

AGITATORS COMING TO CANADA ARE FINANCED BY GERMANY'S GOLD

Tribune Correspondent Tells of Workings of I.W.W.
Organization in Northwestern States,
Where "Invasion" is Planned

By BENJAMIN E. LING

BUTTE, Mont., Aug. 25—With the announcement, published in The Winnipeg Tribune a few days ago, that members of the I.W.W. were invading Canada and that six already had been arrested to prevent their agitating for the destruction of western crops, the doings of this anarchistic organization became of immediate interest to the people of Canada.

I have come here for The Tribune to find out and tell the people of Western Canada who and what the I.W.W. are.

I find centred in this mining town nearly all the industrial strife that for several months has crippled the great copper camps of Montana, Idaho, Utah, New Mexico and Arizona, and that had led to lynchings of I.W.W. leaders, deportations of I.W.W. members, and charges that this "revolutionary" labor organization is financed by German gold.

From Butte, "Wobbly" orators and agitators have penetrated the copper regions of the west, stirring up strikes.

From Butte and other western towns agitators have attempted to enter Canada to interfere with the harvesting of Canadian crops.

In Butte the I.W.W.'s have waged their fight to break up the old Western Federation of Miners, now known as the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers.

In their fight against the mine owners, the I.W.W.'s have sought to wreck every organization affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. This has become a three-cornered fight between the A.F. of L. unions, the "Wobblies," and the mining magnates.

RESULT—At the moment of the government's large demand for copper, the output has been seriously curtailed by strikes.

An indication of the intensity of feeling was evidenced here in the lynching of Frank Little, I.W.W. leader.

The I.W.W. leaders called out 12,000 miners here though less than



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one-third of them were affiliated with miners' organizations. About 5,000 strikers have left to take jobs in mining camps elsewhere or to work in harvest fields.

As is the I.W.W. custom, no demands were made before the men walked out. Later the leaders presented their demands and organized what is now called the Metal Mine Workers' Union. Officials of this organization strenuously deny it is an I.W.W. group, but all the "Wobblies" belong to this union and are active in its leadership.

The demands of the miners are:

Abolition of the rustling card, establishment of a flat \$6 a day wage, elimination of the sliding scale, better working conditions.

The rustling card is the principal contention. Leaders say this merely is a variation of the black-list.

A rustling card is given a mine when his application for a job has been acted upon favorably. To get this card he must tell where he has worked during the previous two years, and other facts about himself, giving reasons for being out of a job.

The Speculator mine disaster in which 170 men lost their lives, June 8, added to unrest among the miners.

The living cost in Butte, always high, has risen over 50 per cent. in the last year. Wages of miners have gone up 18 per cent.

Since the strike was called, the big mining companies, notably the Anaconda and the Great Butte have offered the men another increase of 25 and 50 cents a day.

Their offer is based on a sliding scale depending upon the market price of copper. When copper is selling for between 15 and 17 cents a pound, the miners would get a minimum wage of \$4 a day, while when it is selling for 23 cents a pound the miners would get \$4.75 a day and so on up to \$6 a day.

Miners here say that merchants have raised their prices whenever the miners got a wage increase.

W. H. Rogers, federal mediator, trying to settle the strike, advised I. W. W. members to join the A. F. of L. union and go back to work.

Attack U. S. President

The aroused the I. W. W.'s to a bitter attack on Rogers and on President Wilson.

They insist they want the government to take over the mines. They say if this is done, copper can be sold for less than 16 cents a pound and the miners can get \$8 a day for six hours' work.

The mine operators won't deal with the I. W. W.'s who refuse to sign any agreements for any length of time.

There's much talk about German gold being given I. W. W. leaders to foment industrial discord and thus embarrass this country's participation in the war. I. W. W.'s scoff at the charge. They have more funds than formerly, but say this is because they have more members, who pay initiation fees that vary from 50 cents to \$2. Dues are 50 cents a month.

Regardless of whether the I. W. W.'s are financed by kaiser agents, the result in tying up a large portion of the country's copper supply should please the kaiser, as it soon will handicap the country's plans.

Some organized labor leaders say they are convinced certain mine owners have financially aided I. W. W. agitation, seeking thereby to undermine the strength of the A. F. of L. organizations.

Organizers for the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, seeking to strengthen their union since the strike, have made some progress, but the I. W. W. strength continues greatest.

This is due largely to feeling aroused here in 1914, when the Butte miners' hall was dynamited during the fight between factions in the old Western Federation led by Charles Moyer, present president, and "Big Bill" Haywood, now dominant figure in the I. W. W. Moyer, advocate of A. F. of L. methods, beat Haywood, "direct action" apostle. Haywood's men in the I. W. W. camp here are now fighting, the more conservative Moyer men.

The miners grew discontented when they saw the price of copper rise from 13 cents a pound to over 30 cents and understood the millions of profits this meant to the mine owners, while they—the workers—were having a struggle to live with the scanty increases in pay compared with the big raise in the cost of living.

There has been much anti-war agitation in Butte. Blame for it has been placed at the doors of I. W. W. agitators, Finns, Austrians and Sinn Fein Irish.