

MONTANA NEWS

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THE RAILROAD STRIKE

There appears to be a crisis rapidly approaching in the labor world in America, and the possibility of a strike on nearly every railroad in the United States and Canada.

The strike of the shopmen on the Harriman Lines and Illinois Central has developed to the stage where it is liable to spread.

Other railroads are hauling the freight for the Harriman lines. Cars belonging to the Harriman Lines and Illinois Central Railway are being repaired by union men on other railroads.

Any objections that the union men employed by railroads outside the strike zone, may make against striking cars from the strike roads are met by decisions and laws, rules and regulations of the Interstate Commerce Commission, and if the union men refuse to do the work on any car from off the Harriman Lines, they make themselves liable.

The injunction made by President Taft, while a Federal Judge, 22 years ago against the engineers on the Michigan Central Railway, who refused to handle the C. B. & Q. railroad cars will give the railroads a basis to apply for the protection of the courts against the union men refusing to handle the cars of the Harriman Lines and Illinois Central Railroad. But in case of a strike on all railroads it will be a different matter.

The decision of the United States Supreme Court in 1895 on the appeal taken by the unions of the Northern Pacific Railway against the injunction issued by Judge Jenkins of the United States Circuit Court, sitting in Milwaukee in December 1893 gives all railroad men the legal right to quit working for a railroad at any time they see fit.

The injunction issued by Judge Jenkins was without doubt the most wide-sweeping injunction ever issued against any union.

The Northern Pacific Railroad made a reduction in wages that averaged 18 per cent. The employees of the Northern Pacific railroad threatened a strike, the officials of the railway company applied to Judge Jenkins for an injunction, the injunction was granted and enjoined the railroad men from quitting the service of the railroad either singly or collectively under pain of punishment for contempt of court. The judge basing his decision on the fact that the railroad was in the hands of the receivers appointed by him, and that the employees were employees of the court and could not quit work unless the court said so. The injunction was composed of over 7,000 words. This injunction prevented a strike on the Northern Pacific Railway in January 1894, but the injunction was a splendid organizer for the American Railway Union and the men went on strike six months later regardless of the injunction.

An appeal was taken to the Supreme Court on Judge Jenkins' injunction and nearly two years later the highest court in the land decided that railroad men could quit their jobs either singly or collectively at any time they saw fit, thereby legalizing the right to strike on railroads even if the railroad in question be in the hands of receivers. But, the employees of the Northern Pacific Railway were ahead if the Supreme Court by eighteen months as they went on strike June 26, 1894 in the face of the injunction and in defiance of Judge Jenkins, and thereby asserted their manhood and guaranteed their right to quit when they saw fit.

Without doubt the Sherman Anti-trust law will be evoked extensively against the unions, and it is as likely as not we will see an attempt made before many weeks are over, to dissolve all unions similar to the action taken against the Standard Oil Company, but more effective.

Should the railroad strike last 60 days more, there will be in all likelihood be a strike called on all railroads, with a demand for an eight hour day. This will bring about the greatest railroad strike America has ever seen, and will without doubt change the whole form of unionism on the railroads, and create a new phase in the labor movement and advance the time of nationalization

of therailroads. In fact there are only two ways open to the railroad union men to win the strike on the Harriman Lines and Illinois Central Railway and that is to supply the strikers with more money to carry on the strike than the railroad companies care to spend in defeating the strike, or to call out the men on every railroad in the country at the same time, on a demand for the same schedule as the strikers are now making, an eight hour day without a decrease in pay.

If the strike on the Harriman Lines and the Illinois Central Railway is lost the unions on the railroads will suffer a reverse that will take years to recover from.

MRS. PANKHURST'S MEETING.

The half hearted manner in which the club women of Helena took part in the lecture in Helena by Mrs. Pankhurst the veteran suffragette does not speak well for the cause of woman's suffrage as far as the women's club is concerned.

Mrs. Pankhurst's meeting showed no enthusiasm either before or after, on the part of the Helena women.

The meeting was under the auspices of the silk stocking and pink tea element of the west side, no advertising was done, except the free notices given by the press. Fifty cents admittance was charged to the lecture, this money went to help pay the expenses of securing the Auditorium, although there are a few club women in Helena, who individually could have paid the expenses of the meeting alone, had the desire for suffrage been strong enough in them.

Governor Norris acted as chairman of the meeting and introduced Mrs. Pankhurst, the governor acted in a very gingerly manner, was noncommittal regarding the merits of suffrage and seemed to be ashamed of the fact that he was on the same platform with a suffragette, perhaps the governor may have been living in anticipation of getting a drubbing such as Premier Asquith receives over in London from the hands of the Pankhurst crew.

One thing was demonstrated at the Pankhurst meeting and that is, if the women of Montana desire the ballot they will have to organize and work for it, without allowing the silk stocking and pink tea element of Helena monopolize speakers and throw wet blankets over the work.

It is not banqueting or holding receptions for the speakers of the woman's suffrage cause that is required, but a good hard campaign of education. Women will never receive the ballot in this state until they demand it.

Had Mrs Pankhurst's meeting in Helena been held under the auspices of Socialist women there would have been a greater audience listened to her lecture, but, there would have been no auto-mobile rides around town, or receptions at the swell hotel.

FREE EMPLOYMENT BUREAU FOR HELENA.

Herman Luchman, the Socialist alderman in Helena has succeeded in getting the city council to establish a free employment bureau. The city employment bureau will commence operations on January 1st, and present indications are that it will be a popular institution.

A municipal employment bureau existed before in Helena, in the days when the Populists held sway, but with the down fall of Populism the municipal employment bureau went out of existence.

With only one Socialist in the city council, Socialist Alderman Luchman is to be congratulated on the good work he has accomplished.

Let us imagine two slave owners, one owning fertile land, on which he works ignorant slaves, and produces large quantities of cheap foods, the other owning poorer land, from which he produces valuable, high-grade crops by means of slaves whom he takes pains to educate. Even under slavery the latter group would be being intelligent, they would be more likely to rebel against their slavers. Whatever the original intention of their masters, be they never so selfish the skilled slaves are far nearer freedom than the ignorant slaves. The application of the parable is obvious.

AGAINST DEPORTING REFUGEE.

At the request of Berger, Secretary Nagel, of the Department of Commerce and Labor, has granted a stay in the deportation order against Marcus, a Russian political refugee.

Nagel assured Berger that the Russian Government charges that Marcus is "an ordinary criminal." As a matter of fact Marcus' "crimes" consists of his active participation in the Russian revolutionary movement. He has already served six years in Russian dungeons for his "crimes".

IS SOCIALISM OPPOSED TO RELIGION.

Will R. Shier.

It is said that Socialism is opposed to religion.

But, in what way is Socialism opposed to religion?

Is there anything in the Socialist Party platform inimical to religion?

Has the International Socialist Congress, or any of its affiliated bodies, ever adopted a resolution aiming to destroy belief in a supreme being, in a future life, in the divinity of Jesus or in any other religious doctrine?

Has any Socialist in any legislature at any time introduced a bill that sought to demolish the churches or to interfere with any one's religious ideas?

All those questions must be answered unreservedly in the negative.

Then has the Socialist platform nothing whatever to say about religion? No, it has nothing to say about religion, except to say that the Socialist Party is not concerned with it.

It is true that many Socialists are avowed atheists. But it is also true that many Socialists are avowed Christians. Scores of clergymen belong to the Socialist Party.

It is easy to quote attacks upon religion from the speeches and writings of certain eminent Socialists. And our unscrupulous opponents make liberal use of such quotations to discredit the Socialist movement in the eyes of religious people.

But is that a fair method of attack? Is it fair to censure any organization because of the personal opinions of some of its members? And is it fair to dwell on the bitter things they have said while not giving them credit for the many sweet things they have said?

Would it be fair to say that the democrat party advocated vegetarianism because many democrats are vegetarians? Or would it be fair to charge the republican party with agnosticism because Robert Ingersoll, an ardent republican, went up and down the land declaring that he did not know whether there was any God or not?

Certainly not. Well, a Socialist's religious belief, like a republican's or democrat's religious belief, has no more to do with his politics than the way he parts his hair.

That this is so may be quickly determined by asking yourself whether religion will not be just as safe under a working class government controlled by corporation magnates, whether there is anything in the nature of public ownership to make people irreligious or immoral, and whether labor legislation is likely to upset anyone's religious ideas.

If Socialists criticize the church it is because the church is so backward in espousing the cause of the working people. The only way the church can escape such criticism is to cease deserving it, by stepping into the ranks of those who are fighting for economic justice.

WE LOST THE ELECTION IN LOS ANGELES.

By Josephine Conger-Kaneko. We lost the election in Los Angeles. But don't lets waste any time speculating as to why we lost. It may have been the McNamara confession. It may have been the enfranchisement of the women, it may have been a number of things. But rest assured, there was one thing responsible, and that above and beyond all others; abthabove and beyond all others: There were not enough Socialists in Los Angeles to elect Harriman. That is the reason we lost the election.

And that is a cause that can be remedied in time.

It can be remedied if we do the right thing, the intelligent thing. What we need in Los Angeles, what we need everywhere, is more education. The people's minds must be revolutionized before their votes can count for anything. We need more and better literature. We need constructive literature. And we need workers to distribute it. We need fewer leaders "Chewing the rag" over "fine points", and greater solidarity among the rank and file. We need a rank and file that reads, thinks and acts. Whatever we may gain, if it does not come from the heart and brain of the masses is superficial and means little in the real count of things.

We have just had a great object lesson in the Labor and Socialist movements. We have had a great

city going wild after "votes"; votes must be gained at all hazards, whether they understood the full meaning of Socialism or not. Even protest votes would do. We were crazy to "elect our mayor". But the masses didn't understand Socialism, and we lost. Los Angeles must do now what every city should do—concentrate her forces and wage such a campaign of education as the city has never known before. When the masses understand there will be no question as to how the "vote" will go.

The Labor movement has given us an object lesson in "direct action". And it has failed miserably. Those who believed they could carry the labor movement to victory the destructive methods employed by capitalists, have found themselves at last stripped of all powers, helpless children in the hands of the enemy. And their impracticability and their lack of faith in their own methods have shown themselves through their "confession" at the hour when another wing of the labor movement was hoping to sweep into victory on the political field.

Had these men, who were so willing to risk their lives of others in their "direct action" methods been as ready to risk their own when the test came they might have won some bit of respect even from those who are not in sympathy of such methods. But as their methods were capitalistic and cowardly, so have been their support of their methods. And this object lesson in "direct action", with its logical results should cure any budding, or unnamed revolutionary Socialist of all "direct action" fever. It is too apt to result in tragic-farce.

Neither votes for the mere sake of inaugurating revolutionary Socialism Socialism must come in through the intelligent and conscious activity of the masses of the people. That is why we must never stop our effort at education. We have scarcely scratched the surface. We have got to dig deep, and sow our seed thick, before we can have satisfactory results. We will never swing into the co-operative commonwealth at the heels of a few orators and bomb throwers.

Good literature, plenty of it, and with workers to distribute it, that is what the Socialist movement of America needs to-day. And the least conspicuous, most timid woman who carries a bundle of papers, or leaflets to her neighbor's door is a better soldier for the cause than a score of world-be heroes whose mental processes would continually read the party into broils and scraps and final disruption. Let us have more of the silent and effective workers!

THE WOMEN OF READING.

By Theresa Malkiel.

Reading, Pa., has come into the public eye, first through the election of Comrade Maurer as the first Socialist to sit in the Pennsylvania legislature, and next because of the wonderful activity of its Socialist local during the last municipal election. Every phase of that activity, but, one, has been gone over a number of times and that is—the activity of the women interested in seeing Socialism victorious.

It has ever been thus, woman has never come down to posterity, but for her connection with some one great man. And yet, the women of Reading have played a considerable role in the life and welfare of the Socialist movement in Reading.

It was the women who have made the social life of the Reading Socialists one worthy to be copied by every Socialist local. While the social phase of the movement remained a great necessity to the movement, while the people of the town had still to be shown that the Socialists are not home destroyers, but on the contrary promoters of brotherly feeling, of human relationship, the women gave their time to arranging suppers, entertainments, picnics, and so forth, were all the Socialist members and sympathizers met in social intercourse, ate, danced and made merry, while discussing the graver, bigger phase of life.

The money realized from all these affairs the women used for the purpose of making the Socialist home, or the Reading Labor Lyceum appear homelike and comfortable, they papered the place, bought furniture and decorations, saw that it was kept clean, while a small portion of the money was set aside for an entirely different, though equally noble, purpose. Every sick woman of Reading who was either a Socialist, or a Socialist sympathizer, was sure to receive a bouquet of flowers from the Socialist women in her hours of pain and sorrow. The flowers were, as a rule, brought to the sufferer by a committee of two who expressed personally the love and sympathy of her sisters. Small and insignificant as his purpose may seem at first glance, it meant much to the Socialist cause in

the end. We all know the had life of the workingman's wife and can easily realize how much harder that life is made by sickness. It is then that things seem things seem blackest. It is then that the poor woman yearns for love, for sympathy, and receiving it at the hands of the Socialists she remains true to them forever after.

But the women are not as narrow as some think them to be. This year, when Socialism made good in Reading and prepared to become the political guide of the citizens, the women realized the seriousness of the situation, the many obstacles in the field, and at once changed their method of action. Just as enthusiastically as they used to bake, cook and brew for Socialism, they commenced to organize, speak, distribute literature and hold meetings for Socialism.

The large knitting mills, where thousands of women and children are employed, were covered with Socialist literature especially written for women. The markets, too were not slighted. The women comrades were there on the job at 7 A. M., and while a Socialist speaker would explain to the good housewives the cause of the high cost of living, the women comrades would supplement the speaker's argument with proper leaflets. Street and indoor meetings were held where women speakers appealed to women to protect themselves and their children, to use their influence for the Socialist cause.

There is scarcely another woman enfranchised city in the country, where the average housewife was made as thoroughly acquainted with the issue of the campaign as she was in Reading, Pa.

This was due to the activity of the women comrades who stand shoulder to shoulder with their husbands and brothers in time of war as well as in time of peace. The battle was temporarily lost, but the seed planted is bound to grow and the women comrades are sure to help its growth.

BAREFACED SOCIALISM.

The Panama Canal Commission, besides making the statement that the big ditch would be ready for business in nineteen hundred and thirteen, made another very interesting statement that will be of great importance if it is carried out, because it will mean that the Canal Zone will never mean that the Canal Zone will never harbor a middleman. At present Uncle Sam, besides cutting the waterway, is running a railroad, steamship line, telegraph and telephone lines, the postoffice, the banking business, free

schools, big stores where everything is sold at cost, and doing everything else in the most socialistic manner, and in such a way as to bring credit to himself and joy to the heart of every one with whom he has dealings. This system, according to the commission, is to be kept up and extended as conditions may require if the plans proposed for the ultimate settlement of the Zone are carried out.

For state reasons, all foreigners are to be drawn from the Canal construction corps as their services can be dispensed with and none will be employed permanently upon the canal establishment except American citizens. The force necessary to operate the Canal and its auxiliaries and all the machinery necessary to keep such a big undertaking in active operation will be enormous, and it is proposed to do for them in the same way as the construction corps is being dealt with now. Tracts of land will be granted to all employees who will make use of them and no title will be necessary, none given or required, nothing but occupancy and use will be the title. Production and distribution will, in this way, belong to all the people of the Canal Zone and will be an example and an incentive for a further extension of the idea in the remainder of Uncle Sam's domains. When the middleman is eliminated and with him his extortionate greed, the people are no longer skinned and can live better and enjoy life better, they less than it formerly cost them. All this is very objectionable to those who that such methods would undermine society and deprive the worker of his independence and whole lots of other things of an evil character too numerous to mention, but if the people can live better an enjoy life better, they won't grumble if Uncle Sam runs the business. So success to the Panama Canal Commission and their scheme to occupy the Zone, even if it is Socialistic.—Machinists' Journal.

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