

It will not be wise for the public to expect too much in the line of reduction. One of the strongest influences towards checking the high prices, and perhaps bringing about some reduction, would be a determination on the part of the public to refuse to pay the high prices. This is what has to a large extent happened. The consumers in many quarters have rebelled. Many merchants, faced with the prospect of not selling their stocks, resolved to reduce their prices as much as possible. It is not probable that in any cases they so cut the prices as to involve themselves in loss. What they did was to cut their profits, perhaps in some instances to content themselves to drop their profits altogether, in order to meet the popular demand for reduction. These movements have created what the newspapers have described as the "wave of price reduction." It is necessary, however, to remember that before there can be any continued reduction of prices there will have to be a reduction in the cost of production, and there are no signs of such reduction. In most lines of raw materials the tendency is towards increase rather than towards reduction. Next to the case of raw materials—and in some lines much the larger item—is the cost of labor. There are no indications that there will be any early reduction of wages. Indeed the thing that is clearest in the economic situation is that in the readjustment of conditions that is expected, wages are the last thing that will be reduced. Leading representatives of labor have insisted that the large increase of wages that has occurred during war-time must become permanent, and have intimated that any effort to reduce the remuneration of the workers will be firmly resisted by organized labor. If then there is small prospect of cheaper raw materials and no prospect of lower wages, it must follow that the cost of production is not likely to be lower. Consequently any "wave" of reduction such as is mentioned in the press is not likely to be lasting.

Consequences of a Police Strike

THE nomination by the Republican convention of Governor Calvin Coolidge, of Massachusetts, as a candidate for the Vice Presidency is an interesting and instructive one. It carries a lesson that should be taken to heart by all the leaders in the field of organized labor. It tells a story of a people, naturally sympathizing with all reasonable movements on behalf of labor, driven into an attitude of apparent hostility by the extreme action of some labor leaders.

The most dangerous form of the efforts of organized labor on this continent, as we have repeatedly pointed out, is the attempt, successful in too many places, to obtain con-

trol of the police in the cities and large towns. The right of the policemen of a city to form an association for the promotion of their social interests nobody questions. But when such an association affiliates with a trade union, the police become subject to the direction of a class organization, the leaders and controllers of which may be far away in a foreign country. The police of a city are the guardians of the lives and property of the people, the whole people. To allow the police to come under the control of any class organization is as unjustifiable as would be a movement to place the courts or the army under such control.

The police force of Boston were unwise enough to listen to the agitators who were leading the movement, and when the authorities objected the police went out on strike, leaving the city unprotected. Thereupon Mr. Coolidge, Governor of the State of Massachusetts, ordered out the State Militia and gave the city of Boston the protection it needed. The strike failed. Order was restored. The strikers lost their positions. New policemen were found. Organized labor, unwisely sympathizing with the strike, endeavored to punish Mr. Coolidge by making his action an issue at the State election which followed these events. The fair minded people of Massachusetts, flinging aside party difference, rallied to the support of Governor Coolidge, who was re-elected by the largest vote ever given to a candidate for the governorship. Up to that time Mr. Coolidge was but little known outside his State. The whole nation became interested in the Boston police strike. The re-election of Mr. Coolidge was hailed as a triumph for law and order, and an expression of the determination of the people not to allow the rash labor leaders to obtain control of affairs. Calvin Coolidge became the representative of law and order, not only in the old Bay State, but in the nation. It is for his wisdom and courage in a trying moment that he is now chosen as a candidate for the Vice Presidency.

Will the leaders of organized labor see the lesson of all this and govern themselves accordingly?

Canada—West Indies

THE conference at Ottawa of representatives of the several West India colonies and Canada is a very interesting gathering, which bids fair to be productive of useful results in establishing better trade relations between the Dominion and the island colonies. One good feature of the conference is that it is participated in by representatives of all the group of colonies commonly spoken of as the West Indies, including the near-by mainland colonies. In former conferences of like character some of the colonies were unrepresented. This time every one of them has responded to

the call. Of the desirability of more extended trade with these tropical countries there is no question. The movement for closer commercial relations has the cordial sympathy of all Canadians. The enthusiasts who wish to go further and make the West Indies politically a part of the Canadian Dominion will hardly expect their vision to be realized at present. That part of the question, no doubt, will have to remain for further consideration. Meanwhile the prospect of better business connections between all these British countries will be regarded with much satisfaction. Although no official announcements have been made, there is reason to believe that the conference will come to satisfactory conclusions this week.

Mr. Underwood

SENATOR UNDERWOOD should be grateful to President Wilson for relieving him from a very unpleasant and perhaps embarrassing situation. In a moment of indiscretion, assuming a state of Canadian affairs that to a large extent was imaginary, Mr. Underwood, a prominent member of the Senate, moved a resolution requiring the President of the United States to appoint a commission to proceed to Canada, to enquire into an alleged embargo on the shipment of pulp and paper, to negotiate for its removal, and failing that, to suggest remedies for the condition of affairs so disclosed. Mr. Underwood carried his resolution through the Senate and later obtained the concurrence of the House of Representatives. If the President had given his approval and had appointed commissioners, as was proposed, they would, on coming to Canada, have discovered that the alleged embargo did not exist, that the regulations of the Provincial Governments respecting the manufacture of the wood in Canada were entirely within the legitimate authority of the Provinces, and in short that there was really no ground for any complaint by the Government of the United States. Finding no real grievance, they would have been unable to make any proposals for a remedy. They would have been obliged to frankly report that the whole proceeding was unwarranted.

In the last days of the session of Congress, President Wilson found himself very busy. Some reports say he was so busy that he could not find time to consider the Underwood resolution. He did not sign it. What is most likely is that the President did consider it and that by letting it alone he did a kindness to his friend the Senator from Alabama, who may now be allowed to forget a foolish movement that could have accomplished no good and might easily have been the means of making trouble between the British Empire and the United States.