

## Heppner Gazette Times

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Official Paper for Morrow County

### Can It Happen Here?

**S**INCLAIR LEWIS may have been considered a pipe-dreamer by many who read his "It Can't Happen Here." But there are things happening today that make us wonder whether such an opinion is correct.

Just last Saturday Oregon Wool Growers association was notified by Harry Bridges, union organizer, that any sacks of wool not marked showing the wool to have been sheared by union shearers would not be handled by CIO longshoremen.

What, we ask, if Mr. Bridges forces his point with wool growers, is to prevent similar action being taken against wheat growers? Is it not possible, if present union tactics are permitted, that very shortly Mr. Bridges and his ilk will be telling our wool and wheat growers how many men they may hire, what hours they shall work and how much wages shall be paid?

No, certainly, we have all believed such a thing could not happen here. But if the course of union organizers within industry may be taken as a criterion, we in the farming sections of the country may expect to see just such attempts. They are probably foredoomed to failure for many reasons, but it is time for agriculture to wake up. Our farmers are lying with a strange bedfellow when they play into the hands of uncontrolled, unscrupulous labor organizers.

Recommended to the close study of everyone is a resolution of the Polk county Pomona grange passed at a recent meeting. The resolution urges remedial legislation defining labor disputes as only those bona fide disputes between an employer and employees, and preventing picketing and boycotting unless the controversy is an actual labor dispute.

It is further provided that any controversy between rival labor organizations or between groups of employees shall not be termed as a labor dispute, and picketing and boycotting be prohibited in such inter-union controversies.

Another proposed feature said to have won strong support from the determined Polk county grangers is a section which would prevent any individual or organization from using force, coercion or any other unlawful method to prevent a person from offering his services to an employer desiring to employ him.

The farmers likewise seek to make it possible for the courts of this state to issue injunctions to prevent labor organizations from picketing or boycotting places of business which are not actually connected with a bona fide labor dispute.

While it is reported that State Master Ray W. Gill, due to alliance with organized labor, prevented through deputies the adoption of a similar resolution by the Marion county Pomona grange, indications are given that other Pomona and subordinate granges will give backing to the Polk county resolution.

Certainly no hope of balanced government can exist so long as one large class of the population operates outside the jurisdiction of competent legal authority.

There is no open controversy between shearers and wool growers at this time to necessitate issuance of such a threat as has been made by Mr. Bridges. If and when such a controversy does arise, each individual case may be taken as a dispute. Bridges' threat appears to be just an answer to a recent resolution of the wool growers that they would favor "open shop" shearing, but it is nonetheless indicative that at-

tempts to force organization upon all shearers is imminent. It is just a sample of the method of procedure of CIO which, belying its name—Committee for Industrial Organization—is attempting to bring all labor under one large union, the benefits of which to the lay member are as yet a matter of strong conjecture, and the accomplishment of which is a threat to democratic government.

### The Protection of Competition

**T**HE veracity of "Big Business" is being put to a test these days, and there is a general tendency to overthrow the competitive business system. In fact some economists have recently openly preached a monopolistic system as preferable, and certain administrative principles recently advocated support the trend. Without defense intended for any unscrupulous practices of moneyed interests which have worked against the public welfare, a look into the heart of Big Business may make us wonder if, after all, the competitive system does not vibrate with some warmth.

A savings and loan company salesman from Portland when in the city the other day recalled that he was on the road selling for a large meat packing company in the post-war price depression era of 1924. The head of that concern lost a million dollars a day for thirty days, as prices went into a tail dive, he asserted. Called into conference with the district sales manager the Pacific coast sales force was told that all present stocks were to be marked down fifty percent and that they were to quote the new prices to the trade, but that retailers were to be given every opportunity to unload their stocks before the new prices were made public. In other words, while the large meat packing concern was absorbing a tremendous loss, and one which actually rocked the foundations of the long established business, the head of that business was determined not to make the customers suffer from a situation over which it itself had no control.

That is just one little incident which came to us unsolicited from an unbiased source, at least unbiased to the extent that the man telling it now has no connection with the business. He was, however, in a favorable position to know what that one large company did when business was on the skids.

We have on our desk the beautifully printed, current year book of another large meat packing company. This company and the one above referred to each has been accused many times of being members of the "hogocracy," a name once applied by a vitriolic writer as signifying a monopoly of the meat packing business. This year book gives a pictured human interest story of the company along with a report of its financial statement for the year, and a letter of transmittal says anyone interested may have a copy free of charge. It is, indeed, a picture of a very large and successful business. A few excerpts from this company's story may be enlightening:

"In most industries it is possible for a manufacturer to plan his output several months in advance. On the basis of field investigations and information supplied by his sales force, he can form a fair judgment as to the amount of product his sales outlets will take. He can then buy just the quantity of raw materials that will enable him to carry out his manufacturing and selling plans.

"In the meat business, output cannot be planned in this manner. The meat packer has no control over his raw-material supplies. He must buy live animals as rapidly as they are produced and sent to market, and then find an outlet for meat and by-products at the best prices he can obtain. . . .

"On the buying side, competition brings about a parity in livestock prices from market to market no less striking than the parity in meat prices. If for one reason or another livestock should become relatively cheaper in Omaha than in Chicago, meat packers having buyers on both markets would increase their purchases in Omaha and reduce their buying in Chicago. At the same time, livestock growers in the west would send more of their animals to Chicago where prices were high, and fewer to Omaha where prices were

low. Because of the increased demand for livestock at Omaha and the reduced supply, livestock quotations at that market would promptly rise until they were again in line with prices at other markets. In this way the competition of nationwide distributors holds livestock markets in line with one another. The same competition that has made the market for meat national in scope has also created a national market for livestock.

"The meat packing industry is a free field where there are no favors. Many new firms are set up each year to try their hand in the competitive struggle and to stand or fall on their merits. Some, whether young or old, are able to expand their business, others see their trade diminishing, and still others fall by the wayside. Success comes only to those who study their tasks and who render essential and valuable service at low cost. . . .

"The Shortcomings of Monopoly. As is so often the case with superficial observations and criticisms of this kind, only a portion of the story is presented. If there is merit in the contention that competition is wasteful and should be done away with, the question then resolves itself into one of deciding what course of action would be in order. Obviously the proper course—the only course available—would be to scrap the competitive system and to reorganize all trade and industry along monopolistic lines. The argument that competition is wasteful necessarily implies that monopoly would be less wasteful.

"If an organized effort were made to eliminate the so-called wastes of competition by transforming trade and industry into a series of monopolies, the consequences would quickly become apparent. In the first place, the consumer would have no alternative source from which to obtain his supplies. If he objected to the quality of the goods his retailer offered for sale, or the kind of service, or the prices asked, he would have no redress. He would be in the position of having to accept what was offered or go without. Likewise, the producer of raw materials would have no alternative outlets. He would be obliged to sell his primary products at whatever prices the monopolist might fix, irrespective of the price the consumer would be willing to pay for finished products. Meanwhile, the monopolist retailer, wholesaler, or manufacturer would have no incentive to study the desires of his customers, to improve quality,

to lower costs, or to reduce prices. His profits would be assured. He would have little or no urge to improve his efficiency because his survival would not be dependent upon the efficiency of his operations. . . ."

#### RHEA CREEK NEWS

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Wright left for Portland Sunday. Mrs. Wright is suffering from a severe case of eczema and latest report is she is at St. Vincent's hospital.

Henry Peterson has returned to his home from the veterans' hospital at Walla Walla.

Mr. and Mrs. Frank E. Parker are spending a few days at Walla Walla. Mr. and Mrs. Orrin Wright have returned from Portland where Mrs. Wright went for medical care.

Mr. and Mrs. Tyndall Robison were calling at the Walter Becket home Sunday.

Mrs. Hilma Anderson has been ill at her home in Eight Mile.

## "TIPTOE INN"

FARCE COMEDY IN THREE ACTS

Presented by the Lexington Student Body in the High School Auditorium

**JANUARY 28 8:15 P. M.**

Admission 35c, 25c and 15c



# Morrow County JOINS

Elks Hall ❖ Heppner

**Saturday, January 29**

**ELMER STEELE  
and His Swing Band**

\$1.00 the couple

Extra ladies 25c