

President Defends Eight-Hour Law

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the men demand it, but because it is right, and let me get authority from congress to appoint a commission of as impartial a nature as I can choose to observe the results and report upon the results in order that justice may in the event be done the railroads in respect of the cost of the experiment."

"That was the proposal which they rejected and which congress put into law, a proposal which I made to them before I conferred with it, which I urged upon them at every conference and which, when the one side rejected and the other side accepted, I went to congress and asked congress to enact.

"NOT THE END OF THE STORY"

"I did not ask either side whether it suited them, and I requested my friends in congress not to ask either side whether it suited them. I learned before the controversy began, so far as I was concerned in it, that the whole temper of the legislative body of the United States was in favor of the eight-hour day.

"When I carried it to congress, some very interesting things happened. In the house of representatives the plan was passed, was sanctioned, by a vote which included, I am told, about seventy republicans as against fifty-four republicans; and in the senate, I am informed, the republican members of the senate held a conference in which they determined to put no obstacle in the way of the passage of the bill. Now this was because the proposal was reasonable and was based upon right.

"But, ladies and gentlemen, that is not the end of the story. This thing ought to have been done, and it had to be done at the time that it was done, so as to bring about a reasonable trial of the eight-hour day and a careful examination of the results of the eight-hour day. But that does not finish the matter. Let me call your attention to what I believe we ought to be thinking about so as to set the stage for this and all similar cases.

"There are some things in which society is so profoundly interested that its interests take precedence of the interests of any group of men whatever. One of these things is the supply of the absolute necessities of life.

"It would be intolerable if at any time any group of men by any process should be suffered to cut society off from the necessary supplies which sustain life. But these supplies are of no use unless they can be distributed, and in the matter of the distribution of goods, particularly of the goods that sustain life and industry the interest of society is paramount to every other interest; and the difficulty about all situations like that which we have just passed through is this, that the main partner is left out of the reckoning.

RIGHTS OF THE PEOPLE

"These men were dealing with one another as if the only thing to settle was between themselves, whereas, the real thing to settle was what rights had the hundred million people of the United States.

"The business of government is to see that no other organization is as strong as itself; to see that no body or group of men, no matter what their private interest is, may come into competition with the authority of society. And the problem which congress, because of the lateness of the session, has for a few months

postponed, is this problem: By what means are we going to oblige persons who come to a controversy like this to admit the public into the partnership by which the thing is discussed and decided?

"That is not an easy problem. A great many different methods have been proposed; and one of the reasons why congress thought it necessary to postpone the decision for a few months was that there were so many honest differences of opinion, not as to the object, but as to the method.

"I want to suggest to you a means of testing your fellow men as to whether they know what they are talking about or not. It is not necessary for a man to come and argue with me an obvious moral principle, but I am very much interested when he comes and argues with me how he is going to make it work. And when men say, 'We must not permit any organization to neglect the interests of society,' I say, 'Amen; but what I want to sit down and discuss with you is, how are we going to prevent it?'

"The only thing worth talking about in politics or any other sphere is the constructive idea: 'How are you going to do it?' We all know, or at any rate we pretend to know, what we ought to do, but we do not all know how to do it, and the very difficult question which the American people is now face to face with, and which they are going to settle, is this: 'How are we going to organize our participation as a partner in the settlement of disputes between capital and labor, which interrupt the life of the nation?' I invite all subscribers to suggest a method.

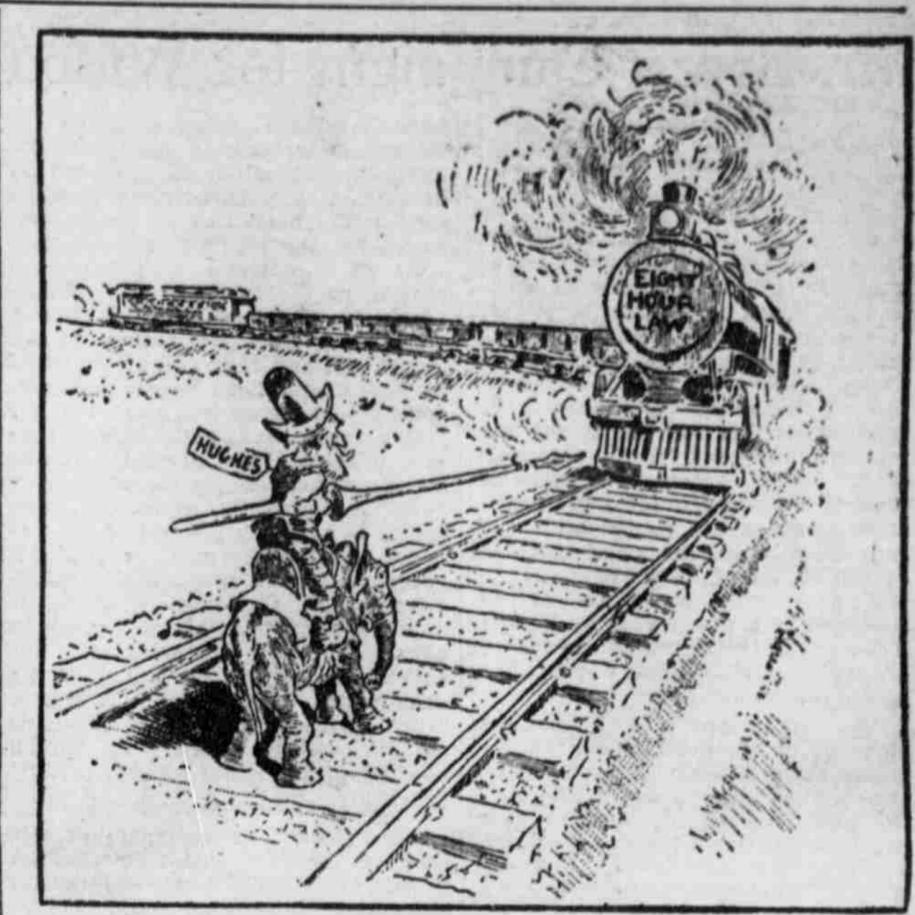
"The question is apt to be obscured in some quarters, as if we were saying that it was the right of the government or of organized society, which is another term for the same thing, to say to a man: 'You must work whether you want to or not.' America is never going to say to any individual: 'You must work whether you want to or not,' but it is privileged to say to an organization of persons: 'You must not interrupt the national life without consulting us.'

QUESTION AT ISSUE

"It is not a question of obliging individuals; it is a question of enforcing a partnership and seeing to it that no organization is stronger than that organization which we all belong to and support and call and love by the name of our own government.

"So I laid a programme before congress by which at any rate a beginning might be made in that direction, and that programme is going to be proceeded with. It is no fun talking unless you can expect to do something. The only zest that ever comes into affairs for a man with red blood in his veins is the zest that comes when he is put to it to think out a difficult thing and do it.

"And I, for my part, congratulate the business men of America that some of their difficulties have been removed by legislation; that they have been fortified against certain forms of control which must have been intolerable to them; that they have had their real commercial strength put at their service by such acts as the Federal Reserve act, for example, and that now, if they think they can conquer the world, it is up to them to do it, and that nobody is going to assist them, because it is a thing in which they can not be assisted by anything but their own brain. We are now out in the open, competitors for the confidence of the



DON QUIXOTE

—DeMar in Philadelphia Record.

world, and there is only one way to get it and that is to earn it.

"I can not imagine anything more inspiring than to be put on your mettle after legislation has taken the shackles off you and appraised you. You know that you are no man's servant. Reaction in this matter would shut us up like a province. To turn back upon any portion of the road we have traveled would be craven. To pretend that we are able to compete with the world and then cringe at the opportunity would not be worthy of any of the traditions of America, and so for my part I am particularly proud to be supported by the business opinion of American men because I know myself to have a great enthusiasm for the triumphant development of American enterprise throughout the world."

Henry Ford for Wilson

A United Press dispatch, from Detroit, Mich., dated Sept. 28, says: Declaring that the eight-hour day is a good thing for business and that he can prove it and that President Wilson is keeping unseen hands off the government, Henry Ford today announced that he would vote for Woodrow Wilson for president.

"I'm for Wilson," said Mr. Ford, "because he is on to the interests, the unseen hands that seek to control government, and is holding them off. This was proven by his refusal to rush into war with Mexico, sacrificing the lives of thousands of young Americans to save the dollars that Wall street invested in Mexico on a gamble.

"But for purely business reasons which may appeal more directly to many men, the welfare of the country demands Wilson's re-election. The republicans are raising a great roar about the eight-hour law and how it will hamper business. I say, and I say from experience, not from guess work, that the eight-hour law will help business. Business men and employers who are hostile to the

eight-hour law do not know their business.

"We have had an eight-hour day in the Ford factory for three years and we have made more money each succeeding year under it. It has proven its own merit.

"The business of the United States has today a momentum that no man or group of men can stop. As for the tariff which the republicans insist must be revised to help save our prosperity after the war, I want to say that the tariff is nothing but a hot house remedy. It may make business sprout for a while but its effect is purely artificial and can never produce a hardy permanent business plant. I know Hughes, Teddy and Wall street are behind him. I'm a republican, but I am for Wilson. I am a republican for the same reason that I have ears. I was born that way. I am for Wilson because I believe he can do more to enhance the prosperity and assure peace for this nation than any other candidate. Any one who does not want peace and who wants to gamble with prosperity should vote against him."

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