

# THE WAGEWORKER



VOL. 5

LINCOLN, NEBRASKA, DECEMBER 19, 1908

NO. 38

## Conference Passes Labor Resolutions

(By Rev. Charles Steizie.)

Thirty denominations, representing eighteen million church members and fifty million adherents, spoke officially with reference to labor in the First Conference of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, just closed in Philadelphia. This is the first time that the churches in America have had an opportunity to express their attitude concerning the labor question. The Rev. Frank Mason North, D. D., of New York City, reported for the committee on the church and modern industry, which report was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted. The report follows:

### Statement.

1. This federal council places upon record its profound belief that the complex problems of modern industry can be interpreted and solved only by the teachings of the New Testament, and that Jesus Christ is final authority in the social as in the individual life. Under this authority and by application of this teaching the contribution to human welfare by the church, whatever its lapses and its delays, has been incalculable. Out of the sacrifice and fervor of the centuries has come a fund of altruism which enriches today a thousand purposes for human betterment, some of which do not know the origin of their impulse. The interest of the church in men is neither recent nor artificial. No challenge of newly posted sentries can exclude it from the ground where are struggle and privation and need. It has its credentials and knows the watchword.

2. Christian practice has not always harmonized with Christian principle. By the force of economic law and of social custom individual life has been, at times, swerved from the straight course, and the organized church has not always spoken when it should have borne witness, and its plea for righteousness has not always been uttered with boldness. Christianity has created both the opportunity and the principles of life. In the mighty task of putting conscience and justice and love into a "Christian" civilization, the church with all its splendid achievements, has sometimes faltered. But it has gone farther and suffered more, a thousand fold, to accomplish this end than any other organized force the world has ever known.

3. The church now confronts the most significant crisis and the greatest opportunity of its long career. In part its ideals and principles have become the working basis of organizations for social and industrial betterment which do not accept its spiritual leadership and which have been estranged from its fellowship. We believe, not for its own sake, but in the interest of the kingdom of God, the church must not merely acquiesce in the movements outside of it which make for human welfare, but must demonstrate not by proclamation but by deeds its primacy among all the forces which seek to lift the plane and better the conditions of human life.

This council, therefore, welcomes this first opportunity on behalf of the churches of Christ in the United States officially represented, to emphasize convictions which have been in fragmentary ways already expressed.

4. We recognize the complex nature of industrial obligations affecting employer and employe, society and government, rich and poor, and most earnestly counsel tolerance, patience and mutual confidence; we do not defend or excuse wrongdoing in high places or in low, nor purpose to adapt the ethical standards of the gospel to the exigencies of commerce or the codes of a confused industrial system.

5. While we assert the natural right of men—capitalists and workmen—to organize for common ends, we hold that the organization of capital or the organization of labor cannot make wrong right, or right wrong; that essential righteousness is not determined by numbers either of dollars or of men; that the church must meet social bewilderment by ethical lucidity, and by gentle and resolute testimony to the truth must assert for the whole gospel its prerogative as the test of the rightness of both indi-

vidual and collective conduct everywhere.

6. We regard with the greatest satisfaction the effort of those employers individual and corporate, who have shown in the conduct of their business a fraternal spirit and a disposition to deal justly and humanely with their employes as to wages, profit-sharing, welfare work, protection against accidents, sanitary conditions of toll, and readiness to submit differences to arbitration. We record our admiration for such labor organizations as have under wise leadership throughout many years, by patient cultivation of just feelings and temperate views among their members, raised the efficiency of service, set the example of calmness and self-restraint in conference with employers, and promoted the welfare not only of the men of their own craft, but of the entire body of workmen.

7. In such organizations is the proof that the fundamental purposes of the labor movement are ethical. In them great numbers of men of all nationalities and origins are being compacted in fellowship, trained in mutual respect, and disciplined in virtues which belong to right character and are at the basis of good citizenship. By them society at large is benefitted in the security of better conditions of work, in the Americanization of our immigrant population, and in the educational influence of the multitudes who in the labor unions find their chief, sometimes their only, intellectual stimulus.

8. We note as omens of industrial peace and good will, the growth of a spirit of conciliation, and of the practice of conference and arbitration in settling trade disputes. We trust profoundly that these methods may supplant those of the strike and the lock-out, the boycott and the black list. Lawlessness and violence on either side of labor controversies are an invasion of the rights of the people and must be condemned and resisted. We believe no better opportunity could be afforded to Christian men, employers and wage-earners alike, to rebuke the superciliousness of power and the obstinacy of opinion, than by asserting and illustrating before their fellows in labor contests, the gospel which deals with men as men and has for its basis of fraternity the Golden Rule.

We commended most heartily the societies and leagues in which employers and workmen come together upon a common platform to consider the problems of each in the interest of both and we urge Christian men more freely to participate in such movements of conciliation. We express our gratitude for the evidences that in ever widening circles the influence of the agencies established by some of the churches is distinctly modifying the attitude of the workmen and the church toward each other.

9. We deem it the duty of all Christian people to concern themselves directly with certain practical industrial problems. To use it seems that the churches must stand—

For equal rights and complete justice for all men in all stations of life.

For the rights of all men to the opportunity for self-maintenance, a right even to be wisely and strongly safeguarded against encroachments of every kind.

For the right of workers to some protection against the hardships often resulting from the swift crisis of industrial change.

For the principle of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions.

For the protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational disease, injuries and mortality.

For the abolition of child labor.

For such regulation of the conditions of toll for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.

For the suppression of the "sweating system."

For the gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practicable point, and for that degree of leisure for all which is a condition of the highest human life.

For a release from employment one day in seven.

For a living wage as a minimum in every industry and for the highest wage that each industry can ultimately be devised.

For suitable provision for the old

age of the workers and for those incapacitated by injury.

For the abatement of poverty.

10. To the toilers of America and to those who by organized effort are seeking to life the crushing burdens of the poor, and to reduce the hardships and uphold the dignity of labor, this council sends the greeting of human brotherhood and the pledge of sympathy and of help in a cause which belongs to all who follow Christ.

Recommendations.

To the several Christian bodies here represented the council recommends:

(1) That the churches more fully recognize, through their pulpits, press and public assemblies, the great work of social reconstruction which is now in progress, the character, extent and ethical value of the labor movement. Their responsibilities of Christian men for the formation of social ideals, and the obligation of the churches to supply the spiritual motive and standards for all movements which aim to realize in the modern social order the fulfillment of the second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

(2) That the study of existing conditions in the industrial world, their origin and outcome, be more definitely enforced as an immediate Christian duty.

That to this end, in all theological seminaries, and, so far as practicable, in other schools and colleges, there be established, wherever they do not now exist, courses in economics, sociology and the social teachings of Jesus, supplemented, wherever possible, by investigation of concrete social facts, and

That study classes and reading

courses on social questions be instituted in connection with the churches and their societies to foster an intelligent appreciation of existing conditions, and to create a public sentiment through which relief and reform may be more effectively secured.

(3) That the churches with quickened zeal and keener appreciation, through their pastors, lay leaders and members, wherever possible, enter into sympathetic and fraternal relations with workmen, by candid public discussion of the problems which especially concern them, by advocating their cause when just, by finding the neighborly community of interest and by welcoming them and their families to the uses and privileges of the local churches;

That the proper general authorities of the denominations endeavor by special bureau or department to collate facts and mold opinion in the interest of a better understanding between the church and workmen, and particularly to obtain a more accurate and general knowledge of the meaning of trades unionism, and especially

That all church members who, either as employers or as members of trades unions, are more specifically involved in the practical problems of industry, be urged to accept their unparalleled opportunity for serving the cause of Christ and humanity by acting, in His spirit, as mediators between opposing forces in our modern world of work.

(4) That the church in general not only aim to socialize its message, to understand the forces which now dispute its supremacy, to stay by the people in the effort to solve with them their problems, but also modify its own equipment and procedure in the interest of more democratic administration and larger social activity;

That more generally in its buildings provision be made for the service of the community as well as for the public worship of God;

That in its councils of direction workmen be welcomed and the wisdom of the poor be more freely recognized;

That in its assemblies artificial distinctions be rebuked and removed;

That in its financial management the commercial method, if it exist, be replaced by the principles of the Gospel as set forth in the Epistle of James, to the end that the workers and the poor, vastly in the majority in the United States, may ever find the church as homelike as the union hall, more attractive than the saloon, more tolerant of their aspirations than the political club, more significant of the best which in heart and life they seek than any other organization or institution which claims to open to them opportunities or ventures to offer them incentives to the better life.

(5) That the church fail not to emphasize its own relation, throughout the centuries and in the life of the world today, to the mighty movements which make for the betterment of social and industrial conditions;

That the attention of workmen

## Trade Unions Illegal

(Chicago Public.)

Another milestone has been passed in the judicial march toward the extirpation of labor unions. The court in this case—Wilcutt against Boston Bricklayers—is the Supreme Court of Massachusetts. It holds that a labor union cannot fine a member under its rules for refusing to join strikes provided for in its rules. This decision comes pretty close to holding that trades unions are illegal. For how can any court hold that a legal body must not fine a member in accordance with its rules and for violating its rules? The right of legal organizations to do this is so firmly established, that its abrogation by the courts can hardly find any other logical resting place than that the organization seeking to impose the fine is unlawful. No matter what reasons may be given in the court's opinion, there can be no other substantial reason for the decision. Denial of the right to fine members for breach of rules is inconsistent with the right to organize for purposes which the fine is intended to promote. With this Massachusetts decision holding that unions cannot enforce upon their own membership their decisions to strike, and a Federal decision holding that labor unions are criminal conspiracies in restraint of trade, little remains to complete the outlawry of labor organization.

and the churches alike be called to these facts;

That the institution of a day of rest secured for the toilers of Christendom by the very charter of the church has been defended on their behalf by it throughout the centuries;

That the streams of philanthropy which supply a thousand needs have their springs, for the most part, in Christian devotion;

That the fundamental rights of man upon which rest the pillars of this mighty group of commonwealths are a heritage from the conscience and consecration of men who acknowledge Jesus Christ as Master;

That the free ministrations to the community on the part of tens of thousands of churches attest the purpose of the followers of Christ;

That the church, while it may not have accepted the task of announcing an industrial program, is at heart eager with the impulses of service and is more than ever ready to express the spirit of its Lord;

That in the quest for the forces by which the larger hopes of the workmen of America may be most speedily and fully realized, the leaders of the industrial world can better afford to lose all others than those which are today and have been for nearly two thousand years at work in the faith, the motive and the devotion of the church of Jesus Christ.

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## With Live Ones In Good Old Lincoln

Manager Guy Green of the "Greenbackers" has given ample evidence of his friendliness towards union labor—not by shooting off his mouth and telling what a heluva good fellow he is, accompanying it with a volume of obscenity and abuse—but by quietly "delivering the goods." At the meeting of the directorate of the Western Association in Chicago recently a resolution was adopted pledging the managers of the association teams to have the allied printing trades label on all team and league printing. Mr. Green heartily seconded the resolution and it was unanimously adopted. Last season the label appeared on the score cards and on the general admission tickets, but through a misunderstanding of the facts the label did not appear on the roll tickets. During the coming season these tickets, like all other printed matter, will come from a union shop.

Manager Green is willing to go more than half way in the matter of handling union made cigars on the grounds. But when big wholesale cigar firms take advertising space of him and local manufacturers do not, he feels that he is in duty bound to exercise a little reciprocity. But he has always had union made cigars on sale, his "Greenbacker" being an especial favorite. Manager Green is not farming out the concessions at the ball park, but will handle the whole thing himself.

What's the matter with the Allied Printing Trades Council taking a space at the ball park and advertising the "Little Joker" where everybody can see it and become acquainted with it? And why don't the Cigarmakers' Union double teams with their employers and advertise union made and Lincoln made cigars in connection with the famous "Blue Label?" It looks like a good stunt to pull off.

Mrs. G. A. Walker will have charge of the cigar stand at the state house during the coming session of the legislature. This will mean that every state house visitor who wants a union made smoke will have no difficulty in obtaining it. The concession is considered a valuable one, and everybody in Lincoln who knows Mrs. Walker will wish for her a profitable return for her work.

The editor of The Wageworker attended a meeting in Omaha last Tuesday, at which time a number of people interested in social questions discussed the child labor law and other legislation in the interests of the wage-earners. Among those present were Mrs. F. A. Cole, president of the Nebraska Federation of Woman's clubs; Mrs. Halleck F. Rose, chairman of the Federation's legislative committee; Mrs. Draper Smith, a member of the committee; Mrs. Keefe, member of the national executive board for Nebraska; Judge Kennedy; Professor Graham of the South Omaha schools, and the truant officers of both Omaha and South Omaha. It was the general opinion of the conferees that it would be unwise for the friends of the law to propose any amendments, as it would give some known opponents of the law an opportunity to emasculate it by amendment. One weak spot in the law is the section relating to "child actors," who are not mentioned specifically. The law seeks to punish the employer, but a test case in Lincoln last winter revealed the fact that it was easy to shift the employment to theatrical agents in the east, thus releasing the manager of the company and the manager of the theatre. An effort will be made to remedy this defect by the enactment of a separate law, thus avoiding the danger of trying to amend the child labor law.

The interest shown by the club women is very gratifying. They have seen to it that employers of labor in Omaha obey the law, and have threatened prosecution in a number of cases. The threats, too, have been effective. The greatest difficulty met is in the enforcement of the cigarette and tobacco law. The other day the South Omaha truant officer prosecuted a tobacco dealer for selling tobacco

to minors. He had enough direct evidence to convict a dozen times over, and Judge Day so declared. But the jury returned a verdict of "not guilty."

Labor Commissioner Ryder is working to secure the abolition of the Saturday night store business. He suggests that one of the best starts would be to abolish the Saturday pay day. His attention was called to the evil—for evil it is—by reason of what seems to be a violation of the law prohibiting women from working more than ten hours a day in factory or store. Stores that open at 8 a. m. and remain open until 10:30 or 11 p. m. Saturday must work from fourteen to fifteen hours. A shift at evading the law is to let the women have an occasional hour off during the week and then "make up lost time" by working late Saturday night. Commissioner Ryder called the attention of employers to the fact that this was a violation of both the letter and the spirit of the law and several of the employers promised not to offend again. Future violations will be prosecuted.

Two of Nebraska's largest stores close on Saturday night at the usual 6 o'clock time—Miller & Paine of Lincoln, and Thompson & Belden in Omaha. And the proprietors of these stores seem to be doing as much business as the stores that think they must keep open late on Saturday night.

Early this week it was rumored that the retail clerks would try to get an extra Christmas week holiday by asking the employers to close Thursday night—Christmas eve—and remain closed until the following Monday morning. The clerks based their request on the ground that one day didn't give them a chance to visit the home folks. Of course the movement didn't progress very far. And why should it? There was no organized effort behind it. The clerks haven't got "sand" enough to organize and make a concerted effort to secure some relief. They did muster up courage enough a year or so ago to ask the ministers of the city to help them get relief, but they didn't have courage enough to ask for it themselves. Funny they didn't pull off the street railway employes' stunt and fly to the city council for relief. The retail clerks will not get very many concessions until they organize.

The recent visit of President Alpine of the Plumbers' International put a lot of ginger into the local "bunch," and they have been doing some lively hustling. President Alpine gave the local situation thorough investigation, and about the first of the year an organizer will be in this territory to help things along. Incidentally The Wageworker wants to remark that the Plumbers' Union of Lincoln, though small in numbers, is among the "live ones." The boys have had many discouraging things happen, but they have never lost courage nor quit fighting for a minute.

When Jerry Howard comes down to Lincoln next month to assume his duties as a member of the legislature from Douglas county, the union men are going to find him a "live one" who will stand by them from post to finish. Jerry knows all the kinks of the labor game, and he may be depended upon to stand up for organized labor all the way. And it is going to be a pleasure to hear him talk. He has a delightful Irish brogue that is the next best thing to visiting the Old Sod.

Emmet Flood, general organizer of the American Federation of Labor, is now in Omaha, and he is getting things started off at a lively rate. He will have plenty to do in Omaha and South Omaha for a while, but he expects to do a lot of work in all the surrounding territory. He will be in Lincoln in a short time to look the ground over, and when he comes he is going to receive a warm welcome—a lot of hard luck stories. Nebraska has needed the services of an organizer for several years, but has never had them—save now and then

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