

EVENING CAPITAL NEWS

AN INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER

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Promised Coal Strike

THE next strike in order, according to the United Mine Workers of America, is a coal strike—a walk out of the miners employed in the big coal mines of the country. November 1 is the date set for the proposed tie-up of this highly important industry. The only thing that can prevent it is adjustment of a wage scale satisfactory to the miners, a working agreement and shorter hours. Here is another instance of a deliberate attempt to place further hardships on the consuming public. If the process continues, the United States is going to have the most indignant mass of consumers in its history. Coal is a commodity they must have irrespective of what the differences are between the mine owner and the miner. If they can not adjust these differences, the people will insist that the government take a hand. Certainly a nation-wide coal strike should not be permitted under any circumstances with winter but a few months off.

The mine workers are demanding: A flat increase of 60 per cent in wages for all classes of work; time and a half for overtime; six hours a day and five days a week. An increase in wages may be justified together with time and a half for overtime, but it will take more argument than the miners have put up to the present time to convince the public that the week scale should be five days and that they should work but five hours a day.

The senate investigating committee should take up the miners' proposal at the same time it is probing into the causes for the steel strike. In fact, the entire labor situation should be reviewed. Congress need not be in doubt about the necessity of enacting legislation to govern the industrial situation. Congress owes it to both employer and labor to pass legislation to bring about an adjustment of the labor controversies.

Senator Cummins has introduced a railroad bill in the senate, one provision of which proposes to prevent railroad employees striking. This provision is classed by W. M. Doak, vice president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, as an attempt to place shackles of voluntary servitude on railroad workers and the "boldest attempt at individual and economic bondage since the Civil war." Mr. Doak may be right but the fact remains that the people are weary of strikes and while not desiring to be unfair to labor, honestly believe that there should be some medium of adjusting labor differences without tying up important industries and throwing thousands of working men out of employment for an indefinite period. Guiding labor leaders should be able to see this also. Without doubt the country is drifting to a crisis in labor troubles out of which will rise some reasonable form of arbitration without interfering with the rights of either employer or employe.

War Profits of Packers

THE federal trade commission has submitted a report to the senate in response to a resolution introduced by Senator Norris of Nebraska, showing that the government knew of the excess profits the packers were making and that at the request of President Wilson a report so showing was withheld from the public. This report contained the startling revelation that the packers' war profits were at a rate of two and one-quarter to three times their earnings in pre-war years. This was held to be wrong by the commission which urged that the food administration regulations of the packers be

so changed as to allow them but an eighth per cent profit.

It is instances of this kind that daily arouse bitterness among the consumers who are being forced to pay high prices. There was only one way for the packers to double or treble their profits and that was by maintaining an unfair and unreasonable profit on their manufactured products forcing the consumers to pay more than was justified. Either profiteering must be done away with by the packers or the government will have to be forced to step in and give the relief the people are so insistently demanding. The present conditions can not continue. Packers should be able to see that.

Herbert Hoover backed up the president in his decision to withhold the early report of the commission from the public. Both may have been justified in their stand, but to keep from the public the fact that the packers are piling up such exorbitant profits only tends to arouse the public, to breed suspicion and criticism. It would be better to give the people the facts and let them render the verdict.

Deserving of Support

THE drive of the American Legion for members is deserving of the support of all ex-service men. The Legion promises to be a powerful organization for good in the United States providing it is given wise direction. So far this has been true. Nothing has occurred that should make one believe otherwise. In Idaho the Legion should have every man who was in the services on its rolls. The state administration has moved to give it recognition in Idaho by providing it with headquarters in the state capitol, a most excellent plan.

Opponents of an organization of this kind fall into three general groups: Those who fear that the organization will be used for illicit political purposes, those who fear the erection of a quasi-military structure in the body politic with the incidental danger of a distinctly military cast, and those who fear a patriotic play to the galleries with a view to draining the public treasury. The Legion organizers probably appraised the likelihood of public opposition for all of these reasons at about what it was worth. They had the experience of previously organized veteran societies as a guide, and the temper of the times as a warning; and the government itself anticipated one objection by a determined effort to find a substitute for the pension system.

Such organizations are born of common experience in a great cause. If properly managed, they break the political quack over his own promises, and by their watchfulness stimulate the honest politician in his work for clean government. So far the Legion has approved no bonus plan that might empty the treasury, and there is no indication that it will. The advantages are at once apparent to any observer, the chief one being the need of encouraging active patriotism by keeping alive the best traditions of the armed forces. This function is important to the former service people, but far more important to the civilian population, especially the youth of the land, and to the nation.

Things are getting pretty bad when they start to sell League of Nation stock. Some people are not inclined to take any stock in the covenant at all.

RIPPLING RHYMES

BY WALT MASON.
HALCYON DAYS.

The happy days of war are gone, and peace's frightfulness is here, when we assemble on the lawn, and cuss the ding-donged profiteer. In war we struck for noble things, to undermine the tyrant's sway, to overturn the thrones of kings, and now we strike for higher pay. In war we loathed the foreign foe, and chased him on his cheap john shore, and now, alas, as all men know, we loathe the man who lives next door. In war we all united were, we had one purpose and one end; but now we fill the air with fur, the fur of neighbor and of friend. I look back on the days of war, that bitter war of four long years, and wonder what we stopped it for, to usher in the profiteers. Far better on the field to die, with fame and glory as your bed, than starve for lack of coin to buy your share of angel cake and bread. Far better meet a stalwart foe and perish where your banner flies, than have a hoarder lay you low, with tricks a soldier would despise. We clamored for the boon of peace throughout the long and bloody fray, and now we yell for the police to take the blamed old boon away.

DECISION FAVORS

SMALL BRANCHES' PUBLIC UTILITIES

Commission Holds Companies Must Operate Extensions if Whole System Is Paying Expenses.

Single extensions of public utilities will not be considered alone in determining whether or not their operation is profitable enough to justify continuation of service, but will be considered in connection with the entire system of the utility, the public utilities commission has announced as a policy in connection with a case in which the commission ordered the Utah

Power & Light company to extend its electrical service to the village of Ririe.

During the war operation of this principle was suspended because of the restriction in all building lines, but its enunciation in the Ririe case means that it will be enforced hereafter, the commission announced today.

"A utility operating under a certificate of convenience and necessity in a given district does not fulfill its full duty when it merely extends to and absorbs business which has developed to a point which will at once return a satisfactory profit," says the decision. "A utility owes its share of effort to the creation and development of new business."

"The former policy of public utilities in anticipating future demands for service by extending and improving their lines to meet such service when it should have developed is no longer either needed or desired. Under the commission's control the necessity for entertaining and holding territory for occupation is done away with, but this means that a utility will be required to reasonably meet and anticipate a developing demand and to facilitate its further increase by reasonable extension."

"The commission may order exten-

sions at any time, if necessary, to meet public convenience or necessity, where the return to be expected is reasonably sufficient when the utility's business is considered as a whole, even though the contemplated extension may not, of itself and standing alone, furnish a profitable return."

Boise Baking Co., 722 Main St. Finest bread and pastries in Boise.—Adv. 828

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