

CUT FREIGHTS IF WAGES ARE CUT, IS HARDING AIM

By David Lawrence

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Washington, April 8.—President Harding has begun to use the influence of the executive department to bring about, if possible, a reduction of freight rates, at the same time as wages are cut on the railroad systems of the country.

Mr. Harding is not "officially" interfering or forcing his advice, influence or suggestions on either the railroads or their employees, but, nevertheless, he is mediating in a dispute in whose settlement perhaps depends more the revival of business in America than any other single factor.

Mr. Harding refers to his efforts modestly as merely seeking information. He is conferring daily with the labor leaders. Next week he talks with the railroad executives. The viewpoint of the shippers of agricultural products has been ably presented in cabinet meetings by Secretary of Agriculture Wallace.

REDUCTION NECESSARY

As a consequence, Mr. Harding believes a reduction of freight rates is absolutely essential. But the interstate commerce commission, whose expert judgment in railroad matters is not questioned, insists that it would be dangerous to reduce freight rates unless the railroads can cut their operating "expenses," which means, of course, wages because labor is the largest item in railroad operation today.

To reduce wages would be a relatively simple task if there were not interwoven in the question something else much more vital to both the railroad executives and their men than the revision of the wage scale of this month or this year. It is the ticklish problem of railroad standards and methods of adjusting future wage scales.

TASK IS DELICATE

President Harding has himself recognized the delicacy of the problem by his method of handling the labor leaders. The railroads, for instance, insist that now that the war is over each railroad system should deal with its own men, while the railroad brotherhoods wish to have all matters of wages adjusted by a national board representing the workers on all systems of the country. The so-called national agreement which covered this method of negotiating on disputed questions was put into effect by Walker Hines in his last days as director-general of railroads, at a time, indeed, when it was simpler for the federal government to handle all wage questions uniformly with the heads of the brotherhoods.

STRONGER AS UNIT

Naturally, labor is more powerful if it deals for the men as a whole and with the railroad systems as a unit. The railroad brotherhoods cannot exert such a powerful influence over their men if the same classes of labor are differently paid in various regions of the country. Their solidarity is affected.

There is division in the ranks of labor as well as in the ranks of railroad executives. Some labor leaders, notably those who are eager to have the American Federation of Labor play its part in handling railroad labor policies, insist upon having the national agreement, which was made by Mr. Hines maintained so that everything can be dealt with on a national basis. Other labor leaders are adopting what seems to railroad executives a much more reasonable attitude, namely, the division of the country into regions so that regional boards may be appointed as between railroads and workers in every section.

SOME THINK IT FAIR

Inside the railroad executive groups are those who think that it is fair compromise. Others, executives of a more aggressive type, such as General Atterbury of the Pennsylvania railroad, insist that the issue is clean cut—either the Pennsylvania railroad deals with its own employees through their spokesmen or it is being deprived of inalienable rights. It bears some relationship, indeed, to the open and closed shop controversy which has been troubling employees of the country in various regions. Whether to deal with a walking delegate of a union or a spokesman of a shop committee of one's own employees is a moot question which the industrial world has not yet succeeded in solving.

DON'T RECOGNIZE GROUP

Universal satisfaction in either employer or employee has been hard to get. That's why Mr. Harding's efforts as a mediator on this very phase of the railroad controversy are being watched with tense anxiety. Should the executive bend one way or the other, the significance of his attitude would not be lost on

either side. The president studiously averted recognizing the brotherhoods as a whole by calling the various labor leaders into conference singly. Had he called for the group who have represented railroad labor he might have been suspected of erroneously recognizing the same arrangement as was provided in the famous national agreement. From the fact that Mr. Harding has not asked any organization as such to confer with him, but has adopted the idea of summoning individuals "for advice," he believes nobody can accuse him of meddling or forcing a decision on any group. The president, moreover, is anxious that the disputants settle the issue themselves. He does not want the Harding administration to be put in the position of cutting wages. That isn't good politics or good economics, especially in a period in which the government's real policy is to extricate itself from acts of paternalism or benevolent partnership either with business or labor as was necessary during war times.

BELIEVES IT CAN BE DONE

Mr. Harding is endeavoring to use his executive influence to bring the parties in dispute to settle their questions on an equitable basis and he believes that it can be done by personal talks with the principals and by pressure on both sides to heed the demand of public opinion for a fair settlement. The railroads are reluctant to promise freight rate reductions until they have pared expenses, and some of the railroad executives think this is a moment to deal in a smashing blow to the railroad unions as a whole.

TWO BLOWS IN ONE

It is a safe prediction that if the plan for regional adjustment of labor disputes were accepted the whole problem would be solved overnight. For it is doubtful if the railroad workers will accept wage reduction and a blow at union solidarity at the same time. Nobody can speak for Mr. Harding as yet, but the attitude of the Harding administration in the first industrial dispute, which resulted in settling the picketers' strike, is being taken as a criterion of government policy, namely, the bringing about of wage reductions without impairing the labor standards acquired by the men through years of bitter strife.

VICTORY MEDALS AWAIT VETS' CALL

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The men on duty are glad to give information along military lines. Men need not hesitate about leaving their discharges when matters are looked up for arrangements are made against loss of these discharges. Now, as to those who are entitled to the Victory medal. Anybody in the service between April 7, 1917, and the signing of the armistice is entitled to a medal. This includes officers and enlisted men who were on active duty in the army of the United States.

SURVIVORS INCLUDED

"In case of a man's death, his next of kin is entitled to a Victory medal. The Victory medal is also awarded to members of the army nurses corps, army field clerks, members of the quartermaster corps and all others who saw active service. The following operations are considered major operations, for which the battle class will be awarded:

"Cambrai. Between May 12 and December 4, 1917.
"Somme offensive. Between March 21 and April 6, 1918.
"Lys. Between April 9 and April 27, 1918.
"Aisne. On the Chemin des Dames and northeast of Rheims, between May 27 and June 5, 1918.
"Montdidier-Soissons. Between June 9 and June 13, 1918.
"Champagne-Marne. Between July 15 and July 18, 1918.
"Aisne-Marne. Between July 18 and August 6, 1918.
"Somme offensive. Between August 8 and November 11, 1918.
"Oise-Aisne. Between August 18 and November 11, 1918.
"Ypres-Lys. Between August 19 and November 11, 1918.
"St. Mihiel. Between September 12 and September 16, 1918.
"Meuse-Argonne. Between September 26 and November 11, 1918.
"Vittorio Veneto. Between October 24 and November 4, 1918."

Fall From Auto Is Fatal to Bridge Man

Oregon City, April 8.—A fall from the running board of an automobile as it rounded a corner caused the death Thursday of Jack Hamilton, flagman on the Oregon City suspension bridge. Hamilton jumped on the machine to ride from the bridge to the courthouse. His skull was fractured. He leaves his wife and child in Portland. He was employed to prevent congestion of traffic on the weakened bridge.

JEWISH WOMEN CLOSE MEETING

The formal adjournment of the first triennial session of the Interstate Conference of the Council of Jewish Women took place in the great amphitheatre at Multnomah Falls Thursday afternoon following the picnic luncheon which was planned as the final social affair in honor of the visiting women.

One hundred and fifty visitors and local women left Temple Beth Israel at 12 o'clock for the trip up the highway, and on arriving at the falls luncheon was served, after which Mrs. S. M. Blumauer, the presiding officer, dismissed the gathering. Some of the visitors left late in the evening for their homes; others are remaining in Portland over the week end.

At the morning session held at Bial Brith building a permanent organization was effected and the following officers elected: Honorary president, Mrs. S. M. Blumauer; president, Mrs. F. C. Sloss of San Francisco; vice president, Mrs. Julius Baer of San Francisco; corresponding secretary, Miss Rachel Abel of San Francisco; treasurer, Mrs. Emanuel Lauer of Los Angeles.

FARMERS TO FIGHT FOR FAIRER PRICE

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With an annual turnover, decided that a compulsory pooling contract might defeat their purpose. Their attorneys advised that a ruling of the supreme court might be necessary to decide if a great cooperative wheat pool would be liable to interpretation as being in violation of the Sherman antitrust act.

Texas and Oklahoma delegates fought for the pool, declaring that they had already formed great cotton pools, controlling hundreds of thousands of bales of cotton annually without being declared in violation of the law.

While the pooling clause in the contract of the new farmers' corporation is not compulsory, it is declared that within a few years, when organization is perfected, it will be able to swing the most gigantic wheat pool ever conceived and to control wheat prices for the farmers.

SOMEWHAT CHARY

There was little opposition to the plan to form this great co-operative organization, once the pooling question was decided.

The proposal defeated was that farmers hold one-third of the wheat they grow for a pool to stabilize the market. Opponents of the compulsory pool idea argued that farmers would resent the proposition of having to pool their wheat. They said that the pool could, and would be maintained without making it compulsory.

"This must be made an educational campaign," declared Secretary J. M. Anderson of the committee of 100, president of the equity exchange of St. Paul. "First, we have got to get finances to swing our proposition. We need from \$2,000,000 to \$3,000,000 and then we can talk without fear. In our organization, we have had 100,000,000 bushels of wheat in warehouses and have not been able to even sell bonafide warehouses receipts and bills of lading because of the influence of our opponents with the big banks."

GET MONEY FIRST

"In 1907 we started a 30,000,000 bushel pool in North Dakota and it went to pieces because we could not handle it when we did get it. This organization will know how to handle a pool ten times that size. But first, let us get the money and educate the farmers to the pooling idea by making his contract optional."

Carl Williams, Oklahoma, refuted this argument. "Within the last five months we have signed 35,000 cotton farmers in our state. In pooling 400,000 bales of cotton," he

HELPED ORGANIZE COUNCIL



Among officers named by Interstate conference, Council of Jewish Women. At left—Mrs. Julius Baer of San Francisco, first vice president. At right—Mrs. E. H. Sauer of Los Angeles, treasurer.

said. "We have advice from Governor Harding of the federal reserve bank and from member banks that our paper is as good as gold. Texas, Georgia and South Carolina have joined us and we are rapidly getting a cotton pool that will be a big factor in determining the prices."

SUCCESS IS SHOWN

California delegates told how 80,000 farmers had joined fruit pools there and members of the Northwest Grain Growers' association told how they have 23,000,000 bushels of wheat under contract for pool purposes.

But, on the advice of Frank Meyers, secretary of the National Grain Dealers' association, controlling thousands of cooperative grain elevators and others, the delegates decided "to go slow" and get their organization perfected before attempting to virtually corner the grain market for the farmers.

BRITAIN IS IN DEATH GRAPPLE, SAYS RULER

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of the national services." Adequate protection will be given these volunteers, he promised.

The premier announced that the king's proclamation will be considered in parliament Monday.

"NO; TOMORROW," SAYS FLOOR

"No; tomorrow!" came shouts from the floor. However, all attempts to prolong the debate or to force the government to promulgate the royal proclamation tomorrow instead of Monday, were overridden and the house adjourned at 5:35 o'clock.

Unless an eleventh-hour development prevents execution of the decision, 5,000,000 workers will be idle in the United Kingdom next week and one of the most disastrous industrial revolutions in history will be in full swing.

A "lighting strike" is scheduled for midnight tonight, all gas and electric workers sympathizing with the miners. The last door to peace was definitely closed when the secretary to Premier Lloyd George announced at 12:40 o'clock that the miners had refused the premier's latest invitation to meet him and the owners.

This invitation from Premier Lloyd George to the miners and mineowners

to meet him again in conference was the last ray of hope. In extending the invitation, the premier completely reversed his stand of yesterday when he had declared resumption of negotiations was utterly impossible because of the miners' refusal to guarantee the continuance of pumping at the mines. So grave is the menace which confronts the kingdom that Lloyd George is believed to have put aside every other consideration in a last attempt to avert disaster.

Riots and sabotage continue in the strike paralyzed coal fields. Mine after mine is being flooded. Even if the coal strike were to be called off today it would take many months to get production back to anywhere near normal. Some of the damage already done is irreparable.

OTHER INDUSTRIES SUFFER

Other great industries have begun to suffer. From Derbyshire came word today that the big Staveley iron works have had to be shut down owing to lack of coal. Three thousand workers were rendered jobless overnight. The Stanton ironworks also has been closed. The same thing is being duplicated over and over in all parts of the kingdom. In the Fife-shire coal fields, among the richest in Scotland, floods have swept the roads and many collieries are under water.

New shafts will have to be constructed at those mines before another ton of coal can be produced.

The International News Service staff correspondent was the first to inform the board of trade of Thomas' announcement that the alliance has decided upon a strike.

"WELL, IT HAS COME"

"Well, it has come!" was all an official word said. His attitude indicated the board had not been overly hopeful for a settlement.

Prisoner Sings as He Saws Bar in Jail

Yakima, Wash., April 8.—Singing lustily near a window Lester Spencer, three-quarter breed Yakima Indian and reputed "bad man" recently fled away on a bar of the county jail here. The cut bar helped him to make good his boast that he would escape when, Wednesday night, he made his getaway on his third attempt. He used an iron brace from his cot to escape from his cell. He was facing a charge of robbing a store at Parker, February 27.

C. DUGGAN, CIVIL WAR VETERAN, DIES

Charles Duggan, well known Civil war veteran of Albina, died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. William McLoughlin, 307 Sacramento street, at 11:30 this morning.

Duggan had the distinction of serving in both the army and navy during the Civil war. Answering the call for volunteers in 1862, he served with the Twenty-eighth Connecticut infantry in the campaign in Louisiana and did garrison duty at Pensacola, Fla. His term of service expiring in less than one year, he enlisted in the navy and took part in the blockade of Wilmington, N. C.

Born in County Cork, Ireland, in 1841, he came to America shortly before the war. In 1853 he came to Portland and had since resided here. His wife died one year ago. They had been married 54 years at the time of her death.

Duggan attended the post meeting of Lincoln-Garfield post of the G. A. R., of which he was a past commander. Saturday, and was at that time in good health. He was an active member of the Ancient Order of Hibernians.

'Bossy' Burns Nose, But Escapes From Flaming Building

Poor "Bossy," a fine cow kept at 939 East Thirtieth street, has a badly burned nose today, but she saved her own life by struggles that enabled her to escape from a burning garage at 10:52 Thursday night. The place was used both for a garage and cow stable, and when it took fire from the automobile motive power short circuiting, "Bossy's" frantic pulling got her loose and she fled, to be discovered this morning with her burned snout. The auto and shed were entirely destroyed.

Sparks from a chimney burned off the roof of the residence of Mrs. H. B. Randlett, 42 Ella street, early Thursday night, and at 271 Market street, apartments managed by Mrs. Graham, a cigarette set fire to a mattress in a shed and it was destroyed.

Auto Upsets Cyclist

An automobile driven by W. C. Serty, 568 Tibbets street, struck a bicycle rider by Ben Wilson, 15, 504 Davis street, this morning, knocking the lad to the street and inflicting scalp wounds. Wilson was taken to the Emmanuel hospital.

Benefit Party to Be Given for Chest

The public will have an opportunity of helping the Community Chest and at

the same time enjoying an evening's pleasure by participating in the dance and card party to be given Saturday night by the Municipal Civil Service association, in the Turn Yerein hall, Thirtieth and Main streets. It is proposed to give the entire proceeds to the Chest.

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COLUMBIA