

strike vote was taken and resulted in a large majority in support of presenting demands which included recognition of the union. At no time did there appear any glaring dissatisfaction. On July 13th a meeting was held in the Union hall and the radicals were defeated at every turn. On July 14th, the writer was informed by a prominent labor man that a meeting to be held on July 20th would probably result in all action being deferred for this year at least. It is a significant fact that the meeting on July 13th was held in the absence of Jimmy McGuire who was in Ottawa keeping in touch with Senator Robertson, Minister of Labor. Before the end of the week the whole situation took an unfavorable turn. It became known that Senator Robertson had requested that the Mine Managers Association send representatives to Ottawa for a conference, that the Union were aware of this, that the Union Executive had previously written the mine managers urging them to attend and that Senator Robertson, on the refusal of the mine managers' to attend such a conference in connection with an issue that was dead, told McGuire that the Government could do no more and that the stand of the union was justified. Had Senator Robertson not invited the mine managers to a conference which he surely felt convinced that they would not desire to attend, things might have gone differently in Cobalt. As it was, McGuire returned from Ottawa, attended the meeting of July 20th, told the 500 or 600 men gathered there that the mine managers had defied constituted authority by not going to Ottawa, that the Minister of Labor had declared that the stand of the Union was justified, that the mine managers were to blame and that a strike was all that was necessary to win that which the Union was demanding. He asked all those in favor of a declaration of a strike to take effect July 23rd, to rise. The vote was almost unanimous. Thus, on the very day which prominent and cool-thinking labor men had the week before expected would result in deferring action for another year, actually saw the industrial situation in Cobalt completely upset.

The Minister of Labor has denied charges that he told McGuire to call a strike. The Minister, however, has not denied that he failed to use his influence to prevent the union from calling a strike. He actually stated that the government had done all that it could be arranged for a settlement and that the stand of the union was justified. At that moment the present strike became inevitable.

During the absence of McGuire and the absence of suggestions from Senator Robertson, the agitation among the mine workers became a dead issue. With the presence of McGuire and the suggestions of Senator Robertson it was fanned afresh into a flame that is still burning.

That the Minister of Labor did encourage the Miners' Union in its stand and did not ask the Union to defer action is borne out in the following copy of a telegram sent to the Minister by the secretary of the union, which reads as follows:— "Reports in 'press that we stated you had told us to go on strike 'are false and we are preparing statement for the 'press giving the developments throughout the 'progress of the dispute. The only statement was 'that you said you did not see that the department 'could do much more, and that you would not ask

"them to wait longer in view of the managers' attitude."

The following reply was sent by Senator Robertson to the Union secretary:

"Your telegram received and the statements contained therein are exactly in accordance with the facts."

Men who are neutral on the issue involved, and who are desirous of seeing labor receive just treatment are found expressing wonder at the stand taken by the Labor Minister, which is apparently to support the Western Federation of Miners even to the point of a strike.

The Cobalt branch of the G.W.V.A. recently appointed a committee whose duty it was to endeavor to bring the contending factions together. The views of the mine managers, according to this committee, are set forth as follows:—

"The Mine Managers will not recognize this Union. It is a branch of the International Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, formerly known as the Western Federation of Miners. This Western Federation of Miners has a history of intimidation and terrorism. The managers have reams of correspondence, judicial and Royal Commission reports and other data to prove this. The local leaders are radicals, and, the managers believe, do not represent the main body of workers. By their ability to talk they got their radical views before the members, which appeals to the floaters, foreigners and discontents. The managers are all willing and anxious at all times to treat with their workers through individual committees elected by workmen in each mine, and this has proved successful. Union members are not discriminated against, and there is no objection to the men joining the Union, but the managers will protect their non-union workers. Conditions in Cobalt are of the best.

"The managers knew last fall that this trouble was coming, and even then all was well until the arrival of the Industrial Relations Commission resulting in a lot of radical propaganda in the Press. The Union served them with a 48-hour ultimatum and the Minister of Labour has tried to force recognition of the Union down their throats. He himself has said that the real dispute is the recognition of the Union. The managers accept his diagnosis. They will not recognize the Union, and therefore there is nothing whatever to negotiate. The Minister of Labour suggested that the managers go to Ottawa. They replied that they would not waste the time of the Prime Minister and himself by going to Ottawa when there is nothing they can concede, and when the correspondence sets forth their case so exhaustively. They have never been offered a Royal Commission, and have no power to accept or to refuse one. The Minister of Labor has tried to make them swallow the Union, and because they will not do so, he is trying to blame them for the strike. Again quoting their letter: "The present dispute is one between the Mines and the Western Federation of Miners, and in no case can it be considered as one between the mines and their employees.

The mines did not throw their men out of employment but the union did and since the mines will not deal with or through the Western Federation of Miners, the question of adjusting the present deadlock is one that must be settled by the employees themselves. At present the majority of the mines are prepared to re-open under the old conditions as regards hours of work, base wage and profit sharing bonus, but as to how long that condition will prevail we are unable to advise."

The G. W. V. A. Committee concludes its reports as follows—

"Now, comrades, you have heard what both sides have to say, and you must bear in mind that we are not vouching for the accuracy of any of the statements. The indisputable fact is that both sides are absolutely at a deadlock. In fact we have felt that the Mine Managers, though they were very courteous and ready to give us information, were treating us with a certain amount of amused tolerance. They knew we were bound to fail as negotiators, for they will not negotiate. We have tried to be fair and impartial in this investigation, and give you an absolutely unblased view of the facts. There is one thing that you may be assured of and that is that we