THE RIGHT TO STRIKE

By MARY E. MARCY

TEN CENTS
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The Right To Strike

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Big Business and its congressmen at Washington are preparing to take away from you workers the greatest weapon you now possess for improving your conditions. Some of us can vote at the elections, of course, provided we are not forced to change our places of residence too often in search of new jobs, and provided we are American citizens, and again, occasionally, even if we possess dark skins or are of the females of the species. There are some things some of us may sometimes vote upon at the elections.

Perhaps you may vote on whether a Republican or a Democrat shall go to Congress or shall occupy the Presidential Chair. These contests are, naturally, of some importance to the candidates, but do not affect materially the price of ham and eggs to us.

Again, you may be permitted to vote on a few vague things, or issues, or for men who claim to represent those issues which are discussed eloquently at Washington and in the private offices of Wall Street, like the Tariff, which do not affect the amount of things we can buy with our wages, nor any other of the practical things of our daily lives.

And up to the present time you have possessed the Legal Right to Go Out on Strike in company with other workers. Theoretically, at least, you had the legal right to organize and to strike with your fellow workers and to express your demands for higher wages, or shorter hours, or even on political or class questions, or for anything else you wanted, or against things or conditions you did not approve nor desire.

Now, I believe no workman ever got anything from the Armours, or Mr. Gary, or the Rockefellers and other big capitalists without some show of strength, or some threat of united action to back up their demands.
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If John Smith, butcher, goes up to the superintendent of the Swift Packing Plant and tells him that he has to have $2.00 a day more wages in order to support his family, the superintendent merely discharges him and puts somebody else in his place.

In the service of Mr. Swift or Mr. Armour, the superintendent possesses all the powers of an autocrat. The owners of industry continue to say when we shall work, and on what terms, when we try to improve our conditions as individuals.

One man alone has no possible chance of securing anything from the big employers of labor. It takes a large group of workingmen acting together to get anything. And the larger the group the more certain the workers are to get what they demand.

Ten men on strike in the stock yards are utterly helpless; so are ten thousand men. But 100,000 stock yards workers, united and loyal to their class, can win a good deal if they are able to hold out long enough. While if all the workers in the basic industries go out on strike in sympathy, they can get almost anything they demand inside of a week.

For a rule that has never failed and can never fail is that: The bigger and broader the strike, the quicker and greater the victory.

During the past three years, according to Government statistics, the Chicago Tribune and other capitalist organs and records, the cost of living has risen in this country over 125%. In other words, the prices of the things you and I have to buy in four years have more than doubled.

You can see this when you go to buy a shirt or a pair of shoes. And you usually find that you have to pay double prices for paper-soled shoes and for shirts so thin you can see though them.

You find that you have to pay double prices for all your foods altho we all know that the Swifts and the Armours or the "Big Five" have made millions upon millions of dollars profits out of foods since the beginning of the war.

It costs us more than twice as much to live as it did
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in 1914. And everything we buy is adulterated, is shoddy, is manufactured of cheap substitutes.

If you have some of your meals in restaurants you will notice from day to day how the butter chips seem to fade and the slices of bread grow thinner. One day you will discover the coffee is nearly all water and the next day you will find that the cream has turned to thin milk. You will notice that everything on the menu is growing poorer in quality and is shrinking in portion day by day—as the prices of foods here, and everywhere, steadily rise.

And when your wife goes to the store she finds, every day, that something has gone up. One day butter has risen five cents and the next day it is eggs. Another time it is sugar and bread, or bacon and potatoes. All the time you are going around with the same old, skimpy pay envelope in your pocket trying to keep clothes on your back and feed yourself and the wife and kiddies in the face of rising prices.

The price of your labor power has not risen in proportion. Wages have remained below the cost of living.

Now some very oratorical politicians, high and low, will sigh and shake their heads and tell you that this is not the way to look at the matter; that nobody can help the high prices and that you can remedy all these difficulties at the ballot box. They will tell you in the newspapers and on the lecture platform, that you can get anything you want, or that the majority wants, by voting for it at the next election.

And the Republican politicians tell you they are going to lower prices and the Democratic politicians are running around in circles and “investigating” the profiteers in order to make you believe they are going to reduce the cost of living. And they will all tell you that and working women have succeeded in securing higher wages. And these groups have always secured these in-you can change conditions if you only vote for them and elect them to office.

Today we face a condition that urgently needs to be altered and that you want changed as much as you desire anything. I want you to consider whether or not you have any chance of improving that condition by voting
on election day, **unless** you back up your vote by your economic power on the job—in the factory or mill.

You want higher wages and you want better working conditions today. You want shorter hours and security against being out of work and hungry next week and next month. You need these things **now**; not next year. You are trying to make **thirty** dollars a week buy **sixty** dollars' worth of groceries, clothing and coal, and pay doubled rent. You have to pay for these things today, not next year.

But you know and I know that no politician would ever think of permitting you and me to vote on such **vital** things as whether our wages should be raised or not. We are only permitted to vote on things that really concern us very little, if at all. But to vote on whether we should have a ten dollar a week increase in wages or a shorter work day! The politicians would say we were crazy to think of such a thing!

Now the tariff really does not affect you and me, and I am not much interested in the Income Tax, personally, because I know that you and I will get no benefits from it whether it is high or low. We know the moneys are usually used to create new political jobs for more politicians and phrase-makers who will continue to fool us and to use us to serve the capitalist class.

Issues like the League of Nations do not concern workingmen nor working women. But the question of wages and their relation to the **value of our products** as well as their relation to the cost of living are always before us and pressing us. They are vital questions today.

Now during the past five years, while prices of commodities have been soaring, some groups of workmen creases **through the bringing of some sort of pressure** to bear. Sometimes the Governments acted for the workers because they knew that if they did not act for us, we would act for ourselves and thus hinder production; sometimes we **threatened to strike** and thus secured our demands or a part of them because the capitalists desired to avoid a strike. More often we **won something because we went on strike for it**.

The Government statistics will tell you that, on the whole, wages have risen, since 1914, **almost as fast as**
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The cost of living! The official statisticians do not claim wages have kept pace with the rising prices of life's necessities. They say the cost of living has only gained about ten or fifteen percent over wages or the price paid for your labor power. Of course, this is without taking into consideration the substitution of paper-soles on shoes, adulterated food stuffs, and shoddy clothing.

But the way the trade union men in our neighborhood figure it, wages in our district have fallen behind from thirty to fifty percent.

The same Government statistics that shed so much light on the question of wages shows very positively that a few hundred men and a few corporations made hundreds of millions of dollars profits during the past five years and most of them have been able to raise the prices of the commodities they sell from 50 to 300 per cent. But you hear nobody, from Presidential candidates to Precinct captains, hinting that it might be a good thing to restrain the big capitalists from raising prices. We cannot imagine a politician suggesting that the packing companies, or the steel corporation, for example, reduce their selling prices. And, of course, they could cut prices if they would be content with lower profits.

During the summer of 1919 we read column after column of newspaper stories about "profiteer investigations"; but whenever we went to buy steaks, or shoes, or cotton goods, we found that the prices of these things had risen over night, perhaps. So you can see what government investigations have done for you and for me. According to figures issued by the Labor Bureau of Statistics during one of the summer months devoted most strenuously to government "investigations", the price of staple food products rose one per cent.

No politician proposes to do anything that will check the Morgans, the Swifts, the Armours or the Rockefellers in their mad careers of profit grabbing. And yet it is often stated that John D. Rockefeller and J. P. Morgan are two of the richest men in the world. They could both throw away a couple of hundred million dollars without losing any sleep over them. And without having to go to work for a living either.

But, as I said before, none of the politicians, or of-
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The right to strike is a fundamental aspect of workers' rights. When high-ranking officials propose to check these billionaires in their wild grabbing for the whole earth, they say the way to stop the rising prices is for you and me to stop asking for more wages. They don't begin on the billionaires; they begin on you and me who are lucky if we have one hundred dollars in the world. They want us to stretch our shrinking dollars and get along without some of the things we need.

They are plotting to take away our right to strike. They know that if they can take away our right to strike in a body, or as an organization, we will be helpless to force the boss to pay us enough to live on. They know that you and I can never get anything from Mr. Morgan or Mr. Gary or John D. Rockefeller if we go on strike one at a time.

They know that every rise in wages and each victory for shorter hours and better working conditions the workers have gained in the past has been gained by pressure, or the threat of economic force.

We have made gains in the past by striking or threatening to strike! And they are now plotting to deprive us of this weapon that gives us the power to help ourselves and to improve our economic conditions to-day!

That is, if the bourgeoisie can get away with it. Which depends upon you and me and the men who work in the large industries. In England when they made it illegal for men to strike during war, the workers went out in a body and the British Government was forced to grant their demands. We need to remember that an ounce of prevention of legislation injurious to the working class is always worth a pound of cure after such laws have been passed.

I am not at all sure, either, that the American capitalists and politicians will dare to go quite as far in peace times as the British Government went in war, although they are going to try to adopt some British measures.

Just now the big capitalists, sometimes through their politicians and their public officials, and sometimes through other servants, are bribing, or trying to bribe, either with cash, flattery, promises of reward or positions, nearly every labor official in this country, in order to win their support in this conspiracy against you and me.
And these capitalists are having some success among the conservative union officials. Not always do they offer these officials actual money. More often the labor "leaders" are flattered by prominent officials, and their ambitions for social position or for political sinecures fostered. They are asked to serve on Committees and in Leagues made up of prominent persons. They begin to see their names coupled with well known men in the newspapers. And they are bribed whether they know it or not.

Eminent persons approach the poor dupes in somewhat this way:

"This country is in grave danger owing to the changes and upheavals resulting from the war, etc., etc. Something has to be done to stabilize production and to settle the labor question until industry shall have had an opportunity to settle back into the paths of prosperity and security for the whole people, etc., etc. Your advice and your influence are essential to the welfare of the whole nation at this time. We want your advice and your co-operation. We must check these rising prices or Bolshevism will leap across the Atlantic and swallow up everything this country stands for, etc., etc."

They ask the assistance of these labor officials in their movement to maintain wages at the present, or at a lower level and to prevent strikes. Then, they say, prices will begin to go down.

They say the place to start is in your pay envelope and in my pay envelope. No matter if prices have risen to the point where the workers are driven almost crazy trying to make ends meet, they are persuading some labor officials to join them in a scheme that will make it impossible for us to go out on strike any more.

And some very subservient clergymen and college professors are saying that if you and I will only work twice as hard and produce twice as much by putting in longer hours if necessary, and that if we will try to live on the wages we are receiving now, perhaps there will be so many commodities thrown upon the market that prices will fall.

But neither the clergymen, the editors, the capitalists nor the college professors tell us that if we manage to
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live on present wages and to double our output by working twice as hard, the manufacturers would soon be howling about "over-production" and would be closing down their factories because they would have no market for these surplus things. And our reward when the factories closed down would be no jobs at all.

But it is proposed by politicians and by certain officials to keep our wages where they are, or to lower them, even while prices are rising every day.

As we stated before, they will probably not go so far as to pass a law which declares, clearly, that it shall be illegal for all workingmen and women to go out on strike. Although, after they get through doing things to the laws and to our officials and to our agreements with the employers, I will wager a great deal that we are going to find that every strike we try to pull will be declared unlawful.

To begin with they are going to try to influence our labor union officials, by one means or another, so that they will refuse to call a strike, will refuse to endorse or finance a strike or to pay strike benefits, and so they will expel locals and officers that go out on strike without the consent of the highest officials; in the A. F. of Labor; it means the sanction of the General Executive Board is necessary.

WHO IS THE CONSUMER?

It is interesting to observe how suddenly solicitous public officials and the capitalist class have become over the welfare of "The Public" which has played the part of Goat in so many of their own profitable transactions in the past.

Wall Street speculators who have unloaded hundreds of millions of dollars worth of worthless stocks upon small investors and who have juggled vast industries out of other men's pockets and into their own, are now wailing all over the states about what suffering would entail to the consumer if you and I went out on strike for wages enough to live on!

Financial bandits who would sell the smiles off their mothers' faces; food hogs who would sell the hides off
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their workers' backs if they could make a profit on them, and millionaire pirates who have sacrificed the peace, the happiness and even the lives of useful men and women because it paid them personally to do so, are to-day bleeding at every pore with sympathy for the poor, abused Consumer! They declare the Consumer must suffer if you and I succeed in getting wages that equal the cost of living.

Almost every newspaper and magazine in the country is telling us that there are three sides to every labor question. If the railroad men, for example, demand a higher wage to meet the increasing cost of living, or, if the coal miners go out on strike for a living wage and a regular workday, the prostituted writers of the press burst forth in a blare of printers' ink to tell us that this is not a question to be settled between the men and their employers. They say, they sing, they fairly scream that there is a third party to be considered in this matter. Again the poor, old dummy is dragged forth out of the make-up wardrobe, this time clothed in ragged raiment—the Poor Old "Consumer!"

Now, of course, it occurs to every workingman that there is no particular class of consumers. Everybody must consume food, and heat and clothing in order to live. You and I are consumers, and if we belong to the working class, we are also producers.

It is true that there exists a class in these United States which contributes nothing in service nor in products and which does nothing but consume, and if this is the class about which our capitalists, magazine and newspaper editors and politicians are speaking, the less said about them the better.

No intelligent workman is concerned with the troubles and difficulties of those persons who have contributed neither products nor service to society. They are like the parasites that inflict our canine friends, and like these friends, our whole interest is absorbed in the question of ridding ourselves of these social pests.

Remember this: that workers who give service or products to society need have no qualms about the requirements of those who have given neither of these things. Our only interest in the Pure-and-Simple-Cons-
suming Class should be, and is to abolish it as a Pure-and-Simple-Consuming Class and to welcome it into the working class which offers labor for labor and service for service as its standard in the social world.

Happily we workers may rest easy so far as the Pure-and-Simple Consumer is concerned. A man who has been able to live his whole life without work or service of any kind cannot expect to be bottle-fed all the time.

But it is one of the colossal jests of the Ages that the productive workers should be the objects of opprobrious epithets because they cannot silently starve for the benefit of these blood-sucking parasites.

YOU OR THE BOSS.

Of course the editors, the preachers, the capitalists and their politicians tell us that everybody will have to pay higher prices for things if we receive higher wages. They hint threateningly, that we ought to do the generous thing, go hungry and not inconvenience anybody.

They will not seriously discuss profits or the profit-takers. Neither will they suggest that the profit-takers might go without that extra ten per cent. Their talk on profiteering is made for the purpose of increasing the circulation of newspapers and magazines, or to secure labor votes at coming elections. Nobody imagines it is to be taken seriously. The hold-ups of the great financial and industrial kings are never actually challenged. Always some small, unimportant men are made the goat.

During the past year, when, in most instances, the rising prices could not by any new hocus pocus be blamed upon higher wages, sundry politicians, high and low, assured us again and again how they would curb the capitalist appetite for profits and give us lower prices. An editorial appearing in the Mobile Register, December 23, 1919, on the Government Report of current prices, contains the following interesting comment:

"The government agencies have gone about reducing the price of necessities. As a result twenty-two staple food products have shown an average increase of two per cent. These increases were in eggs, coffee, tea, sugar, milk, potatoes, onions, fish, bananas, oleo, butter, rice,
cheese, prunes, flour, macaroni, raisins, bread and lard.""

The one point that stands out strongest in all this newspaper cry against high prices is that rising prices must be checked; that capitalists must not be curtailed in their demands for dividends, and that the workers in industry, therefore, will have to be forced to endure a cut in rations.

Professor T. N. Carver, of the Department of Economics at Harvard University said recently:

"Cutting down profits will not be an inducement for men, that is financiers, to produce more." As a matter of fact, financiers never have produced anything, not even the capital (produced by labor) which they are asked to invest.

However, the point we wish to make here is that capitalists are not going to be asked to undergo any hardship for the sake of the Pure-and-Simple-Consuming Class, nor for any other class. It is proposed, by the passing of anti-strike laws, by organizing public opinion against us, by subsidizing trade union officials, and by tying us up with the employers in time contracts which shall be made legally binding under "trade agreements", to make it impossible to call a strike, force us, who produce all things, to cut down on the necessities of life, to burn less coal and eat less food in order to keep prices from rising still further.

In a later chapter we shall show why higher prices for labor power do not mean higher prices for other commodities. But you know, and they know, that all their promises of lower prices are pure bunk. And you and I know that to-day workers must have a higher price for their labor power than they required formerly, in order to live.

The whole question between the mine owners and the miners, between the steel barons and the steel mill workers resolves itself into a question whether the capitalists shall have higher profits or whether the workers shall maintain their standard of living and improve it!

All these strikes are questions of the welfare of workmen and the health and the lives of the families of workmen against the swollen fortunes of the capitalist class.

The ruling classes, the autocrats of industry, who rule
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The whole question between the mine owners and the miners, between the steel barons and the steel mill workers resolves itself into a question whether the capitalists shall have higher profits or whether the workers shall maintain their standard of living and improve it!

All these strikes are questions of the welfare of workmen and the health and the lives of the families of workmen against the swollen fortunes of the capitalist class.

The ruling classes, the autocrats of industry, who rule
break without violation of the law. You will be unable to communicate with your fellow workers to consider the advisability of going on strike without being subject to arrest for conspiring to break the law. For such conduct on your part will be interpreted as intention to persuade your shopmates to strike and thus break their trade agreement!

So you can see what the capitalist class means when it says that it does not intend to deprive us of the right to strike.

In its early report the Industrial Conference said further that at this time it was believed more essential to devise machinery for averting labor conflicts than to undertake a discussion of the causes of unrest. The Conference said:

"Pending the growth of better relationships between employers and employes, the practical approach to the problem is to devise a method of preventing or retarding conflicts (strikes) by providing machinery for the adjustment of differences.

"The plain fact is that the public (the Pure-and-Simple Consumers) has long been uneasy about the power of great employers; it is becoming uneasy about the power of great labor organizations. The community must be assured against the domination of either."

I do not believe it is necessary to bring statistical figures here to show how utterly the working classes are under the domination of the Pure-and-Simple-Consuming, or capitalist, class.

But I may say here that almost all intelligent workers nowadays are fully in accord with the words of Captain John Smith, who, when some of the members of the European Leisure Classes came to America in the early days of her history and demanded the Something-for-Nothing existence they had enjoyed abroad, said:

"In this New World they who do not work, shall not eat."

To-day in many countries the working class is demanding a new industrial franchise in which the right to a voice in the conduct of industry shall depend upon whether or not a man or a woman produces in industry or whether they serve society.
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To return to the work of the Industrial Conference; the Washington report of its work says further that the nine members of the National Industrial Tribunal (or court) three each to represent the employers, the employees and the consumers, are all to be appointed by the president.

So that it is evident that you and I will not even be permitted to elect our own (?) representatives on this jury, and that, as is to be expected, they are to be chosen because they represent what the president considers labor delegates ought to stand for, rather than what the workers desire.

The Mobile Register prints the following report sent out by Washington:

"Industrial regions, probably twelve in number, conforming to the federal reserve system, would be outlined and a regional chairman appointed for each, by the president. Vice chairmen would be named by the Tribunal, if the work in any region required it.

"Panels of employers and employes for each region would be prepared by the secretary of commerce and the secretary of labor, respectively, after conference with the employers and workers of that region. Each panel, approved by the president, would be classified by industries among the employers and by industries, with subclassification into crafts, among the employees. Lots would be cast to determine the order of names in each panel.

"Decisions of regional boards would have to be unanimous or the question would be referred to an UMPIRE, whose DECISION WOULD BE FINAL, or to the national tribunal. . . .

"All the properly constituted boards would have the right to subpoena witnesses, examine them under oath, and to require the production of papers pertinent to the case."

Our erstwhile professional friends (?) in the face of the above plans and recommendations, and in the face of actual anti-strike laws, are running around in circles and assuring us that we will not be deprived of our right to strike. The workers will discover, however, when they try to call a strike that they will be informed that "in this instance", "for the good of the consumer"
(or the public), and because of their duly signed agree-
ment with the employers, they must refrain from striking
until the industrial situation has been investigated as
well as their demands. And after these have been ex-
amined they will be forced to wait until their demands,
as well as the demands of their employers and the claims
of the consumer, have been debated and tried by all
the regional boards and gone to the umpire, whose de-
cision is (supposed to be) FINAL, whatever that may
mean.

JUST TWO BIG CLASSES.

Society to-day is divided into two great classes. One
of these lives by OWNING and EXPLOITING, and the
other class lives by producing and serving. You will
find that nearly everybody belong to one of these groups
or makes a living working for one of these groups. The
writers for the press, for example, and all the writers and
artists that make up the contents of our periodicals, draw
their salaries almost entirely out of money paid to the
owners of the periodicals by the capitalists, for advertis-
ing.

I am informed by a paper manufacturer that the
paper alone which is used in a single copy of the Saturday
Evening Post often costs over fifteen cents. You can
buy a copy of this magazine at almost any news stand for
five cents and your nickel does not cover one-third the
cost of the paper used in a single issue. The difference
in paper cost, in articles, stories, illustrations, etc., in
making up and producing the magazine, are all paid out
of the millions of dollars the Post company takes in every
year from the autocrats of industry, for advertising.

It is easy to understand, therefore, why the owners of
newspapers and magazines take sides with the employers
of labor when a strike occurs, and why the working class
nearly always is misrepresented in, and is deceived by,
the press.

If you consider the men in other professions and can
discover the source of their incomes, you will see how
they usually feel that their personal interests are allied
with the interests they serve. These men in the profes-
sions will rally to the support of that class which pays
their bills.
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There is, in fact, no large group which does not draw its financial support from either the capitalist, or the working class. And men side with the source of their incomes.

Consider the workers in industry. They produce all things and they transport all things. And the value of the service they perform and of the goods they produce is determined by the social labor time necessary to produce them, that is, the socially necessary labor-time involved in the service; or the labor represented in the commodities.

And things are generally sold (or exchanged) for the value (or necessary labor) which they represent.

For example: a coat representing eight hours of labor usually sells to the wearer at its VALUE, that is, it sells for gold, or money representing eight hours of necessary social labor. Suppose the coat sells for $35.00 and support $35.00 to be the value of the coat. Then a $35.00 coat is exchanged for thirty-five dollars in gold, or silver, or notes representing gold or silver. The money and the coat are of equal value.

But when the garment workers go out on strike we discover that their employers only pay FIVE dollars for all the labor spent in making up that coat.

We do not read this information in the capitalist press because the newspapers make millions of dollars annually out of the advertisements of the big clothiers, so they will not print the truth about the workers and what they are striking for.

But if we read some socialist or labor paper we learn that the workers who MADE the coat for FIVE dollars are demanding TEN dollars or doubled wages. The capitalist press will tell use that the tailors, or the garment workers, are trying to "hold up the public" or to "hold up the consumer" and the editors and clergymen and college professors will raise their pens and voices in declaring that some laws must be enacted to protect the public from the labor bandits.

However, if we are persistent and ask a good many questions, we may find out in time that the employers are buying the cloth used in the coat at, say $10.00. Besides this expenditure they pay $5.00 wages for having
the coat made. And when we buy the coat at the store, it costs us just $35.00.

The way the intellectual prostitutes of the exploiting class arouse our minds against the productive strikers when we, ourselves, are not out on strike is by telling us that if the strikers receive more wages, or receive the value of the things they produce, we will be forced to pay more for our coats.

They are very careful not to say anything about who gets the TWENTY DOLLARS PROFITS, or the difference between the actual labor cost of the garment and what we pay for it.

But every intelligent workingman and woman wants to know why the productive and necessary workers cannot receive the value of their product and why the parasites, who absorb the $20.00 out of a thirty-five dollar coat, should not be asked to find some useful, necessary job earning a living.

Did you ever notice that most of the preachers and newspaper and magazine writers, the politicians and college professors take it for granted that just about all the people who produce everything should receive for producing, is enough to live on.

When you go out on strike we hear the “respectable people” saying:

“Well, they ought to have enough to live on.”

The employing and owning classes and those who work in their interests think that a bare existence is good enough for the people who feed and clothe and house the world.

The workers produce more than enough to feed and to clothe themselves and their families. But they receive scarcely sufficient wages to enable them to buy enough to live on. The employing class appropriates all the rest.

If the workers double their output one year and then ask for higher wages, the employing classes throw up their hands and exclaim:

“Why they receive enough to LIVE ON NOW!”

When we produce twice as much, the boss gets it all except the same old pay envelope containing our shrink-
ing dollars, which means less than enough to live on in decency.

The intelligent workers are not complaining over high prices today. They are asking for a New Deal in which the total necessary labor put into a commodity not only shall represent its value but that the producers and distributors of commodities shall receive the value of these goods for making and transporting them.

In other words, when a thing which we have made is sold, all we workers who have contributed to produce and transport it, desire that WE shall receive the value of the things we have made.

If the value of a coat is $35.00 we desire to see the men and women who have collectively produced and transported that coat receive the $35.00. If, by working co-operatively, we produce something having a value of $35.00, we would like to receive that value.

Or, if we receive $150.00 for doing a painting job and the value of the job is $300, we do not want any longer to divide with some parasite who contributes neither labor nor service.

We want to cut off the parasites who pay us a bare living and absorb for themselves all the additional value we create.

We do not object to paying $20.00 a ton for coal if the workers who mine the coal and transport it and deliver it receive that $20.00. What we object to is miners receiving $2.50 for mining coal for which we pay $16.00 a ton. If the value of the coal is represented by $16.00 to-day, we demand that those who produce and distribute it receive that $16.00.

We are with the workers in EVERY strike because we know that their cause is our cause; that every time they raise wages and shorten hours, we have a better chance for doing likewise. We are with them because they are of our own class and we are loyal to our class.

We are with ALL striking workers because we know that their victory means more out of the value of THEIR OWN PRODUCTS FOR THE WORKERS and less for the capitalists, who live by exploitation.

Every time a group of workers goes out on strike we should support it with all the powers at our command
and we should take that opportunity to insist that the demands of the strikers be granted and be paid for out of some of the unearned incomes taken out of the industry by the non-working capitalists.

For example, when the stock yards workers strike for higher pay, we should help them win their demands. But we should all insist that their increases in wages be paid out of the PROFITS taken out of the packing companies. In one year, according to government reports the capitalists in the Swift Packing Company appropriated $47,000,000 in profits, besides exorbitant salaries paid certain favored large stockholders. The wages and salaries paid to employees for that same year, were, according to the same government report, only $22,000,000. The Swift Company could therefore have paid the workers THREE TIMES the wages they were receiving and still have taken a profit of over THREE MILLION DOLLARS.

We must demand that the PRODUCERS and useful workers get a great deal more out of every dollar we spend for packing house products, until that time when the productive and useful people in the world shall own and control all the value they create.

The fight of the coal miners is your fight and my fight. If they win better working conditions and higher wages, these help raise wages everywhere and improve conditions for all workers. They raise the whole standard of living for the useful members of society.

When the Chicago milk drivers struck for $35.00 a week and got it, I know personally of several employers of labor who were compelled immediately to advance the wages of their employes correspondingly. They knew the men in their plants would not do good work and would seek other jobs unless they received a wage equal to the milk drivers' stipend.

Every rise in wages for you means a possible boost, and an ultimate boost, in wages for me. Further, every time I help you win a strike, you feel like helping me in a like emergency. In this way we develop consciousness of our class and we develop a loyalty to that class—the working class. We learn to act together and in the interest of each other. We discover finally that the in-
terests of the workers are identical and that an injury to one is an injury to all.

We learn that no workingman, nor small group of workers, nor trade is strong enough to fight the employers, as a CLASS, and win.

And we must remember that the unbiased spectator to a labor struggle does not exist. Either, as a member of the exploiting class, he desires and it is to his interest, to see the employers win, or, as a worker, he knows that a victory for the striking workers, means generally improved living conditions and a better standard of living for his own class.

THE POWER OF LABOR.

Whenever we marvel at the power possessed by the working class, we are struck by the poverty, suffering and endurance of the workers.

We know that all the useful and beautiful commodities in the world are the products of their hands. We know the toilers have built every ship, have constructed bridges to span the rivers, have wrought giant locomotives and great trains to carry the food and clothing and machinery produced by the laborers all over the face of the globe.

We look about in the big cities and see everywhere the products of the hands of labor. And when we go down into the slums we find the workers, who build mansions, palaces, luxurious apartment houses, skyscrapers, living there in poverty and uncertainty.

We see our comrades, who produce food for the whole world, living upon the poorest and cheapest foods. They are underfed and their children undernourished.

We find our fellow workers, who raise cotton, wool, silk, and who make clothing for all men and women, wearing rags, or clothed in shoddy.

And yet—the productive and necessary workers are so powerful that they can blight the largest cities with famine within a week. So powerful are they that they can fold their arms and bring starvation upon the Leisure Classes who live by the labor of others.

Upon the shoulders of the productive and the necessary workers rests the whole life of Society. Without these workers no man eats, nor is warmed, is clothed,
travels about, has shelter from the storm and the cold.
These workers possess the economic power of life and death over all men. And yet—

These men sleep in tenements, suffer hunger and cold. It is your labor, O workers, which has made other men, idle men, secure. And for you there is no security. You, who have builded palaces, are without homes.

You, who have packed the storehouses with clothing, who have garbed whole nations, are sorely put to it to provide the overalls you need to labor in.

You productive workers! You turn all wheels and cause cities to spring up, and peoples to eat. Engines leap at the touch of your fingers; whistles blow; cars run; wheels revolve; the World awakes!

You have fed the world; clothed and warmed the human race and when you fold your arms, when the workers in a whole industry fold their arms, when all the workers fold their arms, all these good things must cease.

The preachers tell us to be satisfied with the lowly station into which it has pleased their gods to place us. But our station is not lowly; the basis of great power lies in our calloused hands, for, when we, the working class fold our arms—

The source of the food supply is dried,
There is no longer clothing,
Nor coal, neither trains, nor travel, nor steaming ships!
When we, the workers, fold our arms!

Machines are hushed;
In the cities there is neither
Heat nor light; neither water nor gas;
Neither food nor coal;
When we, the workers, fold our arms!

And we rejoice in the power which is ours. We are glad of our strength and our brains to produce things that people may live in comfort; may eat and be merry; may travel and work and live and love!

Glad are we also that, organized, united as a class, with minds awake, we, the workers, possess the economic
power to enforce whatsoever we need and desire and find right and workable in this world of men.

The world of men is a dark place, a hungry, thirsty, cold place, a sick, homeless, idle and dying world—without our labor. It is BY OUR LABOR that all good things come to mankind.

And it is by OUR ECONOMIC POWER that we shall some day make this a world in which all strong men and strong women shall give labor for labor and service for service; and none shall share who does not also contribute to society.

In the meantime the STRIKE is one of the greatest weapons by which we workers can secure a greater portion of the value we create, and it is what we need in our efforts to resist FURTHER EXPLOITATION.

Of course it is true that if we raise our wages from $5.00 to $10.00 for making a coat which sells to the wearer for its value—$35.00, there will be less profits to be divided among the manufacturers, the wholesalers, the retailers, landlords, advertisers, etc., etc. Instead of being $20.00 in profits to be shared by these groups of capitalists, there will be ONLY $15.00, UNLESS the manufacturers and other capitalists can make the ultimate buyers PAY them a bigger price for the coat.

But, in spite of all the talk to the contrary, capitalists cannot raise prices at their own sweet will. If they could, the first person you have to trade with would rob you of your last cent. In almost every industrial field there is still very keen competition so that the employers fight against an increase in wages to their own employes because they know that if they raise the price of the goods they sell, their competitors may secure ALL of THEIR BUSINESS.

Naturally the question arises in your minds, if the capitalists cannot raise prices at will, what IS causing the steady rise to-day? We will use a later chapter in trying to explain this phenomenon.

TYING YOU UP IN A SACK.

In looking over recent issues of financial and industrial journals, I am struck with the evident yearning on the part of the capitalist class for the good days they expect right after next election when their congressmen and other high (?) officials of government can indulge
in an anti-strike law-making debauch without fear of losing an election.

Aloud, almost, they are assuring each other that just as soon as the conceited and puffed-up workers have been used to vote their old stand-bys into office again, they, the employing class, will crack their whips and give orders for the putting over of some of the rawest kind of anti-strike legislation anybody has been able to imagine.

In this connection, a Providence, Rhode Island, dispatch of January 21st, 1920, quotes Senator Miles Poindexter as saying with reference to the "anti-strike" clause of the Cummins railroad bill as follows:

"While it (the anti-strike clause) is confined to those engaged in interstate commerce, it indirectly affects every industry because every industry is dependent upon public transportion, and if the principle is established by the enactment and enforcement of this section, the path will have been cleared which can be followed both by the federal government and by the states, in the industrial struggles of the future.

"When the people of the United States gave Congress exclusive power to regulate commerce, they, by necessary implication, imposed upon it the duty to protect it."

Senator Poindexter is an aspirant for the Republican nomination for President and the above is quoted from an address he made before an audience of business men in Providence, R. I., on January 20th.

What the Senator is explaining to these employers of labor is that once the anti-strike law has been PUT OVER on us, then all strikes that hinder production anywhere at any time can be declared a violation of the law with the anti-strike act interpreted to cover all industry. It seems he is assuring these business men that a strike in woolen mills or in a packing plant will be declared illegal under the anti-strike law because it will be claimed the workers are stopping interstate commerce by ceasing to PRODUCE commodities in the factories or mills. This, he says, as I understand him, will follow if the law is enacted and enforced.

In the January-February issue of the "Unpartisan Review", a journal violently anti-labor in its whole tone,
the editor, in his article "As to Striking", contributes some suggestions whereby he believes the capitalist class of America, with the aid of the new regime at Washington in 1921 can soon so arrange the affairs of our little world that they will be able to prevent all strikes in industries where there is any chance of a labor victory.

Of course all these plots and schemes to prevent labor from using the strike weapon are confessions on the part of the capitalist class that A UNITED WORKING CLASS HOLDS ABSOLUTE VICTORY IN ITS OWN HANDS and that something must be done to check, divide, tie the workers up in a sack, IF POSSIBLE.

The editor of the Unpartisan Review speaks confidently of coming legislation which shall restore the old Conspiracy Laws which made it a crime for workers to cease work simultaneously for the purpose of improving their condition or raising their wages. He assures us that such laws will certainly be enacted to apply in essential or necessary industries.

"But," he asks, "would men seek employment in industries where they were not free to strike?"

He suggests that some men might be induced to work by offers of higher wages, and discloses the fact that an element of compulsion to refrain from striking might be added by "reserving a portion of the wages" to be held as a guarantee fund which should be forfeited by striking." And he asks:

"Would it be practicable and worth while to recognize and stimulate the probably higher class of this labor, by some title or even by some badge?" "It would be emergency labor, or perhaps more properly, anti-emergency labor; (labor used to prevent emergencies or strikes.)

"Under the possible new regime there would probably soon develop a class of labor specially evolved to prevent emergencies (strikes). The men might become the 'trusties' of the labor world:"

(Toadying prisoners in the penitentiaries who become stool-pigeons and inform against their comrades, often are given sinecures and called "trusties"). This is the degrading, disloyal part he expects this decorated group of wage slaves to play against their own interests, as well as against their own comrades.
"It must be admitted, however," continues our edi-
torial champion of the rights of employers, "that prob-
ably, at first, there would be a tendency for the labor
world, outside of the non-striking industries, to regard
those inside them as scabs."

* * * *

These are fair samples of the way the enemies of
labor mean to tie our hands.

As fast as we elect our brother workers to office, who
will actually serve us, they will be suspended by the ser-
vants of capitalism, under the pretense that they are con-
spiring against the government, or "in league with sin-
ister foreign powers", or that they are "plotting against
the welfare of this country", as were the five elected so-
cialist assemblymen in New York.

The capitalist class will no longer seat any persons
whom we may elect to office; it will no longer obey any
laws which may not be wholly in its favor. It is deter-
mined by legislation and by its newly organized riot
squads to rob us of our labor press, our right to gather
together to discuss our plans and our problems at meet-
ings and it is plotting to make "free speech" in America
a thing of the long-gone past.

But if the working class of this country will act in
unison and will loyally stand by its own interests, IT
CAN PREVENT ALL THESE THINGS BECOMING A
FACT BY USING ITS ECONOMIC CLASS POWER
TO-DAY.

If every worker or half the workers, or one-fourth
the workers in American went out on strike for ten
days, we believe there would no longer be any question
of granting promptly, expeditiously and with dispatch,
each and all of the demands of labor!

And remember this—that no matter what may hap-
pen to the law books, the basis of all power, economic
power, lies in the hands of the working class, and in the
hands of that class alone!

The value of a commodity is determined by the nec-
essary labor contained in it. And owing to competition,
and to the fact that substitutes are always assailing a
monopoly of almost everything, commodities usually sell
at their values.

Now that sounds strange; doesn't it? But it is quite
THE CAUSE OF RISING PRICES.

demonstrably true. For example: the productive workers are not robbed by the HIGH prices they pay for groceries, etc.; they are robbed because they are paid very much less than the VALUE of their products.

The commodities themselves usually exchange at value. I mean they usually SELL at their value.

You give the grocer money representing GOLD or silver which was produced by—say FOUR hours of necessary labor, and he gives you—say—flour which it took four hours of necessary labor to produce and transport. You paid your money and received the value of your money. The same thing applies to shoes—even in these days of “high prices”, and to coats and clothing, meats, etc., etc.

EVEN IF PRICES have doubled NOMINALLY, goods are, as a rule, exchanging, or selling, at their value. Now, that would sound as though things had DOUBLED in value; wouldn’t it? But the value in a pair of shoes is probably about the same as it was four years ago.

The point is that something has happened to the DOLLAR. Four or five years ago if you had bought a suit of clothes with American money, it might have cost you—say $30.00; but if you had paid for the suit in MEXICAN dollars it would have cost you $60.00.

Gold and silver are commodities TOO, and they also tend to exchange for things, or to buy things, at their value. And bank notes, gold or silver certificates, or paper money, when they represent gold or silver, exchange for or buy, commodities which contain an equal amount of necessary labor. So much labor exchanges for an equal amount of labor. Value buys equal value, etc. Only to-day these paper “bills” are NOT ONE-HALF AS VALUABLE as they were FIVE YEARS AGO. In far-away corners in the newspapers, in the banking journals, or financial papers you find something said every day about how the currency inflation is causing prices to rise steadily. The capitalists KNOW that they have inflated the money we are using and they know that when money falls to HALF its former value, prices of all things in general will be DOUBLED, but they prefer to blame it on strikes and the workers’ in-
creased wages rather than to confess to the people just what the trouble is.

It is this way. Business has increased so swiftly all over the world the past few years that the supply of gold and silver has not kept up with the needs of the nations for a medium of exchange and a measure of value. Formerly the banks and the governments printed paper notes which were used in circulation because they were easier to carry about than the heavy metals.

When banks and governments discovered that they did not possess enough gold and silver to run business and to pay wages and extend credits, they were forced either to restrict business enterprises or to issue new paper bank notes behind which there was neither gold nor silver.

To quote an editorial which appeared in the Mobile Register January 27th, 1920:

"The German mark that was quoted at from 24 to 25 cents before the war, was listed yesterday at 1.02 cents. The English pound sterling, ($4.87 before the war) has a present day value of $3.59. What is the explanation? "The Bankers' Trust Company of New York quotes British opinion to the effect that the depreciation is caused by credit inflation.

"Credit is usually extended against production. This is called credit expansion. The war, however, caused a great lessening of production; and at the same time greatly increased government expenses. THERE WAS NOT GOLD ENOUGH TO MEET THE EXPENSES, and resort was had to credit, that is, to the issue of paper money; and this credit was not against goods to be sold, but against the hope that some day peace would come and industry would revive sufficiently to take up the credit. . . . . As against the realization in Germany the odds are 20 to 1; in England 10 to 7."

Again, quoting from the same issue of the Register:

"The world's debt was estimated by the National City Bank to-day at $200,000,000,000 compared with $40,000,000,000 in 1914.

"Paper currency throughout the world increased 600 per cent since 1914 while the gold reserve behind it increased only 40 per cent, according to statistics compiled by the bank."
The face value of paper currency of thirty principal countries, which totalled $7,250,000,000 in 1924, had increased to $40,000,000,000 at the time of the armistice and to $50,000,000,000 in December, 1919, exclusive of $34,000,000,000 issued by the Russian Soviet government.

For example: say the paper-money in circulation in the United States has risen to twice the gold and silver back of it. You might then say we are using a diluted currency, and one paper dollar will really be worth only half a 1914 dollar. And it buys only half as much.

This is what has happened not only in the United States, but, to a far greater degree, in England, France, Germany, Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, Turkey, Japan, etc., etc. The supply of gold and silver has proven inadequate, so banks have been compelled either to curtail credits and business, or to print more and more paper bills without an equal additional supply of gold and silver to back them up.

In the face of the needs of big business all modern countries have done the same thing, that is, have printed two, three, even five and six times as many paper dollars or pounds, francs or marks as they possess in gold or silver.

The United States is paying $1.34 for the same amount of silver metal that used to cost it 65 cents, which is some indication of how much our currency, or our money has depreciated to-day.

When I go into the butcher shop and pay twice as much for poor chops as I paid for good ones four years ago, and when my temper rises and I want to tell the poor over-worked young fellow (who is up against the packing companies just as much as we are) what I think of things, I have to remind myself that the money which I carry in my pocket has shrunken to one-half its former value; is worth only half as much and that I can expect to buy only half as many chops with this dollar as I bought with the kind of a dollar we used before the war.

Not long ago I read an interview with Senator Smoot (I think it was) in which he was quoted as saying it was
ridiculous for congressmen to say we could have lower prices when every intelligent man knew that if the business men of the United States intend to capture the foreign trade, they will need to print still more paper money with no gold or silver to back it up, which, he is reported to have said, will mean still higher prices.

In other words, he meant that if the banks continue to dilute the currency by printing more and more paper notes without an equal increase in the gold and silver supply which they are supposed to represent, we can expect to see steadily rising prices.

The point is that big business desires and needs currency dilution, or currency inflation, as the bankers call it, in order to extend its markets over the whole world. This causes steadily rising prices which we workers have to pay in order to live. The situation after all means, not that prices of all other commodities have risen so much, but that MONEY IS BECOMING CHEAPER, or LESS VALUABLE every day.

It means that the workers who have received only a fifty per cent increase in wages are getting only three-fourths of their before-the-war-wages. It means that if you bind yourselves by agreements with your employers to work for a certain length of time at fixed wages, you will find your dollars shrinking so fast that bare existence will become impossible. For, if the capitalist class finds it necessary to still further inflate the currency of the United States in their greed for foreign markets, money will become steadily less valuable and the prices of all other commodities will steadily rise;

EXCEPT the price the employers pay for your labor power and your brain power.

They are planning to tie you up so tight that you will have to slave on, half starved in the face of leaping prices, or walk out of the factory, mine or the mill ALONE. You are to be bound from making any GROUP fight in your own behalf.

And NOW is the time for you to act to prevent this thing. United with your fellow workers, you possess the economic power to write your demands into law, into pay envelopes—or—even of writing them into a democracy of labor and of service in all industry!
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