

STRIKE PERMITS REMOVED AND AUTHORITY OF CITY IS ABSOLUTE IN WINNIPEG

Resentment Against Any Soviet Rule in Western Metropolis is Quiet-
ing Down, But People Recognize That Any Settlement Must
Give Labor Right to Collective Bargaining.

Special to The Journal by Main
Johnson.

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THIEF RIVER FALLS, Minn., May 22—With the disappearance of most of the permit cards and the gradual quieting down of the resentment about the usurpation of authority, the original issues of the Winnipeg strike are again emerging prominently from the melee.

The latest issue of the Labor News puts before everything else, "the absolute necessity of settling once for all the two points at issue: First, right to collective bargaining, and second, right to a living wage."

The G. W. V. A. meeting is also considered as most significant, especially in its declaration in favor of compulsory plenary collective bargaining. There are many signs that the dictation issue that was the storm centre for several days is gradually receding.

Permit Signs Disappear.

The permit signs have disappeared from the theatres and from the bread and milk wagons, and gasoline stations are reopened. The water pressure is normal again, and the delivery of ice has been started. Order is still well maintained, and although general business is absolutely at a standstill, there is noticed a slight relaxation of the intense strain that has prevailed.

The president of the strike committee told the war veterans that there was a possibility of settlement within a few days, but such optimism is by no means unanimous. There is a widespread feeling among the thoughtful men that a crisis has been reached not only in the stormy industrial life of Winnipeg, but also in the whole question of industrial relations in Canada.

These people, although experiencing a much inconvenience as anyone can be, are just as anxious

Winnipeg People Take to Gardens

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WINNIPEG, May 22. — Under the influence of the strike Winnipeg is becoming positively bucolic.

The one occupation that is being carried on is farming in gardens and back yards.

There never was such a utilization of seeds at any one time before and all sorts of plants and vegetables are also being planted.

If you go near the market, you see a constant stream of people carrying in their arms various flowers and plants.

For some reason or other there seems to be a run, especially on pansies and mint.

for a cessation of the tie-up, feel that any settlement reached must recognize fundamentals. They do not want any patched-up peace. Moderates among them are of the opinion that in some way or other the unions must be regarded not as revolutionary reprehensible bodies, but as stabilizing institutions which give the employers a cohesive, responsible force with which to deal.

Change Whole System.

Many of the men believe that our whole system of business is bound to change, and that it may be the ultimate result that the workers will control at least to the same extent that the people rule in politics, and that there will be responsible Government in industry as well as

in public affairs. Those who hold these views, however, do not think any such change is feasible at one stroke. Public opinion is not ready for it, and any attempt to enforce it would mean class war. They do think, however, that the old order can never be restored, and that some direct, advanced step in the direction of industrial democracy must be taken and may just as well be made now as a result of the Winnipeg strike. That is why they deplore certain statements and acts of the strike committee as at least leaving the latter open to the grave suspicion of trying to establish a dictatorship at their very first taste of power. The more reasonable attitude of the last day or two is welcomed as an indication that this manifestation was only a temporary one, and did not reflect any unanimous and determined decision by the whole body of strikers.

Complicated By Foreigners.

The Winnipeg situation is undoubtedly complicated by the large numbers of foreigners here. They have not provided the leadership nor do they form the great mass of trades unionists, but a good many people think they do constitute an active force in the ranks. As long as such men think and act in terms of what we regard as Canadianism there is no objection, but there is apparent in the city resentment against what is looked upon as exotic and incompatible ideals being furthered by men who have not become nationalized here.

Anyone can see that one crying need is for some active constructive measure for securing the co-operation of these people, if they are to remain here, in general national outlook and aspirations.

Await Cabinet Ministers.

The arrival of Hon. Messrs. Meighen and Robertson is awaited with interest. The Government delayed so long in taking any ap-

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preachable notice of the Winnipeg trouble, that many citizens grew entirely disgusted at what they looked upon as either shirking or apathy, but now that Cabinet Ministers are actually near here there is interest as to what they will suggest or try to do.

Popular interest centres in the mass meeting of the G.W.V.A. which was crowded to the doors and which brought forth keen debates and close arguments, but which finally did result in certain definite decisions, although the executive was endorsed and the policy of neutrality reaffirmed. It is quite evident that the temper of the meeting was strongly in favor of Labor and against capitalistic influences. This was shown not only in the decision to call for compulsory collective bargaining of a plenary nature, but also in the vote to disassociate with the G.W.V.A. from the Army and Navy Veterans on the ground, among others, that there was capitalistic influence in it. Questions which poured into the platform from the body of the hall in reference to alleged strike-breaking activities by certain members of the association showed the prevalent drift of opinion.

The Strike Committee presented its case to the meeting, both through the president of the Winnipeg Trades and Labor Council, personally, and in a letter from the committee. The latter expressed regret for the communication appearing in the Labor News calling for the resignation of the executive of the G.W.V.A. The Strike Committee said they did not know such a letter was appearing in the paper.

Back to Fundamentals.

Mr. Winning, who was given a tumultuous welcome at the beginning of his speech, and an even warmer reception at its close, declared the fundamental issue to be that of collective bargaining. The principle had been accepted at the peace table by all the war boards and by most employers generally. Certain Winnipeg employers in the iron trade had been fighting collective bargaining for years, for they feared they would have to share with their men too large a slice of the profit. Mr. Winning, amid cheers, asked why they should fight one group of employers this year, someone else the next, and then have to repeat the same process all over again.

"Why not clean it all up now?" he asked.

The strike leader denied any thought of Soviet rule in Winnipeg and of any ulterior motive in the tie-up. As evidence in support of his view he said that the Strike Committee had been consulting with the Mayor, and as another thing they had taken the permit labels off the bread and milk wagons. They had been put on in the first place by arrangement with the bread managers and dairy companies so that the drivers would not be molested.

It was W. J. Wilton, M.L.A. for Assinibola, a returned officer, who proposed compulsory collective bargaining and the plan was endorsed by the meeting. The proposal was contained in a letter he had written to the Provincial Government calling for a declaration by them that it was a refusal by certain employers to grant unplenary collective bargaining that had caused the strike; that the principle should be universally accepted; that the Government should make it unlawful for employers to refuse to agree to collective bargaining.

He thought it quite possible such legislation would be passed.

Vice-President Notton of the G.W.V.A. said that most of the members of the association were workmen and sympathized with all the legitimate demands of labor, as an organization. However, he contended they must remain neutral.

One Incident.

Objection was raised to the action of an officer and six men, who, it was alluded, had gone to one of the citizens' fire halls and had said they had been sent as volunteer firemen from the G. W. V. A. The answer was that an officer had volunteered, but that he denied saying he had been sent by the organization. There was much talk about an elevator being run in the Investment Building, where the military headquarters are situated. The G. W. V. A. had asked that an elevator operator should be allowed to run this car for the convenience of wounded soldiers, but the complaint was made that everyone was using it indiscriminately. The strike committee said that this particular elevator was being run by military authorities. Vice-President Newton was optimistic about the general situation. He had heard at first there was danger of serious trouble, but he now believed that such rumors were "rot."

The weather has been beautifully warm and clear, and in spite of the fact that Winnipeg runs on old time there is daylight until nearly ten o'clock.

Amusements have not disappeared from the city. Tennis courts and golf links are crowded. The Labor Temple itself provides entertainment in the shape of billiards and pool, but there is such a vast crush of players and spectators that one does not get a chance to watch the fine points of the game.

Whatever the strike leaders themselves may think about it, the opinion is still spreading among private strikers that a mistake was made in stopping the street cars.

About Theatre Signs.

Premier Norris' letter to the Mayor emphasizing the difficulty of strikers' permits was followed by a sharp letter from the Department of the Provincial Treasurer to the individual theatres of Winnipeg. It stated that the department was informed of a sign in the theatre to the effect that it was open by permit of the strike committee. The communication reminded the management that the theatre licenses were granted by the Provincial Government, and said that if the signs were not taken down by five o'clock the licenses would be revoked.

A survey of the theatres showed that in every place visited the signs were taken down by that time. It is reported that representatives of the strikers went to the managers of the Strand Theatre and told him that if the signs were not put back his operators and stage hands would be taken off.

The Strand man, although not antagonistic to labor, pointed out the difficulty of the situation, and said he could not replace the cards. Later in the night, so it is reported, the strikers' representatives returned to the theatre and said it was all right to have the signs removed.

Although there is what amounts to a federal holiday, patronage in the theatres is small and all the houses are losing money heavily this week.

On Wednesday afternoon the Eaton Company sent out a few delivery wagons on their afternoon trips.