

UNEMPLOYMENT

The Cause

Mines, mills and factories are shut down, or working half time or with a half crew. The employers tell us they are forced to lay off men because there is no demand for the product.

Yet there is a ragged lot of men, women and children seeking work at the textile mills. People who are much in need of shoes seek a job at the shoe factories. All the workers are in need of the things made by labor.

This condition is so irrational that there must be a remedy, if we will only take the trouble to understand what is really the cause.

We must first know what this demand for the products of labor really is. We know it does not mean that no one needs anything. Workers are in the direst need when there is least of this market demand.

The demand for the products of labor may be divided into three parts.

First: There is the demand for the things which are needed in the process of production; such as machinery and raw material.

This part of the market demand is dependent on the activity of the other industries. It is increased when the industries which directly supply the things which are necessary for our comfort and well being are active; and it decreases when these industries are inactive.

Second: the demand for the necessities of life coming from those whose income is insufficient to supply them with everything they need; which includes practically all the wage earners and a large part of the middle class.

This second part of the market demand cannot be increased unless the total wages paid to labor is increased, either by an actual raise of wages, or by an increase or redistri-

bution of work so as to give employment to a greater number of men.

Such an increase in the total wages of labor will enable the workers to buy more of the things they need, and will therefore increase this second part of the market demand.

Third: the third part of the market demand is the things bought by those whose incomes are so large that they can buy everything they can use or desire and still have part of their income left over, either in the form of money which must be invested, or in the form of the product of the industries which are stored up until they can be sold.

This third part of the market demand can only be increased by the creation of new desires of the invention of new ways of wasting the products of labor, among the rich people. An addition to their income would not increase the market demand, as they are already able to buy everything they desire.

Briefly stated, then, the market demand consists of (1) The things needed to maintain the machinery of production.

(2) Such necessities of life as the great mass of people are able to buy.

(3) As much of the remaining product as the rich are able to use or waste.

This market demand determines the normal volume of the world's work, which is increased by a large amount of production for speculative purposes.

The entire capitalist system is so full of the bombastic advertising spirit that the employers deceive themselves as to how much of the product they can sell. This leads to the production of more than the market calls for, and therefore to an accumulation of product.

When the employers wake up from their optimistic pipe-dreams they get scared and stop production altogether. That is what is called a panic.

The normal volume of the world's work is not near large enough to keep the world's workers employed ten hours per day—nor eight—nor six hours per day.

That is why we have an unemployed army of men in times of the greatest "prosperity" when production for speculation is at its height.

The Remedy

Compulsory unemployment cannot be solved with charity or imprisonment for vagrancy. Both of these methods tend to degrade and embitter the victims, and do not affect the causes of unemployment except to the extent of getting rid of a very small part of the surplus product.

Woodyards and rock piles where the unemployed are generously permitted to work for their board, is still less of a remedy. It simply means that so much of the world's work is done without giving the workers the means of buying the proportionate part of the product of labor. It brings a very doubtful temporary relief at the cost of more unemployment and much greater poverty in the future.

There are just two remedies for enforced unemployment:

1. Increased wages for the great mass of workers. This will enable the workers to buy more of the products of labor, and thereby increase the market demand.

2. A reduction of hours. This will redistribute the world's work so that a greater number of workers will find employment, and will also tend to keep production down so as not to create a large oversupply of unsalable product.

These remedies will most assuredly not be used by the large employers. They want more and ever more profit.

Nor have we any reason to believe that the middle class will do much to help bring about changes of this kind. It is not at all certain that they would lose by it, but they are such devout worshippers of the dollar sign, that they shrink from doing anything to displease their ideal of manhood—the man with more money.

We, the workers, must ourselves remove the danger and terror of enforced and penniless idleness. We must unite and strive for better wages and shorter hours. We must do it soon, or soon be hopelessly enslaved. Improved machines and methods have increased the productivity of labor fast enough to keep pace with the extension of the world market and with the establishment of modern industry in new fields. The world market is now practically complete, and there are very few parts of the inhabitable part of the earth where modern industry has not taken a foothold. Henceforth inventions of better machines and more efficient methods of work will directly reduce the total amount of work to be done. Unemployment will increase in almost the same ratio as industrial efficiency increases except as this tendency is counteracted by increased wages and a shorter workday.

Temporarily this process may be slightly checked by the destruction wrought by the European war. But war, as a remedy for unemployment, is worse than the disease it temporarily relieves. It may give us time to get together and unite our strength before we are reduced to hopeless peonage, and that time must not be wasted.

Get together. Begin now. Join the One Big Union.

Thanksgiving Reflections

Thank God, (whatever gods may be) that that thanksgiving is over. The fellow with a good job had a chance to be thankful that the fellow with a poor job did not draw as much wages as he did. The fellow with a poor job has a chance to be thankful that he had a job at all. The fellow that was jobless had a chance to be thankful that the Mutts put out a big feed. The Mutts were thankful that there were people that were needy so that they would have a chance to be charitable. The Capitalists were thankful that the slaves were still content to accept charity. The patriots were thankful that there were still plenty of Mutts (common garden variety) who would offer their bodies as bullet stoppers to prolong the present system of capitalist expropriation and everything was LOVELY. Abernith.

After this European Open Season

for Fools is over there will be less patriots to fight for their master and more rebels to fight for their own interest. At least this is our hope. But our prophecy is that after this slaughterfest there will be another and another until after a while there will be fewer boundary lines (imaginary). Eventually we will have One Big Nation. Then we will have one big scrap. Then a thousand fragmentary nations and then we can start all over again. Unless we waken the slaves up. After that and a million more that, we will have a copperplated commonplace and then—then—we'll have an explosion—the earth will splode into a million fragments—re-arrange itself and we can start all over again without useless junk of precedent and tradition that we suffered from in the past. Ye Slaves, how does it look? Will ye reuse now or later?

Notes From Dixie

DIXIE NOTES

Compiled by W. H. Lewis

Arkansas—The Ayer and Lord Tie Co. has closed all its work in this state and Louisiana throwing thousands out of work. The Missouri Tie and Timber Co. has also shut down.

Warren—The Arkansas Lumber Co. has reduced its output one half.

The stove mill at this place has shut down also.

Thousands of working farmers at point of starvation, due to the fact that they cannot get anything for their cotton.

A few live agitators in this state would make it damn interesting for the vultures.

Louisiana—Conditions are, if possible, worse in this state than in Ark. Most of the saw mill Co's who export lumber having closed down.

The transportation industry strictly on the blink. Hundreds of train crews being laid off. Even the sect-

ion crews have been reduced.

From Calvin comes the report that many families are suffering.

And in view of all this we are asked to wait two years and vote the Socialist ticket. Oh Hell!

Mississippi—Conditions in this state are on a par with the others.

At Bay, St. Louis, slaves are working for 40 cents a day.

The canneries there have cut wages.

Oklahoma—Conditions are all to the bad in the oil fields.

Practically all timber work is shut down.

Farmers up against it good and plenty.

Prosperity! Prosperity!, but always for the buzzard.

In every wretched hovel, every empty stomach, on every bending back, every toiling sweating groaning slave in the south there is a lesson that these (my) people MUST learn. If they are not to be utterly devoured by the beast. That lesson is—Organize! Organize!

The I. W. W. is lively in Minneapolis

Since the cold weather has set in the locals in Minneapolis have had to confine their activities to indoor meetings. Industrial conditions are getting worse every day. More slaves are continually getting laid off, and the bread lines getting longer. The result is, that the slaves are more eager to hear the message of the One Big Union, than they ever were before. Here in "Minnehopeless" we predict a big boom for the I. W. W.

after the industries open up. Local 64 holds Open Forum Meetings every Sunday evening. Lawyers, Doctors, Prohibitionists, "Socialists," all come up like lambs and get slaughtered. We give them 40 minutes to speak, and then turn the avalanche loose. The Scandinavian Propaganda League holds an educational meeting every Saturday night, winding up with a dance. All our meetings have been well-attended, chiefly by citizens.

Last Saturday the Scandinavian Propaganda League held a protest meeting in behalf of Joe Hill. The hall was packed, and a collection of about \$10 was realized for our fellow worker now lying in jail. Last Sunday local 64 held a smoker instead of an Open Forum and it was a big success from every point of view. In the future we intend to have most of the prominent heads of all organizations, radical and otherwise (chief-

ly otherwise) on our platform and discuss social problems from every point of view. We have a fine hall here in Minneapolis, one of the best that the I. W. W. has, and we extend a hearty welcome to all who are interested in the labor movement to come and attend our Open Forum. The admission is free. Our address is 232 Cedar Ave.

CHAS GRAY.