

Ballot Not Specific for Industrial Woes

Address by C. O. Young, at the Labor Day Celebration at Kelso, Washington

Labor Day, recognized by all classes of society as a holiday consecrated to the real wealth producers of the nation, is at hand, and we are met here for the purpose of fittingly celebrating the occasion in honor of the achievements and accomplishments of the last year, and to dedicate anew our lives to the continuation of the task of elevating the human race to that standard of living that justice shall be the portion of all.

We, the workers of today, are joining in joyous celebration with those who were pioneers in hewing out of the wilderness homes that dot the hills and valleys bordering on the famous Cowlitz River. Those of the mill, the camp, the factory, the farm, and the business house of Kelso, have come to do honor to those who make civilization possible by human energy and skill; and to join hands with those who throughout the continent are making the day universally recognized as labor's holiday. We of the shop and factory do not forget that the tillers of the soil, and all who give valuable service to society are producers of wealth, and are entitled to the highest consideration. We of the labor movement appreciate greatly the honor of having the pioneers of this part of Washington join with us in the celebration of labor's great holiday. I trust that what I say shall give those present a broader view of the labor movement and aid in giving an understanding of its objects, aims and aspirations.

Labor Day.

The initial action taken, setting apart in this country one day in the year on which to review the activities and beneficial influence of organized labor, occurred at the afternoon meeting of the third day of the fourth annual session of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, October 9, 1884, the convention being held in Schloessers' Hall, Chicago. The resolution creating Labor Day was introduced in the convention by A. C. Cameron, delegate from the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly, and was as follows: "Resolved, That the first Monday in September of each year be set apart as labor's holiday, and that we recommend its observance by all wage earners irrespective of race, calling or nationality."

W. J. Hammond, representing the International Typographical Union from New Orleans, La., was the presiding officer of the convention. The delegates attending numbered only 26. The next convention of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada was held in Columbus, Ohio, December 8 to 12, 1886, and there, joining forces with what was called the "Trade Union Conference," formed the American Federation of Labor, which became the official title of the organization thenceforward. Today I represent that organization, which has grown from a body of a few thousand members, to one of more than two million members. When the gavel sounds calling to order the next convention of the American Federation of Labor in the City of Seattle, November 10th, next, there will be representatives from every State and Province of the North American Continent. Yes, and representatives from across the sea representing the trade union movement of Europe as well.

The two million and more trade unionists are marching and celebrating today, giving expressions of gladness and hopefulness at their achievements, and displaying the strength of numbers as a public notice of their power in the industrial world, and that they are united in the defense of human liberty and the right to maintain decent standards of living for manhood, womanhood and childhood.

Labor Sunday.

Labor has another day which, though recently established, is recognized as important, known as Labor Sunday. The dedication of the Sunday prior to Labor Day as Labor Sunday, was first urged by the Presbyterian Bureau of Social Service in 1905, the Reverend Charles Stehle, of New York City, being the originator of the plan. The Bureau has been merged into the Federal Council Commission on Church and Social Service.

Secretary Morrison, of the American Federation of Labor, at the Toronto convention of that body, introduced a resolution which was concurred in by the convention on designating the Sunday before Labor Day as Labor Sunday. The Federal Council Commission has made a systematic effort to have Labor Sunday generally observed, and last year suggested the text, "One Day's Rest in Seven for all Workers."

Many pulpits were filled yesterday by labor unionists who preached the doctrine of the Carpenter of Nazareth, that "I am my brother's keeper," and that the word Christian means Christ-like, and that we should begin to build a heaven here if we expect to realize one in the beyond.

Why Do Men Organize.

It seems almost foolish to be asked the question, "Why do men organize?" But there are those who manifest good reasoning faculties, who do not seem to understand that men organize because we are compelled to; because it is impossible in this age of centralization of forces to stand as individual working people, while every form of business enterprise is thoroughly organized, working in co-operation.

In this competitive age, business being done on such a large scale, all

successful business is compelled to join with a centralized organization as a matter of protection, from a dollar and cents point of view, as well as an assurance of success. If men are permitted to protect their interests from the dollar standpoint, then how much greater is the need of labor organizing from the human angle of the question. We all know that the tendency of large employers is to buy labor as cheaply as possible, and to substitute any class of labor for that of skilled labor, providing it is cheaper, without question. Were it not for labor organizations, those who toil would be in worse position than were the chattel slaves of not so long ago. We must bargain collectively if we are to be free.

If you will go with me to a country where labor is not permitted to organize, I will show you a country where the standard of manhood is low, the standard of morality still lower, and human aspirations at their lowest ebb. I will show you also universal misery among the working people; a government the picture of cruelty and tyranny; people with a low order of intelligence, just as cruel as their government, and just as criminal and selfish. On the other hand, go with me to the country where labor organizations are most generally recognized and where they are the strongest, and I will show you a country where the standard of manhood is at its highest; the citizenship most excellent; morality of high standard. You will find there the vineyard cottage, with music and culture, and love of country and home.

Low Wages Kill Morality.

Morality does not thrive where wages are low. Morality cannot thrive in unsanitary habitations, neither will it develop on inferior or unwholesome food. Children of high order are not born under that class of surroundings. If we would have a better generation, consequently a better nation, we must prepare better surroundings in which future citizens are to be born and reared. The boys and girls of the slums today will be the fathers and mothers of tomorrow, and the boys and girls of the sweatshop districts will be the parents of a generation of unskilled workers.

The appeal to our endeavor is happiness, and we realize that real happiness cannot come in spots, it must be universal. No broad-minded, conscientious person can be happy while others are miserable. That much-wished-for time will only be near when all shall have plenty to eat and drink and know from whence they shall be clothed and have a place on which to lay their heads. Then shall hope spring anew in the hearts of all mankind and men will rejoice in the reign of universal equity.

Our problem is the problem of life. No question is of such magnitude to the human family. In it you are vitally interested, you must be.

The moral question depends to a great extent on the bread and butter problem. That human beings shall hunger in a land that is productive enough to feed the world, is almost beyond belief. Yet in our land, blessed with productive soil and natural opportunities, want stalks abroad. To abate that unnatural condition is one of the great objects of organized labor. Organization of the units of industry, and then education as to the needs of the human family, and the understanding of economic needs and the remedies of wrong philosophies, must occupy the attention of workmen and women. We must take hold of the situation as we find it, and by organization of the great wealth-producing classes and by education to the point of understanding of human needs, correct wrongs and establish right and justice even as we are able to apply correct principles. And let me remark here, that correct principles cannot be dreamed into practical operation; we must know; we must think clearly without prejudice; we must act.

Vote Not Cure-All.

You cannot vote intelligence into the human family, neither can you by joining any particular political party have a great deal more brains than you had before you professed the faith. The greatest need of the masses is to have knowledge of practical needs, and then they will not have to be told how to vote—that duty will take care of itself.

In the trade union movement we have learned that the greatest advancement we have made comes from the fact that we have strong organizations and force recognition by united demand for our rights. The rules or unwritten laws we make by organized effort, far excel in effectiveness any laws labor has attained by political action.

We must recognize the fact that organization is primarily necessary before either the industrial or political strength of the people will be manifest. And I am bold in making the statement that if all who labor would organize, and by education and unity claim their own, very little political action would be necessary. Do not misunderstand me as saying that I do not believe political action necessary, but I hold such action not so necessary as that of thorough organization of labor's forces, and an understanding of the things possible through collective effort. I would not by any means dispense with any political rights, for political rights like the right to strike, puts in our possession a weapon the use of which—or the threat of the use of it—ofttimes brings splendid recognition of labor's rights that cannot otherwise be obtained.

That political action alone will solve the problems confronting those who labor is sheer folly. Australia tried the political route in curing human society's ills, and lost sight, for the time being at least, of labor unions, and as the unions waned, their political strength diminished and the humane measures established by legal enactments began to be discarded. Then the cry went up from labor's political forces as well as the remaining unions, "Back to the unions, the basis for all political and industrial strength of the hosts of labor."

Strong Organization Necessary.

The power that enables us to achieve results for labor is in strong intelligently conducted organizations. Sometimes our weapons are crude, and sometimes they seem to be—and are—wisely used; but they are all that we have, and if they are not very modern it is not our fault. To be compelled to continually fight oppression well fortified in its position, while we are poorly equipped, is a long and weary contest; and one cannot expect much change in the methods and weapons, until there is a greater awakening to the realization of human rights by the slumbering masses who are only indirectly affected by the contest.

Public inconvenience and suffering is held up by the opponents of organized labor as one of the great sins in an attempt to influence unthinking non-combatants that labor's fight is not a righteous cause. And because of the indirect suffering of the public many schemes have been proposed to curtail our rightful liberties in carrying on contests to give to the laboring millions justice and the right to live in decency and comfort. The public, feeling the sting of the onslaught, oftentimes without thought of the justice of our position, condemns us and thereby aids in our defeat. There must come from the source of public opinion more expression of knowledge of human needs, and an awakening to the realization that the people must demand of wealth recognition of labor's rights. People must more and more realize that a greater value must be placed upon human flesh and blood than upon paltry dollars.

In the wild scramble for wealth, human weal, as a general proposition, has been forgotten. In the glamor of the power and prestige for which wealth is sought, oppressed humanity has been trampled under foot, and left mangled and bleeding. The real opponents of the labor movement have never considered the matter from the angle of just dealing. Justice is not one of the component parts of those whose mission is the destruction of unionism. Theirs is a mission of destruction in the interests of self-aggrandizement and power regardless of suffering and death.

Mulhall Exposures of Value.

The recent congressional investigation of the lobby, and the exposures made by the sworn statements of Colonel Mulhall and others of the methods and operations of the National Association of Manufacturers in the political field and in efforts relative to legislation, is only a verification of what we have known for years of the despicable methods and cunning schemes used to defeat the efforts of labor in the establishment and maintenance of working conditions consistent with decent manhood and womanhood through organization. And equally as despicable is the effort to secure the enactment of laws abrogating the people's constitutional rights, and the efforts which are oftentimes successful in the defeat of remedial legislation.

The labor union disrupters and destroyers accuse us of advocating violence and the use by unions of "Un-American Methods," etc. That wrong, and great wrong, has been done in the name of labor none will deny, but the charge that our organizations, or the principles taught by them, encourage violence or destruction of property, or other wrongdoing is false. That organization which must depend for its success upon wrongdoing will utterly fail, for as Ella Wheeler Wilcox says, "No question is ever settled until it is settled right." Attempts to influence labor leaders by offers of remunerative employment, bribes or intimidation, are of frequent occurrence. While a few professed union men fall from lack of manhood to withstand temptation and courage of conviction to be firm, the many who have pledged their lives in defense of common justice have stood steadfast. There is no organization in history that sacrificed more or extended the hand of real charity further than labor unions are doing. They minister to the sick, they bury the dead, they care for the widew and educate the orphan. In fact, their charity for the struggling wealth producer is boundless.

Our opponents accuse us of having the desire for trouble, and say that labor's representatives cause trouble in order that they may be able to keep their positions. Only those with criminal minds or those who are ignorant of the principles we proclaim, will dare make such accusations.

Unions Greatest Uplifting Force.

Men all agree that happiness is the final goal and to aid in bringing that much-sought-for ideal the trade unions are playing a greater part than all other forces combined. Let me present these facts: The labor movement has redeemed from worse than slavery millions of struggling working people; giving them hope, sunlight, health, education and happiness; shortening their hours of toil that they might have time to recuperate, to strengthen vitality; giving time to associate with friends and family; regaining vitality to bring forth a vigorous generation; gaining time to properly direct inquiry into the

philosophies of life for future citizenship, and in many other ways aiding society as a whole to make strides towards higher and better living.

Besides shortening the working day and giving relief from arduous toil, the trade unions have forced better compensation for labor performed, so that men and women and children have been able to be better fed, better clothed, and better housed. The result of this plan is better health, better morals, and better citizenship, the greatest requisites toward a higher civilization. Trade unions have made better conditions in which people must work; they are taking the children from the factory and the shop, giving them a little sunlight and opportunity for education and development. You ask, "Is it labor that is forcing the recognition of those principles?" I say yes, most emphatically. Every concession that has been accorded to the toiler, every law on the nation's statute books, every law of state and municipality in the interest of those who labor, are there as a direct result of organized labor's efforts and demands.

Help for Womankind.

The trade union is making an effort to give to women who are compelled to enter industry a wage consistent with respectable, healthful living, and as fast as possible organized labor intends to gain for women equal pay with men for equal work. Do you know that today women get less than half the pay that men receive for the same work? Can you figure out how it takes less food, clothing and shelter for a woman than it does for a man? Then why the difference? The answer is, the old custom of making women the burden bearers and drudges, with the only recompense, that of her keep.

I ask that you judge the workers by their ideals and not by their faults. Organizations are composed of human beings with all the frailties and weaknesses of the human family. I have only this excuse to offer for the mistakes of labor: Who has greater right to make mistakes than he who by oppression, for generations, with bended back, with no opportunity for understanding, has been compelled to toil incessantly, for barely an existence? As we are permitted to enjoy a little more of daylight and to revel in the sunshine and the flowers we become better equipped to know right from wrong and to apply the Golden Rule. As our efforts have been rewarded by the elimination of wrong, and our burdens have been lightened, the people have grown in moral stature and in the understanding of right living. There is nothing so elevating as liberty, as justice; nothing more humiliating than poverty, than charity. For justice we shall continue to strive to the end that happiness shall be universal; that poverty shall be driven from the land; that man shall be magnified in industry, and that American woman shall not be robbed of her natural right to be queen of the home and mother of the greatest race the world shall ever see.

SEAMEN'S BILL GIVEN SUPPORT

Central Labor Council Would Aid in Gaining Needed Laws.

The following resolutions were passed by the Central Labor Council, Friday night:

"Whereas, Senate Bill No. 4, introduced by Senator LaFollette, to promote the welfare of American seamen and secure safety of life at sea, in its main features a copy of the bill passed by Congress last session and vetoed by President Taft; and

"Whereas, the three main purposes of the bill are: First, to give freedom to American seamen and to improve their condition; second, to promote safety of life at sea; third, to equalize the wage cost of operating vessels, foreign and domestic, taking cargoes or passengers from ports of the United States; therefore be it

"Resolved, by the Central Labor Council of Portland and vicinity, that Senate Bill No. 4 is hereby endorsed and the secretary is instructed to send a copy of these resolutions to Senators Chamberlain and Lane, with request to vote for this bill.

"Resolved, that copies of these resolutions be given to the press and that members of the Council be urged to write to Senators Chamberlain and Lane, asking active support for this bill."

WILL STUDY CANADIAN LAWS

Commissioners May Learn of Better Methods to Settle Labor Disputes.

Charles G. Wood and Frank M. Bump, of Boston, Mass., appointed by Governor Foss of Massachusetts as special commissioners to investigate the Industrial Disputes Act of Canada, arrived in Ottawa Tuesday, to consult with officials of the Canadian Labor Department.

The two commissioners have been instructed to learn whether the industrial law is superior to the Massachusetts law governing labor disputes. One feature when the labor trouble involves important subject is the Canadian arbitration board has found it a private business. The Massachusetts paratively easy to handle public service industrial disputes, but much harder to make satisfactory settlements in the case of private corporations.

Municipal Railway Profits.

British cities during the year 1912 made profits from street car lines as follows: Glasgow, \$1,328,885; London, \$1,505,810; Birmingham, \$480,230; Liverpool, \$573,660; Manchester, \$425,000; Huddersfield, \$121,405; Leeds, \$511,510; Leicester, \$101,570; Bradford, \$263,915; Bolton, \$135,035, and sums varying from \$700 to \$100,000 by the other 56 cities owning tramways.

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