

Review of the History-Making Events of the World

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

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Wagner Act Upheld by the Supreme Court

FIVE history-making decisions were handed down by the Supreme court, all upholding the validity of the Wagner labor relations act and inferentially broadening the interstate commerce clause of the Constitution. The most important ruling, made by five of the nine justices and read by Chief Justice Hughes, was in the case of the Jones & Laughlin Steel company and directed the reinstatement of ten discharged employees. The decision supported the constitutional basis of the Wagner act, finding it a legal "scheme" to protect commerce from injury resulting from the denial by employers of the right of employees to organize and "from the refusal of employers to accept the procedure of collective bargaining."

The broad constitutionality of the act, was strongly noted by the chief justice. He declared that:

"We think it clear that the national labor relations act may be construed so as to operate within the spirit of constitutional authority."

Hughes defined the right of employees to self-organization and to select their representatives for collective bargaining as "a fundamental right."

Regarding the vital point of the application of the interstate commerce clause of the Constitution, Hughes declared:

"The congressional authority to protect interstate commerce from burdens and obstructions is not limited to transactions which can be deemed to be an essential part of a 'flow' of interstate or foreign commerce. Burdens or obstructions may be due to injurious action springing from other sources."

In the case of the Associated Press, concerning the dismissal of Morris Watson, a New York editorial employee, the court was split, 5 to 4. The majority opinion, read by Justice Roberts, held that the act does not "abridge the freedom of speech or of the press safeguarded by the first amendment" to the Constitution. The court took the view that Watson was dismissed not because his work was unsatisfactory but because of his activities in the Newspaper Guild, and ordered his reinstatement.

Dissenting conservatives, comprising Justices Willis Van Devanter, George Sutherland, James C. McReynolds and Pierce Butler, contended that the act should not be applied to the Associated Press because its provisions violated the "freedom of the press" clause of the Constitution. They found that if the act interfered with the ability of the Associated Press to maintain a policy of impartial news reporting, it must fall under the freedom of the press guaranty.

The three other cases, in each of which the Wagner act was upheld, involved dismissal of 18 employees by an interstate bus company; a dispute between the Fruehauf Trailer Company of Detroit, Mich., and the United Automobile Workers Union; and a dispute between the Friedmann-Harry Marks Clothing Company of Richmond Va., and Amalgamated Clothing Workers. In the bus case the decision was unanimous; in the others the division was 5 to 4.

C. I. O. Men Shoot Several Foes in Galena, Kan.

ORGANIZERS of the International Union of Mill, Mine and Smelter Workers, an affiliate of the C. I. O., invaded the lead and zinc field of Kansas, Oklahoma and Missouri and were forcibly resisted by the "blue carders" of the Tri-

State Metal Mine and Smelter Workers' union, which the C. I. O. says is a company union. The latter dismantled the C. I. O. offices at Picher and Treece and then moved into Galena, Kan., where they paraded. As they reached the C. I. O. headquarters one of the marchers smashed a window. There was a burst of gunfire from the building and at least eight men and one lad fell wounded.

Leaders of the blue card union say nearly every miner in the region belongs to it, that they are drawing higher pay than ever before and are interested only in keeping conditions as they are and in an opportunity to work.

The C. I. O. has started a campaign to organize the 270,000 employees of the American Telephone and Telegraph company, the largest corporation in the United States. Local unions are to be chartered by the United Electrical and Radio Workers of America. Promotional literature is being distributed.

Drive Against Communism Started by the K. of C.

IT IS the opinion of the Knights of Columbus that communism is responsible for sitdown and other strikes in the United States and Canada, and that national organization of 600,000 Catholic men therefore has started an "endless crusade" against what it terms "the most damnable organization in the world." The program was launched officially by 400 delegates of councils in the New York district and will be carried on all over the country.

Canada Motors Strike on Verge of Settlement

MITCHELL HEPBURN, premier of Ontario, reiterating his determination not to permit C. I. O. representatives from the United States to take part in negotiations for settlement of the strike in the General Motors of Canada plant at Oshawa, promised to "call out an army if necessary" to protect the property of the corporation. Hugh Thompson, U. A. W. A. organizer, threatened that every General Motors plant in America would be closed unless the Oshawa strike were settled soon with recognition of the union demands. Homer Martin, president of the U. A. W. A., called Hepburn a number of unpleasant names. The Toronto Trades and Labor Council pledged the support of its 40,000 members to the union's strike against General Motors.

Notwithstanding all this, it appeared likely at this writing that the trouble at Oshawa would be brought to an end very soon by the agreement of General Motors of Canada to recognize the United Automobile Workers and to increase the wages of its employees. To some unbiased observers it seemed that Premier Hepburn had intervened in the affair unnecessarily or at least prematurely, and that his blustering language was not warranted, since the strike was being conducted in a fairly orderly manner with no threat of a sitdown.

British Navy Ordered to Protect Merchant Ships

GREAT BRITAIN will respect the blockade of the northern Spanish port of Bilbao established by General Franco, Fascist leader. But her navy has been given orders by the cabinet to protect to the fullest extent all British shipping outside the three mile limit. The huge battle cruiser Hood and other warships were sent in a hurry to the Bay of Biscay, and orders were given to open fire on any Spanish vessels interfering with

British cargo ships on the high seas. The cabinet, it was said, decided to continue to withhold the granting of belligerent rights to Franco but regarded the blockade of Bilbao as a special case since Franco's forces surround the town by sea and land. Six British ships had been waiting at St. Jean de Luz and one at Bayonne, unable to land food cargoes at Bilbao because of the presence of Franco's warships.

Farmers Must Pay More to Raise 1937 Crops

ACCORDING to the Department of Agriculture American farmers will have to pay more to raise their crops in 1937 than they did last year. Farm labor will cost more. Seed prices already have advanced sharply, and feed prices will be materially higher than in 1936. The department said farm wage rates will continue the "slow rise of the last three years" due to an increase in both the nonagricultural and agricultural demand for labor. Farm wage rates are now the highest since 1931.

The department forecast that "production and sales of farm machinery during 1937 probably will exceed those of 1936—which were the highest since 1930—and equal the 1925-29 average, especially if crop conditions are more nearly normal."

Fertilizer sales and prices, it was said, probably will average "somewhat higher" than in 1936.

Trans-Atlantic Air Service Soon to Be Realized

TRANS-ATLANTIC air service between the United States and Great Britain may be expected to start almost immediately, for the last obstacle in its way was removed by an agreement with Canada concerning routes through the Dominion.

Assistant Secretary of Commerce J. Monroe Johnson announced that two routes through Canada had been made available for trans-Atlantic flying craft that will make a total of four trips a week. One route is by way of Shediac, N. B., and the other through Montreal. The hop-off point for eastward flights over the ocean would be from Bottwood, N. E., which also would be landfall on the westward flights.

Johnson said that under the agreement British and United States planes would make two crossings apiece weekly.

Fascism Is Defeated in Belgian Election

BELGIAN Fascists were badly defeated in an election which was admittedly a show of Fascist and anti-Fascist strength though it was only for one seat in parliament. The voters flatly rejected Leon Degrelle, foe of Premier Paul Van Zeeland, the former obtaining only 69,242 votes as against 275,840 for Van Zeeland. The Fascists there are known as Rexists and were backed by the Flemish nationalists.

Prime Minister Baldwin Will Soon Quit Office

FREQUENT reports that Stanley Baldwin would soon retire from the post of prime minister of Great Britain were confirmed by him in a speech to the members of his constituency at Worcester. It is expected he will quit office almost immediately after the coronation of King George VI on May 12, and there seems little doubt that his successor will be Neville Chamberlain, now chancellor of the exchequer.

In his Worcester address Mr. Baldwin said: "It is far better to go when people may still think of you as perhaps not incompetent in your work than to stay until they know for you do that you are becoming incompetent."

"In a democratic country the prime minister is not only the head of a government, but he is the leader of a party and the leader of the house of commons. To carry on that tripartite task for many years beyond the age I have now reached is, in my belief, beyond the strength of human nature."

The prime minister's long service to his country will be rewarded by elevation to the peerage.

Senate Hits Sitdowns but Spares the President

IN ORDER to get the Guffey coal control bill through the senate without an amendment condemning the sitdown strike, Majority Leader Joe Robinson promised to permit consideration of a resolution carrying similar condemnation, but when it was presented and adopted, by a vote of 75 to 3, it was not a joint resolution, which would require the signature of the President. That was what Senator McNary and others wanted, but Robinson said it must be concurrent, because he would not put Mr. Roosevelt in the position of having to indicate his position on the sitdown strike by either signing or vetoing the measure.

Besides declaring the sitdown strike "illegal and contrary to sound public policy" the resolution as adopted took a double slap at the employers by also declaring:

"That the so-called industrial spy system breeds fear, suspicion and animosity, tends to cause strikes and industrial warfare and is contrary to sound public policy; and

"That it is likewise contrary to sound public policy for any employer to deny the right of collective bargaining, to foster the company union or to engage in any other unfair labor practice as defined in the national labor relations act."

Senator Lewis Urges New Peace Conference

SENATOR JAMES HAMILTON LEWIS of Illinois told the senate that he believes the time has come for President Roosevelt to call an international peace conference that would revise the treaty of Versailles. He said the object of the conference would be to reach a "new disposition that might content the nations that are now in revolt and which continue in conflict because of the affront and injury they feel was worked upon them under the terms of the treaty."

The senator asserted the popularity of Mr. Roosevelt abroad would lend much to the success of such a conference.

Spending of 4 Billion on Water Projects Urged

EXPENDITURE of more than four billion dollars on a long range water program affecting 118 drainage basins was recommended by the national resources committee in a bulky document submitted to President Roosevelt.

The report advocated the immediate undertaking of one group of projects estimated to cost 1 billion 720 million; asked a later start on another group expected to cost 1 billion 54 millions, and relegated to an indeterminate date the commencement of a third list involving 1 billion 400 millions.

Italian Editor Accuses France and Russia

THAT France and Russia are flagrantly violating the Spanish civil war neutrality agreement by sending aid to the Madrid government is the charge flatly made by Virginio Gayda, Italian editor who is generally regarded as voicing the views of Premier Mussolini.

Gayda said 25 officers of the French general staff were mapping the strategy of the loyalists espe-

cially on the front northeast of Madrid, and that transshipment had been permitted through France of much war material made in the United States. He alleged that Edouard Daladier, French minister of war, is receiving reports on the performance of the new 155 millimeter (6.1 inch) French guns sent to Spain and used extensively in the Guadala-jara battle.

The Spanish steamer Mar Negro, Gayda declared, was en route to Valencia from Odessa, Russia, with a cargo of munitions of war for the Spanish government.

Farmers Rout Sitdowners From Hershey Plant

THREE hundred sitdown strikers at the plant of the Hershey Chocolate corporation at Hershey, Pa., were overwhelmed and driven out by a mob of thousands of irate farmers and loyal workers of the company. The farmers were enraged because the strike had cut off their market for \$10,000 worth of milk daily. They and the non-strikers were armed with clubs and bricks and the strikers were treated roughly.

Gov. George H. Earle of Pennsylvania ordered an investigation and declared formally:

"The bloodshed at the Hershey plant was a disgrace to the commonwealth. The blame lies directly on the sheriff of the county, who said he did not need the assistance of the state police to maintain order. Precedent decrees that local authorities must ask the state's assistance before it intervenes."

"The state police will not be used to suppress union labor. Neither are they interested in the sit-down problem. They will prevent mob rule. Apparently the sheriff was not an unbiased law enforcement officer in this case."

Minnesota Senate Scores Gov. Elmer A. Benson

MOVING back again to the West, we find Elmer A. Benson, Farmer-Labor governor of Minnesota, involved in labor troubles that might conceivably result in his impeachment. About 200 members of the "people's lobby" staged a sitdown in the senate chamber at St. Paul for the purpose of enforcing their demands for immediate action on the governor's relief plan.

Benson had previously spoken to the crowd, telling them "it is all right to be a little rough once in a while" in dealing with the legislature, and the lawmakers were exceedingly resentful. The governor, after one day and night, persuaded the demonstrators to leave, telling them they had done a good job.

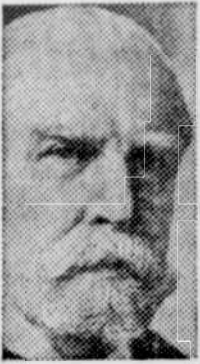
On regaining possession of its chamber, the senate put through a resolution condemning the governor for "inciting people to riot" and failing to perform his lawful duties to "quell and quiet the mob."

While there was no serious talk of impeachment, the report was current that the senate resolution was drafted deliberately as a possible basis for such action.

One Supreme Court Bill Passed by the House

THE house of representatives passed, 122 to 14, a measure admittedly experimental, designed to speed Supreme court decisions on the constitutionality of acts of congress. It embraces one of the phases of the President's court program.

The bill provides that whenever the constitutionality of an act of congress is drawn in question in any suit in a federal court, the attorney general is permitted to appear and present arguments on behalf of the government. The attorney general is given the same rights as a party in the suit.



Chief Justice Hughes



Sen. Robinson



Premier Hepburn



Gov. Benson



Neville Chamberlain