

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE RAILROADS

Published by the Brotherhood of Loco. Engineers

Railroad Workers' Actual Wages Have Declined Over Period of Twenty Years

In a noteworthy discussion of the subject of wages, particularly wages of railroad employes, in the United States Senate on February 9, 1922, Senator Robert M. LaFollette, of Wisconsin, laid down these propositions, which he declared were "economically true and admit of no denial":

(1) The nominal increase in wages has been uniformly less than the increase in the cost of living each year during the war and every year since the war.

(2) The nominal increase in wages has always followed and has never preceded the increase in the cost of living.

(3) Whatever nominal increase in wages there has been since 1914 has been forced by the increase in cost of living, unjustly imposed upon the public by war profiteers. Wage advances have been one of the effects of high prices and not the cause of high prices.

(4) That the actual wage of railroad workers today is not only less than before the war, but in some instances less than the rates prevailing in 1900, more than twenty years ago. During all that period the worker has been struggling against a constantly diminishing income, when the money received in exchange for his labor is computed in terms of commodity values.

Workers Get Starvation Wage
"I assert as an economic fact," declared Senator LaFollette, "that under present conditions there can be no further reductions of wages of railroad employes without national menace."

"Railroad labor," he added, "is receiving at present the least it can receive without sinking below the level of efficiency necessary to maintain the railroads in successful operation. It is receiving substantially no more real wages in terms of commodity values for services rendered than it received twenty years ago."

The data upon which these startling statements are based, Senator LaFollette said, have the official sanction of the United States government. The facts he gave the Senate are embodied in the reports of investigations into wages and cost of living made by the Federal Department of Labor.

A table prepared by the Department

of Labor, showed in the most graphic manner how far behind the cost of living the wages of union labor have lagged during and since the war period, when "high" pay was alleged to have prevailed. This table revealed these astonishing facts:

Taking 100 as the base for wages and 100 as the base for the cost of living in 1913, the union wage rate in 1914 had advanced to 102 and the cost of living had advanced to 103. From that year onward the gap between wages and living costs constantly widened.

In 1915 the union wage rate still stood at 102, but the cost of living had advanced to 105.1.

In 1916 the union wage rate had advanced from 102 to 106, but the cost of living had advanced to 113.3.

In 1917 the union wage rate had advanced to 112, but the cost of living during that period had advanced to 142.4.

In 1918 the union wage rate had advanced to 130, but the cost of living moved forward by leaps and bounds, reaching that year 174.4.

In 1919 the union wage rate had advanced to 148, but the cost of living had gone up to 199.3.

In 1920 the union wage scale had advanced to 189 but the cost of living had gone up to 216.4.

The peak of high prices was reached in 1920, when the wages of union labor had increased 89 per cent., while the cost of living had increased 116.5 per cent. over 1913.

"In the face of constantly rising living costs, the workers," declared Senator LaFollette, "had succeeded in gaining only such advances as prevented actual starvation of millions of persons."

Railroad Workers Lose Ground

Investigations made by the federal government, added Senator LaFollette revealed the astounding fact that railroad workers as a whole had barely kept pace with the increased cost of living, while a number of groups today were much worse off, so far as the buying power of their money is concerned, than they were before the war.

"We find," Senator LaFollette said, "that the only groups whose earnings have increased as fast as the increase in the cost of living are those who in 1900 were earning \$2 a day or less. These workers were shamelessly underpaid then and they are shamefully underpaid now."

"The earnings of the engineers and conductors, whom the railroad propagandists constantly denounced as men whose wages have been exorbitantly increased as a result of the war, have, as the official figures show, fallen far behind the increase in the cost of living, and they are actually in worse condition today so far as purchasing power is concerned than they were at

the beginning of the century. The average wage of all railroad employes in 1900, was \$666. The average wage in 1921 was \$1,575.

"This," says Senator LaFollette, "seems to be very substantial and sufficient to compensate for every change that has taken place. But this impression is dissipated when we see the enormous increase in the cost of living that has taken place in the same period."

"One feels a distinct shock," said Senator LaFollette, "when he discovers that the engineers, who began the century with \$1,161 a year, now have a buying power in terms of the same value of only \$999. The conductors, from a buying power of \$1,004 in 1900, have now declined to a buying power of \$909."

Senator LaFollette characterized the decision of the Railroad Labor Board cutting wages 12 per cent. "as one of the most cruel and indefensible acts ever perpetrated by a government institution."

That decision, he explained, had cut the wages of track laborers and other workers, numbering more than 300,000, to a point where they are now able to earn only \$900 a year if they work full time.

In terms of the purchasing power of 1900, the Senator declared, the \$900 which these men may earn will buy only \$341 worth of food, shelter and clothing when measured by the purchasing power of a dollar in 1900.

"In other words," declared Senator LaFollette, "in terms of actual buying power of money, these men are reduced to the level of \$1 a day. But this is a foretaste of what the railroads hope to do to labor, if they are able to bend the Labor Board to their will. They hope and expect to reduce the wages of these workers to an actual rate of \$1.50 for a 10-hour day, which will be equivalent, in the purchasing power of 1900, to only 50 cents a day."

Coolie Standard for Americans
"In terms of actual buying power," added the Senator, "this \$1.50 which the railroads desire to pay their workers would be worth only what 85 cents would buy in 1913. This would be less than Chinese coolies were paid in the days when the Pacific Railroads were permitted to import them freely and to exploit them unmercifully."

Testimony presented to the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce, said Senator LaFollette, shows wide discrepancy between the wages received by workers and the sums alleged by railroad executives to have been paid them.

Senator LaFollette pointed out ten instances where payroll accounts had been padded, to establish the impression upon Congress, as well as upon the public, that the workers were

getting an exaggerated and unwarranted portion of railroad revenues.

These various items included in the wage bill but which should be omitted, the Senator declared, reached the enormous total of \$1,250,000,000. Deduct that from the whole wage bill, and divide the result by the number of workers employed, he added, and the result will be vastly different from the impression the railroad executives have sought to create.

All Classes Hurt By Wage Cuts
The "deflation" of labor, while most injurious to the workers, has had a correspondingly injurious effect upon all our people, declared Senator LaFollette. He traced the existing paralysis of business to wholesale wage slashing.

"When the workers are well paid and steadily employed," he said, "there is prosperity and a good market, not only for merchants, but for farmers and manufacturers as well. When half the workers are on the streets seeking employment, and the other half are being paid wages insufficient to maintain a decent standard of living, there is commercial and industrial stagnation and depression."

Constituting as they do more than half the population of this country, the industrial workers and their families must consume the greater portion of the products of our farms and the output of our factories, said Senator LaFollette. All that they have to exchange for food and other necessities is the reward of their labor.

"When workers are unemployed, or their earnings curtailed, they inevitably must consume less. That condition is immediately reflected on commerce and industry. To it can be attributed almost entirely the prostration of agriculture and the impoverishment of our farmers, declared Senator LaFollette, who added:

"This is the great economic truth which every statesman must realize. It is so self-evident that a child in grammar school can understand it. And yet it is ignored and violated every day."—Adv.

NOT IN GREAT BEYOND

In the special Memorial Day feature on the Col. Heg Post, G. A. R., run in our issue of May 24th, George D. Recor, one of its former members was listed as passed away in the brief sketch given of that gentleman. We have received word from Mr. Recor however in which he states "I am not in the Great Beyond, but am enjoying the very best of health and am making my home at Waterville, Minn."

We are indeed pleased to hear that Mr. Recor, a respected old veteran and citizen, is yet among the living and hale and hearty in health.

—Lid Wants To See You. tf

OBSERVATIONS

(By the Cornfield Philosopher)

A Real Dirt Farmer for Governor

Editor Tribune: At the election this fall the voters of Minnesota will have the opportunity to choose a real "dirt farmer," the Hon. Magnus Johnson, for governor of this great state.

I am persuaded that his election would be a foregone conclusion if all the people were fully acquainted with Mr. Johnson's merits and his qualifications for this great office.

For eight years Mr. Johnson has faithfully represented the people of Meeker County in the State Legislature, serving in both branches of that body.

During this time he has been active in promoting legislation to advance the interests of the common people and in opposing such legislations like the Street Railway bill that big business has desired.

It may be possible that later in the campaign a circular letter will be prepared and distributed giving a full outline of the measures that Mr. Johnson has championed.

If this is done it will show conclusively that Mr. Johnson has at all times been an unflinching legislative friend of both the farmer and common working people.

These two classes make up an overwhelming majority of the voters of Minnesota.

He is also a friend of the ordinary business man who desires only a fair chance in the competitive field of human activities. If elected Governor we may be assured of this one thing at least, that he will be a real Governor and not merely act as a sort of "chore boy" for the big business interests. The organized farmers and organized labor are both rallying behind Johnson for in him they know they have a candidate upon whom they can rely and implicitly trust. There are few if any men in the state who have a greater capacity to comprehend public questions. Let us all get behind Mr. Johnson and give him a "boost" for if elected he will make a good Governor for Minnesota.

WARNING

On last Thursday evening about 10:15 o'clock, my bicycle was stolen from in front of the Magnet Inn. I saw party who took same thru the window and if it is not returned to 909 5th St. immediately, I shall get a warrant for their arrest and prosecute to the full extent of the law. It would be well for parents whose boys have come into possession of a bicycle mysteriously to look into the matter as this is a very serious offense.

W. E. Soderling, 909 5th St. South.

ROSELAND

June 12—Mr. and Mrs. Gustaf Johnson spent Sunday at the A. O. Renstrom home.

Mr. and Mrs. A. O. Renstrom and son Reynold and daughter Francis visited with Mr. and Mrs. Ture Carlson on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Renstrom and family were entertained at Wm. Renstrom's on Sunday.

Miss Francis Renstrom is assisting Mrs. Ture Carlson with sewing this week.

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Lindquist and family spent Sunday evening with Mr. and Mrs. Roy Lindquist.

Melvin Renstrom spent last Sunday at G. B. Hoon's.

The Lake Lillian kid team defeated the Winfield team 21 to 11 on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Lindquist and family spent Sunday at the Ed Nelson home in Svea.

Elmer Peterson of Minneapolis visited with Richard Rudbeck's on Sunday.

Archie Eastman was seen out riding on Sunday.

Albert (Blomquist) and son Bertel made a call on Roy Lindquist on Monday.

Roy Lindquist was an Olivia caller on Monday.

Evangeline Renstrom of Willmar spent Wednesday afternoon at her parental home here.

Victor Renstrom of North Dakota is spending this week with his brothers, Andrew and Ole Renstrom.

June 5—Violet Renstrom made her usual call at G. B. Hoon's on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Ture Carlson and son Wendell were entertained at Vincent Kostka's last Sunday afternoon.

Oscar Olson was a Svea caller on Monday.

Harold Blomquist called at A. O. Renstrom's on Sunday evening.

Martin Larson and Elvera Blomquist were among those who attended the ball game last Sunday.

The ice cream social which was held at G. B. Hoon's on Saturday evening was well attended.

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Lindquist and daughter Maxine, Mr. and Mrs. Albert Blomquist and family, Mrs. Erick Rosen and Mrs. Ole Blomquist motored to Fairfax on Sunday.

Clifford Adams called on Violet Renstrom last Saturday evening.

Archie Eastman called at William Lindquist's on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Oscar Wahlquist and daughter Jane and Mr. and Mrs. John Sundin of Willmar were entertained at P. G. Gibson's on Sunday.

Roy Lindquist and Archie Eastman called at Erick Rosen's on Monday.

Dr. Tilderquist of Duluth was vis-

iting with his sister, Mrs. P. G. Gibson, a few days last week.

P. M. Renstrom and daughter Ruth called at A. O. Renstrom's on Wednesday afternoon.

Mrs. Fred Lindquist spent last Tuesday visiting at the P. G. Gibson home.

Rev. and Mrs. Axel Anderson and family and Mrs. Albert Blomquist autted to the twin cities on Monday for a few days visit with relatives and friends.

Jim McRhoden called at Charley Kostka's one day last week.

Mr. and Mrs. Gilbert Heglund, Mr. and Mrs. David Gustafson and families spent Tuesday last week at P. M. Renstrom's.

A. O. Renstrom and son Reynold were business callers at Svea on Wednesday afternoon.

The ice cream social, which was held at John Anderson's on Thursday evening was well attended.

Dr. Masker of Olivia called at Oscar Olson's on Wednesday evening of last week.

Mrs. William Lindquist visited at Gibson's one day last week.

Ray and Harold Blomquist were business callers at Olivia on Thursday.

Mrs. Oscar Wahlquist and daughter Jane spent a few days last week visiting at her parental home here.

Ole Blomquist and son Albert were Bird Island visitors on Thursday afternoon.

AUCTION SALE

As I am going to leave the state, I will sell at public auction at the Lake Lillian Lutheran parsonage, on

Wednesday, June 28th, 1922,

beginning at two o'clock p. m., all my household goods and part of my library, also a Ford Touring car.

TERMS: All sums of \$10 or under, cash; above that amount time will be given until November 1, 1922, on approved notes bearing 8 per cent interest.

REV. B. O. BERG, Owner

C. F. Olson, Auctioneer, Bank of Willmar, clerk.

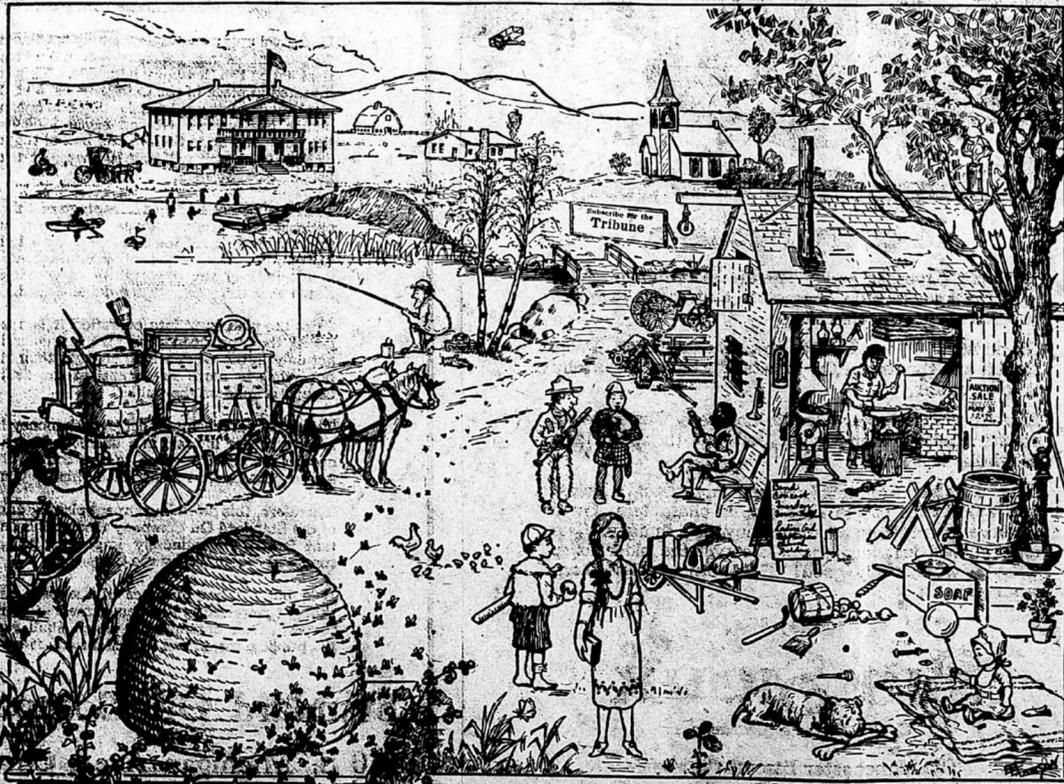
Recommends Chamberlain's Tablets

"Chamberlain's Tablets have been used by my husband and myself off and on for the past five years. When my husband goes away from home he always takes a bottle of them along with him. Whenever I have that heavy feeling after eating, or feel dull and played out, I take one or two of Chamberlain's Tablets and they fix me up fine," writes Mrs. Newton Vreeland, Minoa, N. Y. Take these tablets when troubled with constipation or indigestion and they will do you good.—Advertisement.

WILLMAR TRIBUNE'S BEE-HIVE PICTURE PUZZLE

The Willmar Tribune is the Leading Newspaper of City and County. Unless you read it, you are not in touch with affairs in the community. Subscription price \$2.00 per year--\$5.00 for three years

An Educational Test Worthy of Anyone's Best Efforts
Find the Objects in this Picture Beginning with the Letter "B"



CONTEST CLOSES JUNE 20TH, 1922.

This Contest is Open to Everybody

WIN SOME OF THIS MONEY

\$10.00 will be given to the party sending the largest amount of subscriptions with their answer whether a winner of any other prize or not.	If no subscription is sent in with answer.	If one year's subscription is sent in with the answer.	If two year's subscription is sent in with the answer.
First Prize	\$3.00	\$15.00	\$25.00
Second Prize	2.50	10.00	18.00
Third Prize	2.00	5.00	10.00
Fourth Prize	1.50	3.00	5.00
Fifth Prize	1.00	2.00	2.50
Sixth Prize50	1.00	2.00

SPECIAL PRIZE OF \$25.00 to winner of first prize if one of subscriptions sent in is for a new subscriber

RULES OF CONTEST

- Contest closes June 20, 1922, and all answers must be mailed on or before that day, though it is not necessary that they reach the Tribune office on that day.
- Contest is open to everybody, whether they live in or outside of Kandiyohi County. Employees of this paper or anyone connected with the Tribune however are barred from participating.
- Answers should be written on only one side of the paper. Write your name and address plainly at the head of your lists. If you write of anything else, use a separate sheet of paper.
- Only English words found in the dictionary can be used. Obsolete and foreign meaning words will not be counted.
- The same object can be named but once. This does not preclude however the naming of an object which is a part of another object.
- Only such compound words which by long usage have become, and in the dictionary are given, as one word, can be used. Hyphenated words and words that appear in the dictionary as two words are not to be considered.
- The word may be given in the singular or plural form but if the one is used the other cannot be.
- The first prize will be awarded to the contestant whose answer has the largest and nearest correct list of objects found in the picture which begin with the letter "B", second prize to the next nearest correct, etc. Neatness and penmanship will not be taken into consideration, but every contestant should be careful about the spelling so that no mistake will be made.
- Only one prize will be awarded to members of the same household, or to any group outside of the family who may have co-operated in the answering of this puzzle.
- The judges will be three well known citizens of this community having no connection with the Willmar Tribune and will be selected for their fitness for such a task. The award of prizes as determined by these judges will be final and each contestant agrees to abide by their decision.
- In arriving at this decision the judges will allow one point for each correct word. A margin of 15 incorrect words will be granted to each contestant to allow for a possible legitimate difference of opinion; but each incorrect word above that number will count one against.
- If two contestants tie for first place the first and second prizes will be divided between the two pro rata according to their class. The next highest will receive the third prize, etc. If three tie for first place, the first, second and third prizes will be divided between the three in same manner, etc., etc.

Address all Answers to TRIBUNE PRINTING CO., Willmar, Minn.