

# REPLY TO THREAT OF GENERAL STRIKE

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Manitoba Bridge & Iron Co.  
Refers to Efforts of Agitators  
to Run the Country

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While organized labor in Winnipeg is taking a strike vote in sympathy with the striking metal workers on account of an injunction issued against them by the Manitoba Bridge and Iron work for \$100,000 the company has issued a statement the only weapon left to them for use against lawless interference.

The company claims that the injunction prevents the metal trade workers from ever using intimidation against employees engaged to work in the shops. The company further claims that it is still prepared to enter into negotiations with the

men in regard to increased wages, and that a general strike is a resort to brute force.

The statement also says that the question now is whether the country is in the hands of elected representatives or a "small coterie of agitators."

The following is the statement issued by R. D. Guy, counsel for the Manitoba Bridge and Iron works.

#### Company's Statement

"With reference to the article appearing in this morning's Free Press indicating that a general strike was being ordered by the Trades and Labor council, the Manitoba Bridge and Iron Works, Limited, on whose behalf the injunction in question was obtained, states its position as follows:

"The injunction was the only weapon left to the company to fight intimidation and lawlessness on the part of the strikers, who threw down their tools in the face of the unanimous finding of the Royal commission appointed for the purpose of investigating their grievances, on which commission there was a representative of labor who joined in the findings on all important questions, including the question of wages, and only dissented on the number of hours constituting a working day. Notwithstanding the finding of the commission, the company was still prepared, and is yet prepared to negotiate with their men on the question of wages. The action of the company in obtaining the injunction was merely calling to its aid the law of the land to prevent the strikers from intimidating and preventing other workmen to exercise their right to sell their labor as they saw fit, and before such injunction could be obtained it was necessary to submit proof to the courts that such intimidation had been openly practiced.

"The action of the Trades and Labor council in calling a general strike is a resort to lawlessness and brute force to attain their ends. They are not prepared to abide by the laws passed by the fully elected representatives of the people. If the law is wrong in principle which permits an injunction in a case of this kind, the proper course for the Trades and Labor council is to agitate for a change of the law, but until it is changed the employer has the undoubted privilege of invoking the aid of the courts to protect his rights and property.

"The action of the Trades and Labor council is on a par with the recent proceedings of the Trades and Labor council of Vancouver ordering a 24-hour strike and which was abruptly terminated by the patriotic interference of the returned soldiers. This matter resolves itself into a question as to whether the government of the country is in the hands of the duly elected representatives of the people and the courts, or in the hands of a small coterie of agitators. So far as the Manitoba Bridge and Iron works is concerned, they have repeatedly offered to meet committees of their men for the adjustment of their differences."

#### Board of Trade Committee Named

Five members of the Winnipeg board of trade will act on a special committee with others in studying the labor situation and dealing therewith. This has reference to the general situation and not to the particular dispute between the Metal Workers and their employers.

A letter from the Canadian Manufacturers' association asking the appointment of five board of trade members to form part of this committee, consisting of twenty members, five each from the board of trade, the Builders' exchange, the Citizens' alliance, and the Canadian Manufacturers' association, was read at the board meeting yesterday afternoon, and acted upon. The men named for the committee were the five who acted in the postal situation, Fred Cox, R. Driscoll, H. Bruce Gordon, C. N. Jackson and E. D. Martin.