

Reds Show Their Hand

Socialists In Federation of Labor For Drastic Action On Living Cost.—Want Jail Terms Imposed.—Confiscation and Government Ownership Urged. Delegates Go To See President.

Baltimore, Md., Nov. 18.—The "Reds," as the Socialists in the American Federation of Labor are called, showed their heads for the first time yesterday on the convention floor in the Garden Theatre, to espouse confiscation, jail sentence and Government ownership as remedies for the high cost of living.

Max Hayes, of Cleveland, chief thorn in the side of the conservatives, known as "leader of the Reds," and, strangely enough, a delegate from that most conservative of all departments of organized labor, the International Typographical Union, led the fight against the adoption of a resolution urging the appointment of a commission to investigate the high cost of living. His opinion and the opinion of Max Seidel, of Decatur, Ill., and other trades unionists with socialistic instincts was that Federal investigations were a drug upon the market; that history showed that they had never done any good, and that they were a waste of time.

Federal Commission Favored.

The resolution providing for the investigation was introduced by State Senator William Green, of Ohio, head of the United Mine Workers of America. It was adopted and the Federation of Labor went on record as favoring the Federal commission, but not until after Hayes, Seidel and others had advocated the arrest and imprisonment of those responsible for the high cost of white paper, the confiscation by the Government of all foodstuffs and immediate Government ownership of all mines, railroads, meat-packing industries and the like.

The adoption of the resolution was taken by political wise men in the convention to be an index to the strength of the "Reds," who will undoubtedly seek to influence the Federation and to mold its policies in other matters.

One of these matters, it is expected, will be the re-election of Secretary Frank Morrison. The nucleus around which Morrison's opponents hope to build up an organization strong enough to beat him is composed of four thousand "Red" votes in the convention. Hayes' and Seidel's speeches were loudly cheered, but their principles were

rebutted in the vote upon the resolution.

Called Revolutionary Proposition.

The convention, however, opposed investigation when the resolution taking a stand against President Wilson's plan to make illegal any railroad strike or lockout prior to a Federal inquiry came up. The plan was embodied in the President's message to Congress, in which, at the same time, he urged the enactment of the Eight-Hour Law. The Federation of Labor's opposition to it was embodied in the Executive Council's report. A resolution, based upon that report was adopted yesterday.

That resolution declares the President's plan to forestall strikes "a revolutionary proposition totally out of harmony with our prevailing institutions and out of harmony with our philosophy of government," and declares that it "subjects wage-earners to involuntary servitude," and that its purpose is "to compel railroad men to work even against their will." It would "make criminals of men who cease work during the period of compulsory investigation," says the resolution, and "would not prevent strikes."

In the words of the resolution, the Federation's adoption of it puts the organization on record as taking "an unequivocal position against compulsory institutions and in favor of the maintenance of institutions and opportunities for freedom."

Report Supports Resolutions.

Favorable reports were received upon resolutions contained in the Executive Council's report to improve the working condition of Government employees. At 12:30 the convention adjourned until 9:30 this morning, when more resolutions considered yesterday afternoon by the resolution committee will be reported.

Last night the delegates attended the vaudeville performance at the Maryland Theatre.

At 12:55 today, the delegates, nearly four hundred strong, will leave on a special train over the Pennsylvania Railroad, for Washington, where President Wilson will receive them at 5 o'clock. Between their arrival there and their march to the White House, they will be entertained at the headquarters of the Washington Federation of Labor.

METAL MINERS CHANGE NAME.

Denver.—By a referendum vote the Western Federation of Miners favor changing the name of their organization to "International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers." It is stated that the new name corresponds to the jurisdiction, industrially and geographically, of the metal miners. Application will be made to the American Federation of Labor to sanction the change.

At a meeting of the miners' executive board in this city it was decided to inaugurate an extensive organizing campaign and a statement to affiliates, the board said.

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RAILROADS ATTACK ADAMSON 8-HOUR LAW

New York.—Railroad managers and the executives of the four railroad brotherhoods held a meeting in this city last Monday to reach a common understanding on the workings of the Adamson Eight-Hour Law.

The meeting was unsuccessful. The railroad employees notified the managers that the strike order, given them by their members before the law was passed, was still in effect, and that if the managers persist in attacking the law through the courts that the strike order will be enforced January 1 next.

Washington, D. C.—Numerous suits against the Adamson Eight-Hour Law for railroad train service employees have been started by railroad companies throughout the country.

Since the act was passed some of the highest priced lawyers in the nation have been retained by the companies to study the law to discover an unconstitutional flaw. It is now stated that the fifth amendment to the Federal constitution, which declares that no one shall be deprived of life, liberty or property without the process of law, will be the principal refuge of these attorneys.

This amendment is the regulation defense of every reactionary influence in its opposition to social legislation.

Observing trade unionists, however, believe that these suits are only a part of the general strategy of railroads to secure legislation from Congress that will tie to their jobs all workers employed in interstate transportation service.

The railroads would especially welcome the passage of a law similar to the Canadian Industrial Disputes Act, which prohibits a strike of workers employed in a public utility until after a government investigation. This law was denounced by the last convention of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, after a nine years' trial, and the Dominion Government was called upon to repeal the same. The same theory, applicable to all industries, was made a law by the last Colorado legislature, and after a year's trial the organized workers of Colorado have demanded its repeal.

Other legislation desired by the railroads would empower the Interstate Commerce Commission to fix wages of railroad employees.

These two proposals would result in fastening a worker to his job and take from him the right to sell his labor power.

To secure this legislation the finest strategy is necessary, in view of the declared hostility of the American Federation of Labor and the four railroad brotherhoods.

Because of this fact it is essential that an atmosphere of uncertainty be created in the minds of the public, through numerous court suits and agitation by big business for a commission. The railroads are hopeful that a public opinion will be developed that will justify their friends in Congress demanding that the matter be "straightened out" by turning the whole question over to a commission and deny workers the right to strike pending an investigation.

SEAMEN'S LAW PROTECTS.

Seattle, Wash.—Judge Neterer has notified ship owners that the Seamen's law, which is so bitterly opposed by them, has "teeth," and they must abandon old practices in their treatment of seamen.

This decision was made in the case of a seaman who shipped from Australia for Puget Sound. On arriving in this city he made complaint that he was brutally treated by the second mate and that the captain of the vessel permitted his subordinate to escape arrest.

The owner and captain of the vessel attempted to avoid responsibility by claiming that the Seamen's Law did not apply in this case as the complainant was not a citizen of the United States. To this claim the court replied:

"The fact that the libelant is not a citizen of the United States does not change his relation to the act, as engaging in the service as one of the crew of the American ship 'Blakely' brought him within the protection and benefits of all of the laws passed by Congress on behalf of American seamen, and subject to all of their obligations and liabilities."

PLUMBERS MAKE GAINS.

Leominster, Mass.—After a four weeks' strike the Plumbers' Union secured a 50-cent wage increase, and six months later, 40 cents, together with a 44-hour week six months in the year.

Santa Barbara, Cal.—Plumbers and steamfitters in this city have raised wages without a strike. Thorough organization made the success of these workers possible.

GARMENT WORKERS ADVANCE.

Erie, Pa.—Members of the United Garment Workers' union employed by the Standard Manufacturing company have raised wages 5 per cent as a result of conferences. The increase affects cutters, operators and finishers.

TRADE UNION METHODS SUCCEED IN PORTO RICO

Washington.—Porto Rico workers have been benefited by affiliation to the American Federation of Labor, writes Organizer Santiago Iglesias, of San Juan, Porto Rico, to A. F. of L. headquarters.

"There has been a true and real awakening of the laborers in all the trades and different industries of San Juan," he says. "The spirit of the labor movement and organization is more intense than ever before in past history. It seems that the seed of unionism, sown for so many years, is now sprouting strongly and vigorously in this capital of the island and other important towns."

"The strikes that have broken forth in the middle of last August, up to this date, have been more frequent and numerous than at any other time in the history of the labor movement of the American Federation of Labor in Porto Rico. The coal workers, the longshoremen and the men employed at the wharves and railroad warehouses have risen to a man and gone on strike, and all their demands have met with success. Their victory has been encouraging, and has cast considerable credit on the various labor organizations that have been helping, encouraging and leading these important movements."

Organizer Iglesias also states that railroad shop employees of San Juan won a strike that secured higher wages, better working conditions and more liberty of action. Female employees of the Porto Rican-American Tobacco company, to the number of 2,000, secured improved conditions as the result of a strike. The same is true of meat cutters and butchers.

Building craftsmen and employees in the metal trades are still on strike.

"All these strikes," continues Organizer Iglesias, "have been managed and helped along by the representatives of the American Federation of Labor, in whom the non-organized workers, who were the majority among the strikers, had their confidence and trust."

"As a result of the propaganda, free meetings in the open air and all activities, literature, etc., throughout the island, the workmen of Porto Rico will achieve great moral uplift and considerable benefits in the different trades. These people are now gathering the fruits of their endeavors. As a result of the strikes, some 20 new charters will be needed and each new union will contain a full contingent of members with more experience than ever."

OPTICAL WORKERS STRIKE.

Southbridge, Mass.—A strike of 500 workers employed by the American Optical company should dispel the illusion that this industry employs nothing but the highest skilled workers. Most of the strikers are Greeks, Rumanians, Albanians, Italians and Poles, and many of them cannot understand the English language. In the lens shop piece-work is the rule and \$1.25 and \$1.00 is the average for a 10 and 12-hour day.

The Labor News of Worcester makes this comment on the strike:

"The good old bunk adage that the American manufacturer desires 'protection' and a higher tariff as a 'protection' for his employees 'from the pauper labor of Europe' is being shown up in another instance where the employer hires that very sort of labor and screws the poor foreigner down to a wage level lower than any American would work for. And after driving the poor foreigner as far as possible into the mire of inadequate wages and proper conditions, it is surprising that the poor immigrant should revolt and should talk of organizing unions? It is shown more conclusively every day even to the poor, striking foreigner, that the trade union is his only salvation against greed and tyranny."

REJECT ROCKEFELLER "UNION"

Trinidad, Colo.—The Monthly Bulletin of the Colorado Fuel and Iron company pays a glowing tribute to the Rockefeller "union," whose record, it is stated, "has been thoroughly gratifying to all who have the interests of this company and its employees at heart."

Editor O'Neil of the Trinidad Free Press, is cynical, however, and makes this comment:

"No one would expect that a publication financed by the Colorado Fuel and Iron company would condemn the 'industrial plan' formulated by the salaried cabinet of John D. Rockefeller, Jr."

"The 'industrial plan' established by Rockefeller is a failure, and the fact that the miners and other employees employed in the plants of the Colorado Fuel and Iron company, are deserting the 'industrial plan' and becoming members of the United Mine Workers of America, proves that laboring men have discerned the swindle that has been palmed off as an institution that will preserve the interests of the economic master, while protecting the interests of the victim of wage slavery."

"The Monthly Bulletin is endeavoring to bolster up a farce, but its effort to impose upon the credulity of the working class will be met with the building up of a real union on the ruins of an 'industrial plan,' that died from the ailments of its own infamy."

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