

THE WAGEWORKER



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ONLY A MATTER OF SELF-INTEREST

Mr. Laboring Man, don't you think it is about time to cast a vote in your own interests? What's the matter with voting for something that will be of immediate benefit to yourself? Why should you cast another vote for men or interests with which you have nothing in common?

Suppose you take a little time to study this interesting bit of Nebraska history.

A few years ago a fusion legislature enacted an eight-hour law, but it was so loosely drawn and so full of loopholes that a republican judge was compelled to declare it unconstitutional. It was unconstitutional, too. Why? Because there were no workingmen in the legislature to prevent a lot of cheap politicians from doing the will of their masters and making a farce of the law. And while these political officeholders were spoil-

ing an adequate and just eight hour law they themselves work less than eight hours a day and draw huge salaries.

Long years ago a lot of political jobsters foisted upon Nebraska an infamous prison contract labor law. The work of the convicts was farmed out to contractors who paid the state from 40 to 50 cents a day for each convict employed, the state boarding and clothing the convicts. The product of this convict labor was, and is today, sold on the open market in competition with the product of free workingmen. What chances does the free and honest workingman stand with that kind of competition?

For years free workingmen have complained of this unjust competition, and year after year they have asked the legislature to relieve them of it. But every request has been turned down. During all these years the legislature has been made up of pol-

iticians, and we who must compete with convict labor have been blindly voting "straight party tickets" and then vainly asking for legislation in our interests.

HAVEN'T WE BEEN A PRECIOUS LOT OF "SUCKERS" FOR NOT TAKING MATTERS INTO OUR OWN HANDS?

Why didn't we get together long ago and elect a few members of the legislature who would look after our interests as workingmen just as carefully as the men we did elect looked after the interests of the penitentiary contractors, the favored banks, the corporations and the cheap politicians?

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH ACTING SENSIBLY THIS TIME, AND ELECTING A COUPLE OF LEGISLATORS FROM OUR OWN RANKS?

Let These Great Facts Soak Into Your Minds

Have we any interests as workingmen in the work of the coming legislature. Just let these few facts soak into your minds:

The penitentiary contractor is now making brooms by the thousands every day, and these convict-made brooms have driven the honest and free broommakers of Lincoln out of business. A few years ago the penitentiary contractor made barrels. The result of this convict competition was that the free and honest coopers of the state were driven to the wall and forced to accept starvation wages or leave their families and seek work in distant states.

If they can make barrels and brooms at the penitentiary with convict labor, what's the matter with them setting up a factory for making harness and saddles? When they do, what

will become of your job, Mr. Leather Worker on Horse Goods?

And if barrels and brooms and harness, what's the matter with cigars? And when they get to working a couple of hundred convicts at making cigars, what will become your chances for employment in Nebraska, Mr. Cigarmaker?

And if brooms and barrels and harness and cigars, what's the matter with contracting "trusties" to drive the coal and lumber wagons of the city. And when the "trusties" are farmed out to compete with the free and honest teamsters, what will become of your chance for work at a living wage, Mr. Teamster?

If the convicts can be contracted out to make brooms and barrels, they can be farmed out to make any kind of goods and shush compel free and honest workingmen in every line of trade to either accept a wage based on the hire of convicts, or seek

work in other and far away sections.

Have you digested all this?

THE ONLY WAY TO CURE THIS EVIL IS TO ELECT WORKINGMEN WHO ARE PERSONALLY INTERESTED IN CURING IT.

It will never be cured as long as we elect men to the legislature who care nothing for us after they have landed in the office by virtue of our votes.

THE PRISON LABOR CONTRACT LAW MUST BE WIPE OUT, AND THE COMPETITION OF CONVICTS PREVENTED. THE WAY TO WIPE IT OUT IS TO ELECT TO THE LEGISLATURE MEN WHO ARE INJURED BY THAT KIND OF COMPETITION. AND YOU'LL HAVE TO HELP ELECT THOSE MEN.

The Employe Needs Protection Like the Employer

But the convict labor law is not the only thing that injures the workingmen of this state. The lack of laws in our interests is a crying evil. As workingmen we are entitled to an **EMPLOYER'S LIABILITY LAW THAT MEANS SOMETHING.**

Right here is where the railroad men of the state should sit up and take notice. They are the ones most largely concerned in this matter, although it is of interest to all wage earners. Here is an instance:

A raw and careless employe of the railroad improperly fixes a stake on a flat car loaded with lumber. In coupling up

the train the stake breaks or slips and the lumber falls upon the brakeman, cruelly injuring him. The injured employe tries to secure damages for his injury—an injury sustained through no fault of his own—and is confronted with an infamous law which says the corporation employing the careless and incompetent employe is not responsible, and that the injured man must look to the fellow servant for redress.

YOU'LL NEVER GET THAT LAW WIPE OFF THE BOOKS AND ONE THAT WILL PROTECT YOU PUT IN ITS PLACE UNTIL YOU ELECT TO THE LEGISLATURE

MEN WHO ARE EQUALLY INTERESTED WITH YOU IN WIPING OUT THE PRESENT INJUSTICE.

This same rule of law applies in every other branch of mechanical injury. The employer merely shows that it was another employe's fault, and escapes responsibility. In every other case the principal is responsible for the acts of the agent.

IF YOU WANT TO REMEDY THIS RANK DISCRIMINATION, VOTE FOR MEN OF YOUR OWN CLASS TO MAKE LAWS FOR YOU. THE MEN INTERESTED IN MAINTAINING PRESENT CONDITIONS WILL NEVER DO IT FOR YOU.

Let Working Men Guard Against the Evils Now Facing All

But there is another danger confronting the workingmen of Nebraska, and it is up to them to guard against it.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE A CONSPIRACY LAW ENACTED?

A concerted move is being made throughout the country by the enemies of organized labor to secure the enactment of so-called conspiracy laws. These laws will make it a felony for a lot of employes to get together and agree to make a concerted demand for better wages or shorter hours. It will make it a felony for a body of workingmen to mutually agree to quit in a body unless their demands for fair pay and fair hours are granted. It will make it a felony for one body of workingmen to try to induce another body of workingmen to assist them in securing better conditions. In short, **THE CONSPIRACY LAW THAT THE "UNION BUSTERS" WANT IS A LAW THAT WILL DESTROY YOUR TRADES UNIONS.**

The only way to head this infernal scheme off is to elect to the legislature men who are personally interested in defeating any such scheme. Who is interested in its defeat? **WORKINGMEN LIKE YOURSELF.** You can't expect the fellows elected to represent the interests of the other fellows, and the fellows who don't give a darn one way or the other—you can't expect such men to look out for your interests. If you do expect it you are a bigger fool than Thompson's colt. Thompson's colt was so foolish it swam the river in order to get to the watering trough for a drink.

And, again, what about your children and mine? Do we want them to become the victims of a modern individual Moloch that demands their young lives?

IN THE MATTER OF CHILD LABOR LAWS NEBRASKA IS ON A LEVEL WITH ALABAMA, MISSISSIPPI, LOU-

SIANA AND GEORGIA. And in those states the mills are filled with children from 4 to 14 years old, working twelve and thirteen hours a day and being either thrust into premature graves or growing up into ignorant, dangerous citizens.

The labor of these children destroys the demand for adult labor. Where child labor prevails, the labor of men is not in demand, and poverty, ignorance, misery and vice reign supreme. **NOW IS THE TIME TO TAKE STEPS TO PREVENT ANY SUCH CONDITION OF AFFAIRS FROM EXISTING IN NEBRASKA.**

Around the glass works in a city in an eastern state is built a fence of barbed wire, "horse high, and hog tight." Edwin Markham asked the superintendent what it was for. He replied:

IT'S TO KEEP THE KIDS ON THE NIGHT SHIFT FROM SNEAKING OUT AFTER THEY HAVE BEGUN WORK."

Nebraska should immediately take steps to build a barbed wire fence around her entire borders, "horse high and hog tight," not to "keep the kids on the night shift from sneaking out after they have begun work," **BUT TO KEEP THE CRIME OF CHILD LABOR FROM EVER ENTERING THE BORDERS OF THIS SPLENDID COMMONWEALTH.**

How may that fence be built?

It will never be built as long as only men who represent the employing corporations are elected to office. It can only be built by electing to the legislature men who are personally interested in preventing child labor—men who are themselves workers at some trade or gainful occupation; men who toil at the bench, the case, on the engine, on the runningboards, at the forge and in the foundry and mill.

Give us, the fathers, an opportunity to work at fair wages and let us keep our children in school and on the playgrounds until they are old enough to begin the task of learning to take

our places. Give us conditions that will enable us to give our children better opportunities than we had.

NEBRASKA MUST HAVE AN IRON-CLAD LAW AGAINST CHILD LABOR, AND MUST HAVE IT THIS WINTER.

The way to get it is to elect to the legislature men who are personally—yea, selfishly—interested in securing its enactment.

And now to the point. The workingmen of Lancaster county can make sure of securing legislators who will work in their interests by casting their votes solidly for **HARRY W. SMITH** and **GEORGE F. QUICK.**

Who are these men? **SMITH IS A PRINTER. QUICK IS A CARPENTER.** They are workers like yourself. Their interests are your interests. They will work for your interests because it means working for their own interests. They will stand for every just demand that labor makes. They will fight every scheme aimed against the welfare of the toilers.

A VOTE FOR SMITH AND QUICK IS A VOTE IN THE INTERESTS OF THE MEN WHO TOIL.

Now, fellow workingman, let's roll up our sleeves and spend the remainder of the time between now and election in pushing the candidacy of these fellow workingmen. Tell the professional politicians and the party bosses to **GO STRAIGHT TO HADES.** Vote for your own interests this time. If every man who works for wages in Lancaster county will vote for Smith and Quick, they will be elected by overwhelming majorities.

NOW DO YOUR DUTY AS WORKINGMEN, AS CITIZENS AND AS HUSBANDS AND FATHERS.

This is a bully good time to make the bosses sit up and take notice that we workingmen are in the political game for keeps—and in it because we want to get a few laws in our own interests.