

Governor Pleasant's Message

Governor Pleasant of Louisiana took the lead in bringing about the ratification of the national prohibition amendment by the legislature of his state. In this connection, his work stamps him as a leader of the type needed in every American commonwealth. In these days of progress, when all the world is looking for leadership and forward looking men, there is no room for the slow-going, interest-serving office-holder of the old school. Governor Pleasant's message, which called the legislature of his state in special session, dealt especially with the liquor question, and a reading of this portion of his message will disclose the reason for the splendid results it brought about in Louisiana. The portion of his message referred to follows:

"Gentlemen of the General Assembly of the State of Louisiana: This week four years ago Germany began her assault upon the liberties of the world. Her encroachments extended to this republic. We resorted to every honorable means to avoid war, but German aggressions, hostilities, insults and criminality forced us to take up arms in defense of our dignity and the property and the lives of our citizens. Once in the great conflict the national government resolved that nothing should remain undone to accomplish a certain and overwhelming victory. The President, the cabinet, and the congress of the United States quickly concluded that one of the wisest and best laws that should be adopted in order that the arm and brain of both soldier and civilian might be developed to their highest state of efficiency was the prohibition by the Nation of the traffic in intoxicating liquors. The great majority of the people of this country are in accord with this view, and eventually prohibition throughout the nation is a certainty. I trust that Louisiana will not fail or further falter in her affirmative approval of this great movement.

"During the recent regular session of the general assembly the house of representatives favored the ratification of the national prohibition amendment by a vote of seventy to forty-four.

"The senate did not positively vote against ratification, but merely failed to approve the amendment by a tie vote of twenty yeas to twenty nays. One seat in the senate was vacant on account of the resignation of the senator from the twenty-seventh senatorial district. This district is known to be in favor of prohibition in any and every form.

"The conditions being as above recited, I was unwilling that Louisiana should be recorded in the history of the nation differently from what would have been her expressed sentiment, if a full senate had been present to vote on ratification.

"I have, therefore, called you in extra session principally for the purpose of further considering this great moral and economic question. The people of the various states, and of the United States, have expressly said in the federal constitution that you must decide whether Louisiana is for or against this, or any other federal amendment submitted to you by the congress.

"A referendum, therefore, is out of order until the people again speak and change from a representative to a referendum policy.

"I have believed, and still believe, that Louisiana is not ready for mere state-wide prohibition for the reason that the percentage of her population opposed to prohibition is too great for the proper enforcement of a state law to that effect. Successful state-wide prohibition can be ultimately accomplished only through the operation of local option until a sufficiently large percentage of the parishes and population adopt prohibition and thus insure the enforcement of a law embracing the whole state. This has been demonstrated by the experience of the prohibition states of the Union.

"Insofar as nation-wide prohibition is concerned the United States is ripe for such a policy. More than eighty percent of the territory of continental United States is already dry, and about seventy percent of the nation's population lives in dry territory. She is, therefore, in a position to secure the approximate enforcement of prohibition laws. The anti-prohibition population and territory of Louisiana may be fairly

large when compared with the rest of the state, but they are quite small when matched with the rest of the United States.

"I urge you to ratify the national prohibition amendment for the good of humanity. It will make us stronger as individuals, greater as a people, and mightier as a nation.

"Dry territory in this state should also be protected from invasion by the liquor dealers."

IS BIMETALLISM COMING?

The following extract is taken from a news letter in the Chicago Herald:

"Beyond the nearby questions of a loan to China, of the creation of a formidable discount institution, of a corporation to finance public utilities companies, is the world-wide problem of establishing an international monetary system, or at least a plan to which the allies and neutral countries may subscribe.

"The treasuries of the United States and of Great Britain have had this matter under advisement for some time. Mr. McAdoo has conferred with American and British bankers from time to time.

"Once the fourth loan is out of the way and the nearer questions mentioned above disposed of, the Secretary is likely to address himself in a practical way to the biggest problem:

"If the proposition is worked out along the line in consideration gold and silver will be put upon a ratio of coinage, together forming the basis upon which the paper money of the United States and of the allied and neutral countries would be issued. Bimetallism, in other words, would be restored in the money standard of the nations.

"The scarcity of gold, which forms the basis of currency coinage in the United States and Great Britain, is advanced as an impelling argument for establishing a bimonetary system.

"Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Balfour believe that bimetallism must be established to maintain the equilibrium of international finance, although both frankly acknowledge that America with her gold store has less need of the plan than other countries.

"The British statesmen are urging the immediate consideration by this country, Great Britain, France—the allies—and the neutral nations of an international bimonetary system to be in being indefinitely.

"Colorado, Nevada, Utah and Arizona senators and representatives are working hard to bring about a realization of the project."

CONSCRIPTION OF LABOR

The administration attitude toward conscription of labor was outlined at an Association of Commerce luncheon, at Chicago, by Louis F. Post, assistant secretary of labor.

"The time may come," he said, "when we will have to conscript workers in the mines, forests and factories, but in the name of democracy these men shall not be conscripted until we have first conscripted the places where they shall work. This democracy will not stand for the conscription of men to work for the profit of other men. The conscripted man must work for Uncle Sam and no one else.

"Let us not forget that there has been profiteering and labor troubles because large bodies of labor men have been convinced they had been made victims. But that time and condition have passed. Most men feel that it will be a shame for any man to come out of this war richer than when the war began. There must be no profiteering by rich or poor.

"The United States department of labor intends to stand behind the principles of the war labor board, of which former President William H. Taft and John F. Walsh are the heads. These principles are the right of workers to organize trade unions; the right to bargain collectively; retention of union shop or open shop as it was before the war; basic eight hour day, and equal pay for equal work when women are employed."

The war correspondents say that both of the great contending armies carry a large number of weather experts with them in order that intelligent direction may be given to assaults with gas. The United States government meteorological bureau ought to keep an eye on these gents so that it may get some for its own use some time.

If one were to judge by outward seeming, the candidate who can damn the kaiser most fluently and wrap the flag around himself most securely imagines that these abilities entitle him to the most votes.

Wilson Orders Strikers to Work or Fight

An Associated Press dispatch, under Washington date of September 13, says: Striking machinists and other war plant workmen at Bridgeport, Conn., were informed today in a letter addressed directly to them by President Wilson that they must return to their work and abide by the decision of the war labor board or be barred for a year from all employment over which the government exercises control and lose all claims for draft exemption on occupational grounds.

At the same time the President announced that the plant and business of the Smith & Wesson Company of Springfield, Mass., the first employer to "flaunt" the rules of the war labor board, had been commandeered by the War Department for the period of the war.

President Wilson's letter, addressed to the Bridgeport district lodge of the International Association of Machinists, "and other striking workmen of Bridgeport, Conn.," follows:

"Gentlemen: I am in receipt of your resolution of September 6, announcing that you have begun a strike against your employers in Bridgeport, Conn. You are members of the Bridgeport branches of the International Union of Machinists. As such and with the approval of the national officers of your union you signed an agreement to submit the questions as to the terms of your employment to the national war labor board and to abide the board's award.

"The members of the board were not able to reach a unanimous conclusion on all the issues presented, and, as provided in its constitution, the questions upon which they did not agree were carried before an arbitrator, the unanimous choice of the members of the board.

"The arbitrator thus chosen has made an award which more than 90 per cent of the workers affected accept. You who constitute less than 10 per cent refuse to abide by the award, although you are the best paid of the whole body of workers affected and are, therefore, least entitled to press a further increase of wages because of the high cost of living.

"But whatever the merits of the issue, it is closed by the award. Your strike against it is a breach of faith calculated to reflect on the sincerity of national organized labor in proclaiming its acceptance of the principle and machinery of the National War Labor Board.

"If such disregard of the solemn adjudication of a tribunal to which both parties submitted their claims be temporized with, agreements become mere scraps of paper. If errors creep into awards, the proper remedy is submission to the tribunal. But to strike against the award is disloyalty and dishonor.

"The Smith & Wesson Company of Springfield, engaged in government work, has refused to accept the mediation of the National War Labor Board and has flaunted the board's rules of decision approved by presidential proclamation. With my consent the War Department has taken over the plant and business of the company to secure continuity in production and to prevent industrial disturbance.

"It is of the highest importance to secure compliance with reasonable rules and procedure for the settlement of industrial disputes. Having exercised a drastic remedy with recalcitrant employers, it is my duty to use means equally well adapted to the end with lawless and faithless employes.

"Therefore, I desire that you return to work and abide by the award. If you refuse each one of you will be barred from employment in any war industry in the community in which strike occurs for a period of one year.

"During that time the United States employment service will decline to obtain employment for you in any war industry elsewhere in the United States, as well as under the War and Navy departments, the shipping board, the railway administration and all government agencies, and the draft board will be instructed to reject any claim of exemption based on your alleged usefulness on war production. Sincerely yours,

"WOODROW WILSON."

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