

# LOCAL LABOR MEN ON THE WINNIPEG VERDICT

Think Definition of "Sedition"  
May Result—Suggest "Bill  
of Rights" on Strike.

Conviction of the five Winnipeg strike leaders has stirred the labor movement in Toronto to a considerable degree and has created a demand that labor draft a "Bill of Rights," in which sedition, unconstitutional action, and strike rights will all be clearly defined.

As usual, the labor movement has divided in its opinions on the effect of the verdict. A canvass of a number of prominent labor leaders by The Star, to-day, gave the following comments:

W. J. Hevey, former secretary of the Trades and Labor Council, was one of the few to see definite benefits accruing to organized labor, as a result of the trial. He said: "I think it will have the effect of showing labor that massed action, as preached and practised by the One Big Union, is not a successful way of doing business. The only way is by constitutional means, and not by Red propaganda and violent action. The case of Ivens appears as the worst. He should have known better."

### Interpret Sedition.

A. W. Mance, secretary of the Toronto Trades and Labor Council, remarked that it merely meant that the cases would be appealed forthwith, as the strikers have been granted a reserve case. "Under the instructions from the judge," he said, "and in view of the fact that the case was tried under a law that has been obsolete in England for more than 50 years, I believe that the jury was perfectly honest in its finding. There has been no precedent in Canada, and it now means that labor will have to draft a bill of rights, in which an interpretation of sedition, and what constitutes seditious actions, will be clearly defined. As it is now, a public speaker never knows what he can or what he cannot say, without being prosecuted. However, there is one thing certain, and that is labor will take care of its right to strike. The trial has brought things to a head."

John T. Vick, a prominent member of the Independent Labor party, and business agent of the Bricklayers' Union, refused to comment on the verdict.

"It is too stiff," said John Cottam, secretary of the Toronto Carpenters' District Council, emphatically. "They should have let those men off, seeing that they did not proceed against the ones who really decided the strike—the rank and file of the Winnipeg Labor movement. Officials of a labor union inevitably have to bear the brunt of any strike in which they merely carry out the instructions they are given."

### Let Themselves Be Caught.

"They shouldn't have left themselves open to be caught in the trap. That's all I have to say," said ex-Controller Robbins, secretary of the Street Railwaymen's Union.

"While I rather expected the verdict," declared Herbert Lewis, one of the prominent labor organizers in Toronto, "I retain the opinion that the Government has made a serious mistake in sending these men to jail. The effect of the sentence will be to create a far greater interest in the case, as well as to stimulate the labor movement. While I don't by any means agree with all that was done in Winnipeg, neither do I believe that a few men should have been singled out and made bear the burden on the strike. These men were mainly paid officials of unions and simply carried out the mandates of the members of their organizations. To have sent anyone to jail, they should have sent everyone who voted for the strike."

"I believe a deference fund is still being raised to carry on the appeal. It was to have closed just latterly, but this may have the effect of reopening it for new subscriptions. The strike was primarily a trades union movement and now means that all trades unions in Canada must take up the fight."

The International Association of Machinists, at their provincial conference, on Saturday, memorialized the Dominion Government, asking for a definition of what constituted sedition. They also demand that the Government put into operation the eight-hour clause of the peace treaty.

James Simpson refused to venture any personal opinion on the verdict, remarking that he had not read sufficient of the evidence which had been heard. "I know, however," he said, "that there is a great body of opinion that has merely looked upon the strike as a general-strike of great magnitude. It is generally believed that the leaders merely conducted the strike along customary strike lines, and attempted in no way to usurp the reins of Government. They will no doubt believe the sentence too severe."