

Portland Labor Press

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TRADE UNION COUNCIL
PORTLAND

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Don't fail to register for the coming city election. Voters' list will close one week from tomorrow.

Send your union friends in the East a copy of last week's Labor Press. They will appreciate it.

To prospective candidates: Don't forget to mention the "square deal" in your platform. It's the correct thing.

Why smoke "scab" cigars made in dirty back rooms by half-starved children? "Have a good one; it's union-made."

Bear in mind the union label. Patronize those places of business that display union-made goods and let the merchant know the reason you buy of him.

Those citizens who are now endangering their necks in a wild scramble for a nomination had better go slow. There's going to be an election after the nominations.

Get into the habit of asking for the Union label; it's a good habit and one not to be ashamed of. Let your dealer know where you stand and he'll respect you.

"American Industries," the official mouthpiece of the Citizens' Alliance, is again making an appeal to merchants to withdraw their advertising from all labor papers. Consistency, where is thy jewelry?

There is no good reason why the church and organized labor should not be drawn closer together. Both are powerful factors in the moral development and betterment of mankind and by working harmoniously together much good would result.

The Citizens' Alliance is making preparations to "butt" into the city election. Already one of its high moguls is "mentioned" as a probable candidate for mayor. Portland labor unions may not have the money back of them that the C. I. A. has but every union man has a vote and votes will count in this election.

After reading the editorial on municipal ownership in Wednesday's Oregonian the Socialists of Portland were highly elated at having at last converted the editor to their cause. The Socialists' claim of victory is premature. Everybody who reads the Oregonian editorials knows that the editor's views are as changeable as the weathervane.

Mrs. J. H. Burlingame, of Chicago, and Dr. Osler are bound to depopulate the earth. The doctor would asphixiate all men over 40 years of age, and Mrs. Burlingame would stop the birth of children because, she says, they break up the home and cause trouble. Here is two fine subjects for the fool-killer whose functions of office should be performed without delay.

In order that organized labor shall show its full strength at the next municipal election it is necessary that every union man in the city should

have his name on the voters list. There is only one week more in which to register and no union member should neglect this plain duty.

The thing that makes President Roosevelt strong is the high moral standard he urges upon the American citizen and the fearless performance of his duties as a representative of the people. Here is a plank of his platform told to the people Wednesday on his way to the hunting grounds in Colorado:

"To you people in Kansas, to you in whom I believe so much, there are just one or two things I could say in this brief moment. There is nothing peculiar in the qualities you need in Government that differentiates those qualities from the qualities you need in having one private man deal with another. If a man is to be an advantage to the community in which he lives, he must be a decent, square-dealing man, who does fairly by his neighbors, who takes care of his family. The same qualities in another sphere must be applied in public life if he is to amount to anything—honesty, decency, courage and common sense."

GOVERNMENT OWNERSHIP.

The city election at Chicago April 4 can be termed as a decisive victory for the advocates of municipal ownership of public utilities, considering that the White City is not committed to large majorities for any party, and that Judge Dunne defeated Harlan by the largest majority ever polled in the history of Chicago. Another surprise developed in the small vote of the Socialists. Approximately the Socialists polled 20,000, when it was estimated that they would show returns fully 50,000 strong. It is evident therefore that the latter over-estimated their strength, or many of their faith cast their ballots for the candidate favoring the immediate enactment of their favorite scheme. This is in all probability what happened, and the most sensible thing they could do. In all events Chicago is now committed against private ownership of its traction service, and if the venture proves advantageous in time other public utilities will be taken up by the city. It may be called socialism, good business sense, or by whatever name, the experiment must needs be made in this country, and Chicago, the most progressive city in the Western continent, has taken the initiative. Many cities in the United States own their lighting plants, a few the telephone, Portland and other cities have built and operate their water works, and our own experience shows clearly that our water supply, the finest in the country, costs less, gives better satisfaction, and decreased by a large percentage the death rate, than under the old system of private ownership. There is not a resident in Portland today who would go back to the days when our drinking water was pumped out of the Willamette river, a couple of miles up the stream.

Chicago's election fully demonstrated that the consolidation of private interests of the common carriers is simply a step to ultimate government ownership, and why not? A monopoly exists; there is no competitive incentive; the people are taxed outrageously for a privilege that they could as well operate themselves, and they are relieved of money, one-half of which would, in two year's time, buy the whole traction system in Chicago, and then leave fair returns on the money invested.

A few years ago such an innovation as has been started by Chicago would have struck terror into the minds of the people, who would have declared that the people of Chicago had gone mad, and their actions were nothing less than a conspiracy against the Government. And the same thought would exist today were it not that the people have been forced into advanced thought and schemes of defence by the greed of the money power. It is this same greed that developed the strength of the trade unions, and unless the great financiers of this country moderate their appetite for authority and business ambition, the labor unions will not alone raise up and rebuke them Chicago has started a programme the world will watch with interest.

ACCUSERS BY IMPLICATION.

There is perhaps no policy more unfair nor unjust than to condemn an individual or an organization of individuals of a crime by implication. And in no quarter is it so inexcusable as that coming from a

source pretending to be an educator and the personification of equity. Yet the Associated Press is invariably guilty of this unenviable offense, and frequently is reinforced by editorial comment by some of our leading papers. This was the case in the industrial troubles of Colorado, where the trades unions were charged with a plot of blowing up a mine and destroying life and property; at the same time there was no evidence to confirm the charges, and out of scores of union men arrested upon circumstantial proof not one was convicted before the courts.

Now comes the tragedy of Zeigler, where thirty-five or more miners are blown into eternity by a premature explosion of powder, according to the state mine inspectors, and because Joseph Leiter, the stock gambler and owner of the mine, has declared open war on the Miners' Union for the past year, it is insinuated by the Associated Press and its editorial champions that in all probability the union miners are at the bottom of a deep plot to destroy the mine and all of the nonunion miners that worked underground.

In the first place, according to the reports of these same papers, Leiter had walled and garrisoned Zeigler—his city of several hundred houses—and placed armed guards to patrol the wall, and gatling guns in block-houses, covering every point that could be approached by the union men—his common enemy. It would therefore appear to any sensible mind that it was next to an impossible thing for the union miners to get inside to operate, and it is the simplest kind of argument to say that some sympathizer was induced to secure work in the mine and destroy his own life while destroying the others. There was not enough at stake, as is the case in Russia today, for this.

Again, the United Mine Workers of America, at which John Mitchell is the head, is anything but a criminal organization, and would lend any assistance to apprehend anyone guilty of so heinous a crime. After the explosion the officials of the union in that district offered any amount of men and assistance to rescue the unfortunate miners who lost their lives in the explosion.

These papers add that the cause of the trouble was due to the company installing machinery in the mine. This is not a fact in any sense. The cause of the strike was due to Leiter posting notices that the wages of the miners would be reduced from 10 to 20 per cent after the machinery was placed in the mine. The union miners refused to accept a reduction of wages. Leiter would not even listen to a conference and a strike was called. The union miners were then evicted from the houses owned by Leiter; he filled up his mine with negro strike-breakers from the South, built a wall around his little city, garrisoned it, and openly declared war upon all trades unions. After the eviction the union miners moved their families into tents and temporary wooden structures just outside of the walled city, and supported by their international with funds, proceeded to make it as interesting for Mr. Leiter as possible, always keeping within the law.

These are the facts of the labor troubles at Zeigler, and the explosion in all probability was due to incompetent workmen. Explosions sometimes occur in coal mines with experienced men, but they are usually caused by coal dust or the accumulation of gasses. The Zeigler explosion was caused by powder, and anyone familiar with mines knows what this means.

There is not the slightest evidence that the explosion was a plot framed by the union miners to injure Leiter or his nonunion negroes, yet the Associated Press and its newspaper coadjutors eagerly hasten to stigmatize organized labor with a fiendish crime that the latter would denounce as quickly as the Associated Press and its allies. In fact, in such cases, the accused is far better than its accusers.

WORTHY OF IMITATION.

According to the Post, published at Aberdeen, Wash., the painters of that city have a plan which may well be imitated in other unions. At each meeting three men on the roll are taken in their order and compelled to make a speech, recite a poem, sing a song or pay a fine of 10 cents, which goes into a refreshment fund. Should a member be absent when his turn on the roll comes, he is fined 10 cents. The plan is popular with the boys and the fund is growing. The

painters have also decided to compel each member to exemplify a piece of work at least three times during the year. This is an educational feature which it is believed will benefit the union.

LABOR WINS BY ERROR.

Enemies of Labor Unions Lose Out in Framing Bill.

That the factory inspection law, for the passage of which the lumber interests in the recent state legislature were prepared to sacrifice everything, and the enactment of which was made one of the conditions by which the railway commission bill became a law, will be an utter failure, says the Seattle Times, so far as affording the manufacturing interests the relief they desire, is the opinion of eminent legal authorities who have examined the law since the governor attached his signature.

The factory inspection bill was passed to take the place of a law already in existence, which required manufacturers to safeguard all dangerous machinery. Under the workings of the old law a man who was injured by unguarded machinery could bring action for damages, and a showing that the machinery was not properly guarded was evidence per se of negligence on the part of the owner, who was deprived of any right to show contributory negligence on the part of the injured employee.

The new law prescribes many of the provisions of the old law in regard to safeguarding machinery, but the section covering the point is very much involved.

It is made the duty of the labor commissioner of the state to inspect as soon as practicable after the passage of the act, and annually thereafter, all factories, mills, warehouses, storehouses, warerooms, stores and buildings containing machinery in operation, and every person operating a factory, mill or workshop is given the privilege of calling upon the labor commissioner for an inspection of his premises.

Will Issue a Certificate.

When in the judgment of the labor commissioner the machinery inspected is in conformity with the provisions of the act, he is required to issue a certificate which shall be prima



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UNION MADE
\$10 to \$25
MEN'S
SPRING SUITS

We've Everything That
Men and Boys Wear ::

facie evidence, as long as it continues in force, of a compliance with the provisions of the act.

It is by the use of this certificate in actions for damages that the mill and factory owners hope to escape the burden of proof placed upon them, but the framers of the bill, for some reason yet to be given, placed a section of it, which, in the opinion of lawyers who have examined it, practically nullifies the effect of all that has gone before in the act.

Section 10 reads as follows:

"Nothing in this act contained shall prevent any person from bringing an action under any other statute or act, or at common law, for any personal injuries received by him; and in that event the certificate provided for herein shall not be admitted in evidence in such suit or action."

Just what this section means, it is admitted, will require an interpretation by the courts, but it is generally contended that it will be possible to bring actions for damages for injuries occurring in any manner in any mill or factory, with no more restrictions as to evidence than if the factory inspection law were not on the statute books.

This section also cuts out the advantage the mill men think they have in section 8 of the law, which places a \$7,500 limit of liability.

The sum and substance of the opinion expressed by many is that the lumbermen have obligated themselves to pay thousands of dollars annually to secure a lot of certificates that will be of no value to them, and in so doing have laid themselves open to

payment of additional damages for minor injuries, and further, have not escaped from the burden of proof or secured a limitation of damages in the larger claims for damages.

The Department of Justice at Washington is making preparations to begin an investigation of the Standard Oil company's methods in the oil fields of Kansas and other states which shall be independent of the work of Commissioner Garfield. The intentions of this department were made known last week, when the federal officers of Kansas received orders to furnish to the department all information they could get regarding the business methods of the Standard in this state. The department also has several secret service men at work in the oil fields and their reports will be considered with the reports of the officers here.

After struggling for two years to gain recognition the telephone girls of Springfield, Mo., claim to have the first union in that industry. All the operatives of the telephone company in Springfield are members of the union, which has the sanction of the company. The new organization has a signed wage scale and a strict union shop agreement, and is affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. As a result of organization wages have been materially increased.

The members of the Boston Cigarmakers' union voted to assess themselves \$5 for label agitation, the amount to be paid at the rate of 25 cents a week. The total will be \$10,000.

MR. WORKINGMAN

THINK THIS OVER

ARE YOU PAYING RENT FOR THE USE OF THE OTHER FELLOW'S HOUSE? IF YOU ARE, WHY NOT STOP NOW THROWING AWAY SO MUCH MONEY AND BEGIN A LITTLE FINANCEERING ON YOUR OWN ACCOUNT? THAT SAME MONEY YOU ARE NOW WASTING FOR RENT WOULD PAY FOR YOUR OWN HOME IN A FEW SHORT YEARS

EVELYN

THE BEAUTIFUL RESIDENCE LOCATION IN THE HEART OF THE MT. SCOTT DISTRICT, HAS SOLVED THE RENT PROBLEM FOR OTHERS, WHY NOT FOR YOU TOO? LOTS ARE GOING FOR \$3.00 A MONTH, TAKE THE CAR AT FIRST AND ALDER STREETS AND SEE FOR YOURSELF, AGENT ON GROUNDS

GEO. W. BROWN, 203 Failing Bldg