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#### EDMONTON FREE PRESS

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### GENERAL STRIKES NOT PRACTICAL

It's an ill wind that blows no good. Strikes throughout the ountry in sympathy with Winnipeg-and the Winnipeg strike itself -have demonstrated the impracticability of the general strike as a means of forcing a decision in Labor disputed. The general strike is the high road to revolution, and until affairs become so "rotten in the state of Denmark" that revolution is the only alternative the general strike has no place. There is a considerable element in society now prepared for any extremity—even revolution. But the great majority of Trades, Unionism is not, and certainly the rest of society would be pitted solidly against such measures. That extreme radicals chiefly directing the O.B.U. movement are using Trades' Unionism to and certainly by the off sials of the Internationals

successful. The general strike stops the wheels of all industrial activity accepted as just and right in theory and inapplicable in practice. Continued that means death to a community. Self preservation is the first law of nature. Organized Labor seeks to benefit a community, not to kill it. So fundamentally the general strike is in error. The general strike penalizes women and children and others innocent of any of the direct issues. Organized Labor does not wage a Hun warfare. But perhaps the greatest reason pointing to the inadvisability of Organized Labor utilizing the general strike as a means to an end s because it is physically impossible to prolong it. The remainder of the people—ordinarily in sympathy with and supporters of Labor in all its struggles—will not permit it. If Organized Labor itself fails to relieve the industrial business blockade the remainder of society is prepared to take steps to make it ineffective.

Organized Labor might as well look these facts squarely in the face, unpleasant though they may be for many. But cost what they may ,unpleasant as they may be, just or unjust, facts must be considered and dealt with as they are, not as what they should be.

Organized Labor is in a big fight all over Canada. With soldiers returning from overseas requiring employment; with the government Labor are seeking to smash unionism to the end of a general reduction in the price of Labor without a reduction in the cost of commodities. And it would appear that the national government is aiding and abetting in the program. National legislation recognizing the principle of collective bargaining and the eight-hour day would have put an end to the Winnipeg strike. Four-fifths of the people of the country recognize these principles as just and right. Why does the government refuse to act? If Canada had a Labor parliament these reforms would be quickly enacted. As it has a parliament representative of big interests as opposed to the masses of the people it refuses land to act. Parliament represents the dollar, not the human being

Labor asks what is the solution to the problem then? The O.B.U. which are a menace to lives and health. replies: a general strike, bringing the entire nation to a dead halt until the desired end is attained, or material steps are taken toward its be solution. The Dominion Labor Party replies united political action. Mill agents are a The U.F.A. replies united political action. Trades' Unionism has been reductions in hours. divided a bit as to which course to pursue. The general strikes which have been precipitated are the result of Trades' Unionism in some living above the existence line. centers heeding the advise of the O.B.U. Although the general strike ience proves its unsoundness. In every instance it had to be modified ever just around the corner.

to the extent that it was no longer a general strike. A plausible procedure of winning the fight against the Triple that ripens into rebellion.

Alliance of Winnipeg has been suggested by E. E. Roper, writing in Who is furnishing a f a recent issue of the Edmonton Bulletin. He advised that Trades' unions return to work with the exception of the Winnipeg metal Journal. trades' workers. Union men will then be drawing wages and will be in a position to contribute to the support of those men that they may remain out indefinitely. If the Triple Alliance introduces strike CO-OP. SOCIETIES breakers all other workers would refuse to handle their product. The three outfits would be tied up hand and foot and laid upon the shelf, And the general public would be solidly behind Organized Labor in its efforts. That procedure is the one that has been used by Trades' Unionism in the past. Those methods have put crafts' unionism in the position it occupies today. It has been tried and found sound when properly applied. On the other hand the doctrine of the O.B.U. has proven unsound at every instance when attempted. The fights have settled down to orthodox Crafts' unionism strikes in which a considerable part of trades' unions are taking part.

THE STRIKE BREAKER

When Labor men are on strike, strike breakers receive little public sympathy. That industrial concern which attempts to break

public sympathy. That industrial concern which attempts to break politics—which in Russia means a mira strike by such methods usually precipitates trouble and makes matters decidedly worse. Workingmen are always ready to treat matters decidedly worse. Workingmen are always ready to treat with employers and arrive at an amicable adjustment of differences differences between the Moving Picture New Orleans, La., got together and comby peaceful and lawful means. The strike breaker is used by indusoperators' Union and the owners of the 
trial concerns as a club with which to beat over the head men and 
theatres in Brunswick, Ga., all of the 
ters' and Butcher Workmen's Union. women who have resorted to the only weapon in their possession to operators ceased work. Increased wage They have been working 14 hours a day force a recognition and righting of their grievances. He is paid demand was the cause of the strike. and seven days a week. wages usually far in excess of the figure the men and women are striking for. When the strikers are starved out the strike breaker who pulled the chestnuts out of the fire is usually fired or his pay reduced to the figure against which the union men were protesting.

He earns the enmity of his fellow citizens who belong to Ogganzed Labor, loses the respect of the community generally. Those who encourage him in fighting his brother workers in their efforts to better conditions for all who toil, are men with selfish and personal interests which they want served, if not at the time, then at another day.

Look at the thing squarely, unselfishly, without bias or prejudice, and there are none who fail to recognize these facts. Self respecting citizens very properly resent being classed as strike breakers.

QUESTION OF PROCEDURE

Quite a number of internationals have advised unions under their jurisdiction to return to work as regards the Winnipeg sympathetic strike. Other Internationals have refused their unions taking a strike vote-particularly in the railroads' running trades. This was bitter medicine for many men-particularly for those who had already laid down their tools. But is there any man who will dispute that the Internationals are acting as they consider in the very best interests of Trades' Unionism? Perhaps many disagree with the Internationals that the position is the right one—that is a matter of personal opinion. But the Internationals are just as convinced that it is the right cours

In its last week's issue the EDMONTON FREE FRESS in its editorial columns which express the convictions of the paper itself, and which have been, are now, and always will be used to advance the cause of Organized Labor at all times, suggested that Organized Labor in Edmonton return to work and thereby lift what had been to all intents and purposes a general strike. That suggestion was made because the EDMONTON FREE PRESS was convinced after most careful and thoughtful consideration of every fact available, that the general strike is impracticable, is economically unsound,

impossible of prolongation, and an undesirable weapon for Organized Labor to use. It was with full cognizance that many union men could not at that time, nor yet, see eye to eye with the paper in this respect. On the other hand it must be conceded that many union men do agree with it, many internationals agree with it

It is quite possible—nay further, it is a fact—that the FREE JUNE 7, 1919 PRESS had a broader perspective of the local situation than those actively directing the policies of the strike, and we are thoroughly convinced that the time is not far distant when Trades' Unionism as a whole will recognize and concede that the suggestion was sound, was right and opportune. The approval of those who seek to disrupt and destroy Crafts' Unionism will not be given, neither is it anticipated. As the EDMONTON FREE PRESS is the organ of Trades' Unionism in this city, the paper's editorial columns have promoted, and purposes to continue promoting the case of Trades' Unionism, and to fight the enemies of Trades' Unionism fearlessly and to the utmost of its ability.

### COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AND SCHEDULE AGREEMENTS

Trades' Unionists most properly claim the same right as capital precipitate the overthrow of the Internationals and a general disrup-tion of social organization is recognized by many Trades' Unionists bargain collectively. And therein lies a fundamental factor that d certainly the off sials of the Internationals.

A general strike was attempted at Seattle. It was a failure. A bargaining is to be a conceded and legal right of Organized Labor general strike was attempted at Winnipeg. It is a general strike no in this country, Organized Labor has got to see that those bargains onger. A general strike was attempted in Edmonton. It is a general are respected, their terms are lived up to, and that agreements strike no longer. The same is true with other cities. It was clearly entered into are not mere scraps of paper. One's veracity, fulfilrealized that a general strike runs afoul of too many fundamental ment of one's obligations, living right up to one's agreements in factors necessary in winning a desired end by the last resort method. word and in spirit—these are fundamentals of character in an in-The general strike too quickly sacrifices sympathy of the public. dividual. If Organized Labor should fail to substantiate its agree-Statistics show that without public support few strikes have ever been successful. The general strike stops the wheels of all industrial activity

#### THE INTERNATIONALS

If ever there was a time in the history of Organized Labor when Trades' Unions require their Internationals, it is now. It would appear that the fight against Labor is national. And because of this Labor cannot, must not, dissolve itself into isolated independent sectional groups recognizing no central and directing force. The International has a perspective of every labor difference of moment which a local group cannot have. The International is not stan peded into rash steps that may be destructive tomorrow although appearinto rash steps that may be destructive tomorrow although appearing advantageous today. The International is not moved by heat, on, stubbornness and emotions which cause men to act contrary to dictates of their better judgments under normal circumstances.

The employers of Labor do few things hastily. Their combines are national in scope. The keenest brains supported by unlimited money are employed in handling their case. There can be no doubt that the disruption of Trades' Unionism is an end they are seeking taking practically no steps to inaugurate activities to absorb that to bring about. If the O.B.U. promises to disrupt Labor organiza-Labor, industrial barons and big combinations of capital employing taking practically no steps to manufacture to absorb that tion, there would be no hesitancy in financing such activities. Ortaker are seeking to smash uniquism to the end of a general reduction, there would be no hesitancy in financing such activities. Ortaker are seeking to smash uniquism to the end of a general reduc-Destroy the discipline, destroy the organization of any army and it is defeated. Destroy the organization of Labor as it is and at this juncture, and the whole cause is lost,

#### WHO ARE THE REVOLUTIONISTS?

There are millions of children working in the varied industries of the so-called civilized and Christian nations

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Hunger and want are ever a menace to the families that send advocated has been tried only in a comparatively few places, exper- these children to the factories. Poverty and destitution for them is

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