and Chauffeurs**—Lott McGonigle, 205 1/2 Franklin.  
**Typographical Union**—Geo. L. Levy, Recorder building.

## LOCAL LAUNDRIES AND LABOR UNIONS CLASH

It will be recommended to the Olympia Trades Council that the two steam laundries of this city be placed on the "Unfair List," and that arrangements be made to divert work to Seattle or Tacoma, union laundries.

This decision is the result of a three and a half hours' conference between proprietors of the two local steam laundries and a committee of three, representing the Steam Engineers' Union, the Teamsters and Chauffeurs and the Trades Council, held last Saturday night.

The committee presented to the laundry owners an agreement providing for an 8-hour day for engineers and teamsters, at a wage of \$4. It was proposed that the questions relating to laundry workers be settled through an adjustment board. The contract provided for settlement of all disputes through arbitration.

The laundry owners offered no counter proposal, but held it to be a necessity of their business that present conditions continue. They demand the right to employ inefficient and unskilled men to tend their engines and boilers, at a daily wage of \$2 to \$2.50, with a day's work consisting of 10 or more hours, according to the demands of the accumulated business of the laundry. They did not agree, however, to assume any responsibility for serious accidents that might result from such a policy. An explosion, of course, would be laid to the carelessness of overworked and underpaid employees. The drivers, too, must work an unrestricted number of hours, according to the demands of trade, and forget any idea of added compensation for long hours of work; and any change in the hard conditions of the laundry workers would be nothing less than business suicide.

The pleas of the laundry proprietors were fully set forth during the conference, and may be boiled down to these conclusions:

The laundry owners are being constantly importuned for contributions to the Red Cross and other schemes for war support, until they have come to regard such contributions as a serious financial burden.

Soap has doubled and trebled in price by the barrel, as has bluing, which, as an afterthought, they declared they were unable to obtain at any price.

Cotton cloth, for padding the mangles and like uses, had enormously increased in price.

The increased cost of groceries, they insinuated, were visionary, one proprietor citing that his grocery bill, for himself and wife and two children, was never over \$14 a month.

Customers are careless and indifferent about unnecessary and aggravating loss of time in the collecting and delivery of laundry, and continuously growl and find fault, making enforcement of reasonable regulations in collecting and delivery impracticable.

The split-penny practices of their customers is annoying in the extreme, and these practices were illustrated by a stated instance of one customer who had called with five collars, found that the price for four would be 10 cents and for five 13 cents, and thereupon had extracted the one collar from the package and

carried it home in her muff in order to save the half cent.

The laundry business is skirting the abyss of bankruptcy at all times, and the proprietors yearn to unload upon the trades unions. They are willing, they claim, to sell their plants to the unions, but they are unwilling to correct labor conditions at the behest of organized labor.

And the workers are actually not worth the wages they are paid, according to the laundry owners. They soldier away their time and are careless and inefficient—a check against one woman worker on one shift showing that the amount received in payment for work turned out in this shift was but 10 cents in excess of the sum paid the worker.

Drivers waste their time in gossip with customers, slip out and get a hair cut or a shave whenever the spirit moves them, and otherwise fritter away the time of the boss. The boss himself was tolling earnestly about 24 hours a day in order to make ends meet, and they could see no good reason why the employees should not do likewise.

Facing all these burdens, of "cheap skate" customers and "bone-head" employees, the laundry owners can see no way to recoup themselves except by holding down the wage scale, although it was admitted that a new and increased price list of laundry work was now being issued, and that about a year ago prices of work had been increased.

And with regard to the wages paid and the hours of labor: It was brought out in the discussion that laundry workers are employed all the way from two to twelve hours a day, according to the desires of the employer, with the minimum wage rate of \$9 a week as the maximum scale and the hourly rate of 18 1/2 cents applying to short time work. Workers are compelled to appear for work at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, secure two, three or more hours, and as a weekly wage get the munificent sum of \$3, \$4 and up to \$9.

This practice is justified by the laundry owners on the theory that it is simply a spending money proposition on the part of the workers. And this was clinched by recital of an instance where one woman had insisted upon taking a day off when the laundry had plenty of work on hand and really needed her services.

The committee argued that such claims by employers were puerile; that inefficiency, if permitted, was properly chargeable to the director of the business; that small reward for good and faithful service and unreasonable and vicious conditions of employment had some bearing on the matter; that union labor does not approve of or assume to protect inefficiency, but believes in good work for a living wage, with reasonable working conditions; that if the public was so lacking in order and regard for the rights of others as asserted, it was chargeable to lack of system upon the part of the laundrymen themselves.

The agreement presented by the unions is as follows:

This agreement, entered into between the Laundry of Olympia and the Olympia Trades Council and respective branches thereof.

The Laundry to be known as the party of the first part and the Olympia Trades Council and branches to be known as the party of the second part.

Article 1. Eight hours shall constitute a days work. Six days shall constitute a weeks work. There shall be a regular pay day each week.

Article 2. The party of the first part agrees to hire none but members in good standing with the union that has jurisdiction over the branch where the vacancy may arise. Providing, however: that the union can furnish such help, and in case the union involved cannot furnish the help the employer may hire whom he desires. Providing, however: that the person employed shall make application to the union and is eligible to membership therein.

Article 3. The party of the first part agrees that it will not discharge any employee on account of personal prejudice or on account of activity in union work.

Article 4. Both parties agree that during the life of this agreement no strikes or lockouts shall be resorted to, but if a grievance shall arise it shall be settled by a board of arbitration. The board to consist of four members—two employers and two employees (employees to be one from the Trades Council and one from the union involved). If it is not possible for this board to settle the grievance, they shall call a fifth party, who declares himself to the satisfaction of both parties to be unbiased and impartial, and the decision rendered by this party shall be final and binding to both parties.

And it is further agreed that at no time during the life of this agreement shall the party of the first part enter into any other contract or change any part of this agreement with any branch of the party of the second part without the unanimous consent of all involved.

Article 5. This agreement shall be in force when signed and remain in force until a change is desired by either party, in which event the party so desiring the change shall give thirty days' notice in writing of such desired change.

The party of the second part agrees to give its moral support in every possible way to aid and assist the party of the first part.

**Wage Scale and Working Rules.**  
**Laundry Workers.**—The wage scale and working rules shall be taken up by conference at such time as there is an active organization and a charter for this branch. At such time as the wage scale and working rules shall be settled they shall become a part of this agreement.

**Teamsters and Auto Drivers.**—The wage scale shall be \$4 per day. Time and one-half for all overtime. Double time for all legal holidays.

**Engineers.**—The wage scale shall be \$4 per day. All overtime to be paid at the rate of time and one-half. All over eight hours. Sundays and legal holidays, to be considered overtime.

The minimum wage regulations of the State Welfare Board are as follows:

(1) No person, firm, association or corporation shall employ any female over the age of eighteen years in any laundry or dye works establishment, at a weekly wage rate of less than nine dollars (\$9.00), any lesser wage being hereby declared inadequate as to such employee to supply the necessary cost of living and maintain them in health.

It is true that a Tacoma superior court judge rendered a decision that under this regulation a laundry could work its employees any kind of hours not in excess of eight at an hourly wage based on the \$9 minimum. We will leave to the reader to decide whether such an interpretation of the law is stupid.

This decision has been corrected by the workers themselves in the cities of Tacoma and Seattle, through organization and with the support of union labor.

The practice of the laundries under this decision had been to compel the employees to appear for work early in the morning and wait throughout the day, doing the work as it came in, sacrificing the entire day for perhaps a few hours' work and being paid at the end of the week for actual time on the machine at the rate of \$9 a week.

The assertion that any less sum than \$9 a week is "inadequate to supply the necessary cost of living" apparently was considered by the learned judge as an off-hand expression of opinion, with no bearing on the amount to be paid.

The laundry trust in Seattle and Tacoma, one of the most contemptible combinations of business interests of record, because it exploited weak and defenseless women and girls, was attacked by organized labor, whipp-d, and wages and conditions of labor within reason established.

It is apparent that the local laundry owners, members of the Laundrymen's Association, are acting upon the advice of that association, and hope through their monopoly to enforce their "caveman principles upon the local situation.

That the local laundries are getting all the business and more than they can handle is proven by the fact that one of the local laundries, this week and last, was compelled to turn away offers of laundry work from the army post at Camp Lewis.

Union labor is determined that detestable conditions of employment in the laundries of Olympia shall be corrected. If employers of free white labor insist upon conditions of work and pay akin to that observed in Chinik laundries, there is no good reason why they should not be placed upon a plane with the Orientals.

The Trades Council will no doubt name a permanent committee to push to a conclusion the question of conducting the laundry business of the city on a "spending money" basis.

## BACK PAY CHECKS.

Employees of the Sloan shipyards were made glad, Wednesday of last week, through receipt of their back pay checks. The figures on the individual checks ran all the way from 75 cents to \$125—a \$50, \$60 or \$75 check being of the common variety.

The payment represented the difference, from August 1 to January 15, between the variable wages in effect since August 1 and the final award of the federal labor adjustment board, which became effective January 15.

Shipwrights drew retroactive pay at a rate of \$1 a day or over. In the case of the other employees the rate varied to a much greater extent.

The Shipyard Laborers' union has given constant and vigorous attention to stabilizing the wages, but it was not until recently that it met with complete success. Beginning

with this month the 10 per cent bonus for steady workers became a part of the permanent scale, which establishes the minimum wage of unskilled laborers at \$3.60 a day of eight hours.

Ship Carpenters have had a like condition to contend with. The business agent of the Shipwrights has been a busy man for many days, promoting adjustments of sliding scales of wages, and was just ready to congratulate himself upon the fact that his troubles were largely in the discard, when back-pay day was sprung and with it unloaded a number of discrepancies between the sums figured by the company clerks and the amounts claimed by the individuals. The business agent of the Shipyard Laborers also was presented with a phistfull of like grievances for adjustment.

However, last Wednesday was a gala day for the great majority of the shipyard employes, and the instances where the amount awarded did not meet the expectations of the recipient are being adjusted to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The work of the shipyards is now going forward with a speed and smoothness that speaks volumes for the principle adopted by the national administration that the laborer is worthy of his hire, and that the union is the proper channel through which to promote speed and efficiency. There is satisfaction among the workers, and the business interests of the city are reveling in a wonderful increase in cash business, while every dwelling in town is filled to capacity.

## PRESIDENT STOCKS APPEARS BEFORE BOND MEETING.

President A. J. Stocks presented the Trades Council view of the proposed bond issue for road work, at a meeting of interested parties with the county commissioners, Monday.

Stocks advised the meeting that the Council viewed the Des Chutes bridge improvement as a work of necessity, that must be undertaken at this time through a bond issue or later under the district assessment plan. He thought bonding for the improvement the more equitable way and called attention to the fact that creation of an improvement district for building the bridge would place upon the home owners alone burdens already heavy because of numerous improvements in the past. The bridge is a work of necessity not alone to city residents, but to the farmers and mill owners, and to bond for its construction would equalize the burden.

It is conceded that the proposal of the commissioners, if allowed to go to a vote, will be defeated emphatically, and so the commissioners have decided to recall their resolution for a special election on the \$100,000 issue and substitute some other plan.

## YOUNG TRANSFERS TO LARGER FIELD.

C. B. Young, business agent of the Trades Council for the last four months, has accepted a call to Seattle and will work among the members of the Shipyard Laborers' union of that city. He will work through the district council, of which he is the executive head, and will thus be enabled to spend a part of his time in Olympia caring for his duties as financial secretary of the local union. He hopes to be able to be in Olympia Saturday, Sunday and Monday, devoting the balance of his time to the Seattle work. The Seattle union of Shipyard Laborers has more than a thousand members, so that the new field of our business agent is a much larger one than the old and naturally commands increased compensation for larger duties.

When the matter of continuing the services of a business agent was under discussion before the Council last Thursday evening, Young declared that he could not allow his name to be considered, as he had made other arrangements.

At the meeting of Shipyard Laborers, Monday evening, leave of absence was given Secretary Young so that he could engage in the work in Seattle.

While much work has been accomplished in Olympia through the business agent in the last four months, there is much yet to be done, and local unions will feel the effects of the change. Young is a man of more than ordinary ability and it is certain that the results of his efforts among the Seattle workers will be in evidence from the start.

## TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION.

Delegate Frank Satterlee made a report of his trip to Portland as a delegate to the Northwest Typographical Conference, at the meeting of local printers last Sunday.

The apprenticeship question, wage standardization and closer affiliation of printing trades, were the three questions that engaged the particular attention of the conference.

On the question of apprentices, the conference recommends co-operation with vocational departments in our high schools and colleges and allowance to regularly indentured apprentices of the time spent in study of the printing art in public school departments of printing.

The conference was enthusiastically unanimous on the question of closer affiliation of printing trades. In the past there has been an aloofness manifested between the several crafts, internationally and locally. Today, according to Satterlee, "members of the different crafts walk on the same side of the street without carrying a chip on the shoulder." In Tacoma delegates from the other crafts sit in the regular meetings of the Typographical union and vice versa.

The conference officials will urge upon Northwest unions the importance of uniform wage scales, the major portion of the propaganda work, however, having been turned over to the Printing Trades Conference, which includes the Printers, Pressmen, Stereotypers, Photo Engravers, Bookbinders and Malters.

The convention of the Printing Trades also met in Portland last week and Satterlee attended this convention.

## BROTHERHOOD OFFICIAL VISITS LOCAL PAINTERS.

Joseph F. Clarke, fourth general vice president of the Brotherhood of Painters and Decorators, visited Local Secretary P. M. Kendrick this week and discussed the printing industry in its relation to work in the shipyards. The vice president reports that things are in good shape for painters in the coast shipyard painting industry.

Local 743 initiated one new member Friday night and, on motion, will move February 1 into the new quarters of the Trades Council, Third and Washington, meeting the second and fourth Fridays of the month.

## COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS.

The Trades Council, at the meeting of Thursday, January 24, adopted resolutions opposing the county bond issue of \$100,000, instructed the secretary to protest to our congressmen and senators against conscription of labor, discontinued the business agent, and considered several communications.

Six delegates presented credentials and were seated in the Council. They were John Lewis, Plumbers; Alderson, Cornell and McBratney, of the Blacksmiths, and Norrie and Adams, of Teamsters and Chauffeurs.

Delegate Stocks reported progress in negotiations with the Star Laundry and the secretary was designated to represent the Trades Council in further negotiations.

Business Agent Young reported the work of his office during the current week, and announced that he had made other arrangements and could not be considered in connection with the question as to continuation of the services of a business agent.

The matter of continuing the services of a business agent, laid over from last week, was taken up and the services of a business agent formally discontinued.

Delegate Bert Goodman reported the successful initiation of social session by the Shipyard Laborers and said that these events would be frequently held by his union in future.

Delegate Stocks reported that the Steam Engineers had changed their meeting time to Monday evening, beginning with the first session in the Eagles' hall, Monday, February 4.

Delegate Burrell reported that the Electricians had voted to subscribe to the Standard for their permanently located members.

Delegate Young reported that he had accepted a position on the county committee for mobilization of labor.

## ENGINEERS DANCE FEB. 22.

Steam Engineers have completed all arrangements for a successful dance at the Tumwater club, the evening of February 22. This is the first annual of the Engineers, and it is the intention to make the event as attractive as possible.

Beginning with February 4 this union will meet on Monday instead of Wednesday as formerly, in the hall in Eagles' building.

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