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COMMISSION HAS REFUSED INFORMATION

Dr. W. Jett Lauck's Investigations Reveal Indefensible Price Boosting

(By Laurence Todd, Staff Correspondent, The Federated Press)
Washington (Wa. Bureau).—President Wilson's Anthracite Coal Commission has refused to receive information gathered by Dr. W. Jett Lauck, consulting economist for the United Mine Workers, as to the secrets of the anthracite graft. It has formally voted, by a majority of two to one, against admitting in evidence—on the issue of a wage increase for over 150,000 miners of hard coal—Lauck's statement of facts as to the relations, for instance, between wages and production, costs, prices and profits in the anthracite industry. Six other statements, on other phases of the hidden "velvet" of the business, have been likewise rejected.

Now the miners are appealing to the President himself to read the facts and inform his commission about them.

Among the things which the Anthracite Coal Commission has formally announced its refusal to learn are:

That while the amount of hard coal which must be produced each year is fairly constant, the number of men employed in producing it varies from year to year considerably. Before the war there were about 180,000 of them; in 1918 there were only 147,000 because many had gone to the war.

That when the number of miners decreases, the number of days worked during the year by each miner increases, on the average, to make up the difference. There are now more men employed than in 1918 or 1919, and the number is increasing; hence the number of days worked by each man is being reduced. That the probable average of days to be worked by the men henceforth will not be over 240 in a year. Wages must be calculated on a 240-day basis.

That the value of an hour's work in money has increased only 49.8 per cent since 1912, while the value of a ton of coal has increased over 102 per cent. In other words, while the miner produced coal in 1912 worth at the mine mouth about 5 1/2 times his wage, in 1919 it was worth about seven times his wage—an ominous indication of what the high cost of living means to him.

Blind, Deaf and Hostile
But these are only the first items of information to which the majority of the President's Anthracite Coal Commission is blind, deaf and hostile.

Dr. Lauck showed that whenever in these years since 1912 the operators have been forced to pay any increase in wages, they have added all of it, and a wide margin of further profit, to their sales prices. A profit is taken at the mine mouth. Another profit is taken through a sales corporation owned by the mine stockholders. A third and more important profit is taken through excessive freight charges on the coal, paid to the seven anthracite railroads whose owners own the mines.

"The increase in retail prices," shouts Dr. Lauck into the cotton-stuffed ears of the commission, "has been about three times the increase in labor costs at the mines. From 1914 to December, 1918, the increase in labor costs at the mines was \$1.41 per gross ton, while the increase in retail prices at New York and Boston was respectively \$4.37 and \$4.48 per gross ton. Since December, 1918, there has been little or no increase in labor costs at the mines, while the retail prices have further increased (in New York and Boston) an average of \$2.40 per gross ton."

A large part of the recent boost in retail prices of hard coal is due to the anticipated wage award of the commission, which will date back to April 1st, and if this increase is to be one-third the boost in prices it means that the operators expect the wage increase to be about \$.80 a ton, or 27 per cent increase. As a matter of fact,

"BLACK COATS" AWAKE TO NEED OF ORGANIZATION

English Bank Employes Protest Against Low Wages, Unreasonable Restrictions

London, Eng.—More than 2,000 bank clerks have organized the bank employes' guild and are protesting against miserably low wages and unreasonable restrictions that include denial of the right to marry until they have reached a certain grade. Under this ruling of the banks an employe cannot marry until about 25 years old. The bank clerks and similar employes are being organized by labor, which refers to them as "black coats."

The British Bankers' association has refused a request to form a Whitley council to adjust matters. These councils are the result of a commission appointed by Prime Minister Asquith in October, 1916, "to make and consider suggestions for securing a permanent improvement in the relations between employers and workmen." The chairman of the committee was Hon. J. H. Whitley, member of parliament.

A committee composed of employes, with Hon. J. Whitley, member of parliament, chairman, recommended plans that would make intercourse between employers and workers possible. The plan is being adopted in industries that are not thoroughly organized. In organized industry the trade unions are functioning.

"AMERICAN PLAN" ATTACK FAILS TO BREAK UNIONS

Spokane.—Labor has withstood assaults by non-union employers in this state, according to the report of officers of the state federation of labor to the annual convention.

"The injury done to organized labor," says the report, "has been slight in comparison to that suffered by the city and community as a whole. Most of the strikes that have occurred in this state are the direct result of the campaign that has been organized by the associated industries for the purpose of breaking down the trade union movement of our state, and if the employers generally without interference by this body a satisfactory agreement, in most cases, would have been effected and a great deal of injury to the community that has resulted would have been avoided."

AVERAGE SHOP WORKERS CAN STUDY ECONOMICS

(Continued from Page Two)

Some results can be obtained without all the troubles of the system of chattel slavery. He simply hires you to work so many hours a day. He doesn't buy you; he does by your human power—your labor power.

You sell him your labor power just as a salesman sells shoes or a baker sells bread. If you want to be bossed for so many hours a day of the only thing they have to sell as wage workers. They sell their commodity, labor power.

There are some people who contend that labor power is not a commodity and should not be considered as such in comparison to such commodities as boots, potatoes, corn and other articles which are bought and sold in the open market.

I think it is safe to say that all modern economists agree on the following definition of a commodity:

A commodity is an article of some sort which required labor power to make it useful to its consumer, something produced by labor power for sale or exchange. An article may be useful and yet not be a commodity unless it has an exchange value. A pair of shoes made by a shoemaker for his own use is not a commodity. A pair of shoes made to be sold to someone else is a commodity. It is not made for use only, but for sale also. And your strength to make things, your human labor power is also a commodity when sold to an employer for wages.

The man who sells shoes tries to get as high a price for his commodities as he possibly can. The worker also when selling his commodity—labor power—endeavors to secure as much as he can for the use of it. The employer, however, tries to buy it just as cheap as he can.

It is this struggle between the sellers of labor power and these who buy it that makes the difference between the labor cost at the mines represents less than one-fourth of the retail price of coal in New York City. If a wage increase were given that would add 50 per cent to the labor cost of mining coal, the retail price should not be increased over 12 1/2 per cent, even if the previous profits were left undisturbed. If bloated profits were reduced, the retail price would not need to be advanced one penny.

But the distinguished commission has declined to listen to any of these statements of the economic facts.

FOREIGN POLICY GREATEST FACTOR IN HIGH PRICES

(Continued from Page One)

about four times the pre-war price for bread. The vast majority of the British people quietly tolerate the entente policy towards Russia, by which the price of food in Great Britain is kept at this abnormal high price.

Affecting the Housing Problem
The housing problem remains unsolved. The cost of building materials makes economic building impossible.

The fundamental cause of this is foreign policy. The help which Russia might give in the form of timber exports is withheld by the foreign policy of the entente powers. On every pound of sugar, on every loaf of bread, upon every new house, the British people are paying hundreds per cent of indirect taxation owing to foreign policy.

We are offered everything as a solution of high prices except the real solution. Laudable efforts, inspired by sympathy, are made to send succor to the starving people of the famished European countries. The British government make frantic appeals through newspaper advertisements to the investing public to subscribe to Treasury Bonds for the purpose of reducing the floating debt. Calls for national economy are urged from every quarter to which neither the government nor individuals pay much attention, as the way to reduce the high prices. Socialists and Labor men advocate the capital levy to reduce the national debt as a means of bringing down prices.

Trade trusts are denounced as the villains of the drama, and demands are made for their drastic reorganization. **Dominates World Affairs**
All the while the old foreign policy dominates world affairs and strangles every effort to restore economic solvency and to revise international trade. The chief of staff tells the country that the hope of peace is futile, and warns the men who have fought to end war to be fit and ready for more wars. The twenty odd wars now being waged, and the far bigger wars we are promised, are the results of foreign policy.

It is not the least use imposing a capital levy, reducing the national debt, controlling trusts, dealing with inflation and currency, if the statesmen are allowed to pursue the present vicious foreign policy. All such efforts are merely trying to dam the stream far removed from the source. **The one vital thing that must be imposed upon people is that foreign policy dominates national affairs, and that it is futile to attempt to ameliorate economic conditions so long as foreign policy is conducted in the present spirit and with the present aim, of trying to satisfy narrow and selfish and suicidal national ambitions.**

Stop Wars to Reduce Prices.
The way to reduce prices is to stop wars, to recognize that the world is an economic unit, that the destruction of the trade of one country reacts disastrously upon the economic condition of every other country. If nations would but realize and apply the knowledge of that fact bad as is the condition of the world, it might, by international co-operation which performed such miracles of production for the prosecution of the war, could, if internationally employed, speedily make the devastated fields give forth new and abundant harvests.

There is no other way by which prices can be reduced. Unless this policy be adopted things will go from bad to worse. Military and naval expenditure must be stopped, the resources of nations in men and material must be devoted to useful and productive work, not to the destruction of life and wealth.

The cause of high prices is foreign policy. Let that fact be driven home to the people of every country with energy and persistence. Change foreign policy and then all the other problems resulting from the foreign policy of the past and present will be well within our power to solve.

HAMILTON "BRICKIES" ACCEPT AWARD OF ARBITRATION BOARD
The bricklayers of Hamilton, Ont. have accepted the award of the arbitration board, which provides for \$1.02 1/2 an hour, dating from May 26. This decision was reached at a largely attended meeting of the members of local No. 1, Bricklayers' and Masons' union, in Bricklayers' hall last Friday night. The vote was said to have been unanimous.

UNION MAKES GOOD
Bushnell, Ind.—The Carpenters' union has shown the value of organization by reducing the work day from 10 to nine hours and raising wages from 65 to 80 cents.

The term Labor includes all human exertion in the production of wealth, and wages, being that part of the produce which goes to Labor, includes all reward for such exertion.—Henry George.

buy it, as to what price shall be paid for it, that is largely responsible for most of the labor strikes.

High prices for labor power are what wage-workers want. Low prices for labor power are what the employers want.

If the working people are in competition with each other when they sell their labor power, the price will certainly be lower than when they combine to sell their labor power. That is why those who must buy labor power do not favor the union of the working man, although they like a trust of their own.—Machinists' Journal.

THE "OPEN SEASON" FOR LABOR BAITING

(By Edgar Wallace in Mine Workers' Journal)

In his report to the National Coal Association, Retiring President Harry N. Taylor apparently felt the urge to take a slam at unionism in general and the United Mine Workers in particular, and following the usual course, he built up a straw man and then proceeded to demolish the result of his work.

To answer his allegation against the union workers it is first necessary to quote him at some length, therefore, that part of his report that refers to labor is reproduced in full. He says: "Organized labor seems to have adopted the theory that to work too hard will spoil the job. Their leaders say: 'Why increase production when a shortage in supply is the very thing that keeps business alive?' They further assert: 'If you allow an oversupply of commodities to develop, we will be driven out of our jobs.' This argument is a fallacy. The fallacy lies in confusing individual production with the production of the plant as a whole.

"To maintain output during the past four years, coal operators and manufacturers have had to employ more men to do the same work. This means higher costs, first in pay-rolls, second in additional mining machines, clerk hire and overhead cost. The higher cost is generally passed on to the consumer in the form of higher living expenses. Still the shortage in production continues, so new companies are induced to start mining or manufacturing, sinking new mines, building new plants, and creating what in normal times will be an excess of producing capacity.

"The effect is plainly seen in the distress of excessive living costs, overstrained credits, and over-expanded business. Increasing individual production is quite another thing. "If each workman by his more effective work adds 25 per cent to his daily output, he supplies the goods that are needed; but he does not add to the producing cost; in fact, he cuts down it additional per unit, for he helps get a greater output from the same mine, the same machinery, the same equipment, without increasing the overhead charges. He benefits himself, either through higher wages or by lowering the cost of living to the consumer, of which he is one. He is able to buy more things, and consequently he increases the demand for goods at the same time that he increases the supply and cheapens the cost."

"History does not record any instance where business depression was caused by labor increasing its output of goods per man. The unnatural condition forced by the false logic of shorter hours and less production creates a situation of higher cost, which in turn is responsible for the wave of labor unrest, which again in turn breeds bolshevism.

"Bolshevism is merely a lazy man's envy of the prosperity of a hustler.

"The often repeated claim of the socialist that labor creates the world's wealth is another utter fallacy. The wealth of the world has always been created primarily by intelligence. It is the brain of man that leads in production, and not the brawn.

"Capital after all is only crystallized labor. Manual labor without the guidance and inspiration of brains has never accomplished anything for mankind beyond a bare existence. When the world gets down to work again, we will cure our economic ills, and not until then.

"The coal industry was the first basic industry to recognize the principle of collective bargaining. Since 1918 this method of dealing between the employer and the employe has been in force. Each wage period finds it more and more impossible to reach a settlement. The miners have fully recognized the importance of organization, and with the expanding of their efforts along these lines it becomes more and more difficult for the operators to meet and successfully maintain their position."

"Organization is the keynote of industry. One hundred per cent organization on one side must be met by an equally well organized body on the other, if fair results are to be obtained.

Before the Freilighuysen Senate Committee, which was supposed to investigate the high cost of coal but which developed into a partisan body calculated to stimulate prices and to prejudice the public mind against the workers' demands for wages that were justified by coal prices, during the direct negotiations with representatives of the United Mine Workers in joint conference, before the president's commission that finally decided the rate of increase that was allowed to miners, the operators were able to produce indisputable statistics that indicated the average earnings, and the average was less, far less, than of individuals which were introduced by operators. These high earnings were considered in the averages, and so it follows that there were some who earned far less than the average of wages.

The point is that all the figures produced indicate that the individual union miner is in no way deterred by any rulings of his organization from making all he can, from using all of his superior ability to produce coal and reaping the results of advantages from better working places than the average.

If there is any falling off in the average daily production, that can be read-

ly accounted for by the fact of the short time worked at most mines, results of conditions over which neither miners or operators have control—car shortage and lack of markets.

Miners of experience know that the output is greater each day when mines are running comparatively steady; for the reason we have not far to seek: After one or more idle days a percentage of miners will find their working places in bad shape because of falls of rock, or water in their working places; often there are falls on the haulage ways; sometimes air passages are blocked. These are the conditions that make for higher production prices when mines are working few days per week, and every experienced mining man knows it.

Necessity is a lard driver. The majority report of the president's commission, signed by the representatives of the operators and of the public, states that the miners had been working all through the period of high prices that so early followed America's entry into the war and which has continued ever since at less than the equivalent of wages they had been receiving prior to that time. The decision for a 27 per cent increase is based upon the supposition that such increase would place them in about the same relative position as to real earning power as they occupied before the war; no more. The document is plain on that matter. It goes on to state that possible future reductions in the cost of necessities may compensate miners for the fact that they had been working for less than they had received prior to the war up until the date of the decision. The cost of necessities has appreciated more than 100 per cent since the decision was rendered and the end is not in sight, and so, necessity impels each miner to earn all he can when opportunity offers. We ask Mr. Taylor to quote one statement made by any leader of the workers that would even indicate they held the thought he charges against them as a statement of policy.

Shorter hours—yes, the miners and their officials favored shorter hours—but we are not having the opportunity to work even the number of hours that were suggested by us, and worse than that, and the reason for our demand—what working time is possible is not evenly distributed among the miners. If collective bargaining between operators and miners is more difficult now than in times past the reason is indicated in the report of the president's commission—the operators would have their employes work for less than will supply their wants, while profits are abnormally high, and the miners are producing coal for less than the equivalent wage they received prior to the war. Unrest will always be when work does not supply want, nor would the country be benefited if it were otherwise.

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