

THE WAGEWORKER



Temple Committee Gets Ready to Start Something

Those who have succumbed to the idea that the Labor Temple project has "gone by the board" will be shocked into life again. True, the project has been allowed to lie dormant for the past couple of months, but that was by design, not because of any lack of interest. It was thought best to let the matter rest until after Labor Day, and then take it up in a systematic manner.

Two months ago the secretary of the Central Labor Union was directed to communicate with each local union in the city, asking each one to select a representative to act upon a "Labor Temple Committee." A number of these locals failed to receive any notification, with the result that less than one-half of the unions are thus far represented upon the committee. Finally the committeemen already appointed decided to go ahead and "start something." In the meanwhile the rest of the locals will be notified and asked to send representatives.

The first meeting of the committeemen already selected was held last Monday evening at the home of Will M. Maupin. The following committee were present:

J. W. Dickson, Carpenters' Union.
 Fred Iringer, Typographical Union.
 Alex Wekesser, Pressmen's Union.
 T. C. Kelsey, Leatherworkers' Union.
 T. W. Evans, Cigarmakers' Union.
 Sam'l Chaplin, Barbers' Union.

A temporary organization was effected by electing Mr. Dickson chairman. Mr. Maupin was then honored by being made a de facto member of the committee and chosen to officiate as secretary pending permanent organization.

It was decided not to select even a temporary treasurer until more unions were represented. Neither was it deemed wise to take any immediate action concerning plans of procedure. Instead, informal talk was indulged in concerning the plan of organization. It was pretty generally agreed that it would not be well to organize an open stock company. The plan pursued by the local Masonic bodies was discussed, and the secretary was instructed to secure, if possible, the drawing up of articles of incorporation similar to those adopted by the Masons when they built their temple. The secretary was further instructed to notify secretaries of all unrepresented unions of the organization of the committee, and ask them to send representatives.

Letters from cities where labor temples have been erected were read, and various suggestions made for plans of procedure. Every member of the committee was enthusiastic, and it was unanimously conceded that it would be possible, by earnest work, to insure the erection of a Labor Temple upon a convenient site.

Just before the meeting adjourned Mrs. Maupin invited the committeemen into the dining-room, where a "Dutch lunch" was spread and enjoyed to the fullest extent.

Every committeeman thus far selected was present with two exceptions, Mr. Warner of the Plumbers and Al Walker of the Bartenders. Mr. Warner was absent because his union met that night, and Mr. Walker was "on watch." They have promised to be present at the next meeting.

The committee will meet again next Monday evening at the home of Mr. Chaplin, 407 South Twenty-fifth street. The following unions which have not yet selected committeemen are requested to have representatives present. Pending the selection of a committee by the locals, the secretaries thereof are requested to act so as to be able to keep the local fully informed:

- Bricklayers and Masons.
- Lathers.
- Machinists.
- Boilermakers.
- Electrical Workers.
- Painters.
- Stationary Engineers.
- Bookbinders.
- Stereotypers.
- Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers.
- Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen.
- Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen.
- Brotherhood of Railway Carmen.

Brotherhood of Railway Conductors.
 Commercial Telegraphers' Union.
 Theatrical Workers and Stage Employees.
 Tailors.

The organizations already represented on the committee represent about 750 union men, leaving practically 2,000 as yet unrepresented. It is hoped to have all of these represented upon the committee before the end of September, thus providing a full committee that can put in the long winter months in framing up and prosecuting a campaign that will secure for Lincoln a Labor Temple worthy of the city and the trades unions.

Remember the fact that the committee meets again next Monday evening, and that the meeting will be held at the home of Samuel L. Chaplin, 407 South Twenty-fifth street. Take Citizens' line cars, East St., North Twenty-fifth or Randolph street, and get off at Twenty-fifth. Go two blocks south.

And now for a strong, steady and sustained pull for the Labor Temple.

CENTRAL LABOR UNION.

Extends Aid to Striking Telegraphers and Selects Committees.

The Central Labor Union met at Bruse's hall Tuesday night, with five unions represented by eight delegates. Scattered about in the big hall the delegates were so inconspicuous as to leave the impression that the hall was vacant.

Only two bits of important business were transacted. A communication was read from the striking telegraphers asking aid for the local strikers. The central body appointed a committee consisting of Kelsey, Evans and Chaplin to visit local unions and ask for aid, the central body leading off with \$10, which was supplemented to the amount of \$2.50 by the Wage-worker. The telegraphers are entitled to the fullest possible support. There are at present four men left on the strike list in Lincoln. Three men have left town for other situations, and two former members of the union "scabbed."

The next bit of important business was the announcement of the following committees:

Executive—F. A. Kates, O. M. Rudy, S. L. Chaplin.
 Organization—A. L. Compton, G. F. Quick, W. M. Maupin.
 Home Industry—G. A. Walker, E. E. Betts, N. K. Howard.
 Label—T. W. Evans, J. C. Kirkman, Louis Measears.

Considerable discussion was indulged in concerning the Central body's failure to accomplish any work worthy of its existence. Finally it was decided that the secretary should immediately put in effect a plan of notifying every union whose delegates failed to attend, and to enforce the laws governing the discipline of absent members. It was determined to inaugurate a new era of things from this time forth make the central body, if possible, a real force in the work of building up the unions of the city. The executive committee was instructed to make the best arrangements possible for a hall for a permanent meeting place.

THE CARPENTERS.

They Give Another Sample of What Genuine Trades Unionism Means.

The Union Carpenters of Lincoln have just given another exhibition of what trades unionism means, and it is commended to the consideration of those who are not acquainted with genuine unionism.

Last spring a young Swede carpenter named Erickson came from the old country and settled in Lincoln. He immediately joined the union, and as soon as he could he sent for his wife and three children. He worked faithfully and was prospering until seized with typhoid fever, which resulted fatally on September 5. Mr. Erickson had not been a member long enough to entitle him to a funeral benefit, but this fact was not allowed to cut any figure. The union carpenters immediately took charge of the funeral arrangements and will pay all expenses. The funeral of Mr. Erickson was held Sunday afternoon at the chapel of Castle, Roper & Matthews, and interment was at Wyuka. The

widow and her three little children are left practically destitute, but the unionism which set aside the rule and paid the funeral expenses may be depended upon to see to it that the widow and the orphans will not suffer.

If this is not the "pure religion and undefiled" that the union tentmaker, Paul, referred to, we confess our ignorance of what that kind of religion means.

The local held a special meeting Saturday night to arrange for the Erickson funeral. The carpenters turned out in a body Sunday afternoon and accompanied the remains to the cemetery.

The meeting Tuesday night was one of the largest and best for many moons. The enthusiasm continues to grow.

Speier & Simon expect to occupy the building at the corner of Tenth and O streets as soon as it can be properly remodeled. They have inserted in the plans and specifications a clause which demands the employment of union labor only in the work of reconstruction.

At the meeting Tuesday night the case of the striking telegraphers was taken up, but owing to the lateness of the hour and a seeming misunderstanding no action was taken. The matter will doubtless be acted upon at the next meeting. At any rate the carpenters may be depended upon to do their share—and a little more if necessary.

Parties who are in need of carpenter work need not go without. Nor do they need to give it to non-union men. All they need to do is to 'phone headquarters, Bell F2289 or Automatic 5601, and state their needs. The man at the 'phone will see that the carpenters needed are supplied. This fact should be borne in mind by all citizens interested in employing carpenters who make their home in Lincoln and who help to make the city prosperous.

At Richmond, Mo., carpenters receive 30 cents per hour for nine hours and in Lexington, Mo., where before

the craft was organized, the wages were \$1.75 and \$2, the maximum scale is 35 cents per hour.

The mill owners of Memphis, Tenn., recently posted notices that their places would be run as open shops. This was due to a disagreement with the Carpenters' Union regarding the construction of the scale—especially that part relating to the Saturday half holiday. The firms insinuated that free and independent workmen, who would be content to work any number of hours at any wages desired, would be about the proper thing. The union men, however, thought otherwise, and a strike resulted. Four firms were involved. Within two days one firm asked that its old men be returned to it. In another day one other firm capitulated and the next day the other firms signified that they had plenty. Under the terms entered into the firms conceded the union shop and the Saturday half holiday.

THE PLUMBERS.

Some Notes About the Knights of the Firepot and Wrench.

Bert Chipman is back in Lincoln once more, but he is minus the rheumatism he took with him when he went away. Bert's many friends rejoice at his recovery, and the local union is almighty glad to get an enthusiastic member back again.

Nearly every union plumber in Lincoln went to Omaha on Labor Day and paraded with the Omaha "bunch." They report having had a magnificent time.

The plumbers' international now claims a membership approximating 18,000. Strikes affecting 600 men are now on.

Beet Cutters and Butcher Workers' Union in Cincinnati has gained an increase of about \$2 for each man.

The cities of Tacoma, Seattle and Spokane are overrun with carpenters, and travelers are earnestly urged to stay away from the coast until further notice.

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Another enemy the non-union operator is called upon to meet is the organized railway operator. Practically all of the Western Union's wires run along railway tracks, and when the railway operator hears a message passing through his station, he knows when the sender is "wrong," and it's only the work of an instant to pull the plug, thus putting the wire out of commission. It's only for a few seconds, but the unionist knows someone else will take up the work of harass and delay.

But this is not the only trouble of scab operators—union linemen on the outside are his secret enemies. The linemen are members of the Electrical Workers' union. They have a chart of every wire running into a city, and know its purposes. They know the wires of non-union operators, and when they cling to a pole, high in the air, to repair cables, they don't assist in making the strike-breaker's life a bed of roses.

Another powerful aid to telegraphers is the strictly union Hearst and United Press wires, and those in the brokerage offices. With a "true blue" on each end, valuable information is instantly forwarded, with a secret code, to all parts of the country. Messages are never "delayed in transit" for the union telegraphers' official, and he don't have to depend upon newspapers or rumors for valuable tips.

And while Western Union and Postal officials will tell of the number of men employed, they don't add that they are mostly graduates from schools that learn the "trade" in six months. And they don't tell of the numberless influences the strikers use to harass and annoy the companies. But the latter are fully alive to them, despite a bold front that makes the "foxy" union telegrapher smile.

Cigarmakers Set Mr. Whitten, Secretary, Right

Office of the Secretary, Cigarmakers' Union, No. 143, Lincoln, Neb.—To Secretary Whitten, of the Lincoln Commercial Club.—Dear Sir: It has come to the notice of this organization that for some time past you have seen fit to charge us, the union cigarmakers of Lincoln, with having prevented you from securing for Lincoln another cigar factory that would employ from twenty to thirty or more men. It is further understood that you have, directly or indirectly, charged that our organization was acting on the behalf of the local manufacturers, who are quoted as being opposed to bringing any more cigar factories here to compete against them.

We desire to state the exact facts to the public, and having stated them, we court the fullest investigation and are willing to abide by the results.

The factory to which you refer is the Pepperburg factory at Plattsmouth. Instead of employing from twenty to thirty men the year around, as you report, Pepperburg had three men at work the day he conferred with a committee from this local, together with yourself, at the Commercial Club. We venture the assertion that Pepperburg does not employ an average of seven men the year around. But that is neither here nor there. You charge that because we would not make Pepperburg a concession we thereby prevented him from locating in Lincoln, and you declare that this refusal was at the instigation of the employers, and that we acted in an arbitrary and selfish manner.

We deny both your assertions, and we cheerfully submit the proof that you have been, and still are, doing us an injustice by your false assertions and reports.

The leading cigar made by Pepperburg is the "Bud." This cigar is an odd size, being 4 1/2 inches long. He insisted that our local consent to a change in our scale that would permit him to have this cigar made for \$10 a thousand. Lincoln employers are now paying us \$11 for a clear seed mouldwork cigar of the same length. If we gave Pepperburg the concession it would simply mean that we would have to consent to a reduction of \$1 a thousand for making cigars of all classes contemplated in our schedule, and below the 4 1/2-inch limit. In other words, we were expected to be patriotic enough to consent to a practical reduction of \$1.50 a week in our wages in order to secure another cigar factory for Lincoln. And because we declined to carry our civic pride and our local patriotism to that extent—\$75 a year for each man—the secretary of the Commercial Club criticizes us most severely.

We insist that according to our wages and our opportunities we are doing just as much for the upbuilding of Lincoln as the secretary of the Commercial Club, or any member thereof. If the Commercial Club is in earnest in its desire to increase in Lincoln it can do so without going to the trouble of trying to induce another manufacturer to locate here. It can accomplish the object by indulging a little more in "standing up for Lincoln" and "patronizing home industry," and doing a whole lot less of preaching about it. The Commercial Club, which is always crying for "home industries," should set an example to us cigarmakers. The Commercial Club sells cigars for the accommodation of its members, all of whom are supposed to be boosters for home industries. And yet, among the twelve or fifteen brands of cigars sold at the Commercial Club only one is manufactured in Lincoln. The others are all manufactured in the east, either by the tobacco trust or by sweat shop employers who have their perfumed and doctored cigars made in filthy tenements.

Here are the prices we charge for making "clear seed, hand mould" cigars, the kind Pepperburg wants to make in Lincoln:

4 1/2 inches or less, per M.	\$ 8.00
4 3/4 inches or less, per M.	9.00
4 1/2 inches or less, per M.	10.00
5 inches or less, per M.	11.00

Mr. Pepperburg wants to make his cigar over the 4 1/2-inch limit without paying for the extra length or its odd shape. To grant him that extra length and shape would mean that our present employers would demand a reduction equal to the concession granted Pepperburg, which would be a reduction of our present scale, which is by no means exorbitant. There is nothing to keep Mr. Pepperburg from bringing his factory to Lincoln. We will make his cigars any length or shape he desires providing he pays us the scale, just as the present employers pay it. We will make them three feet long if he will pay for it.

We would like to see a thousand union cigarmakers at work in Lincoln. But as it is, we have about twenty. We would not have even twenty if all of the demand for our product came from members of a commercial club which loves to preach "home industries," but loves still more to omit the practice. If the sales of cigars at the Commercial Club rooms are any criterion, one cigarmaker working a week could keep the club supplied with all the Lincoln made cigars it consumes in three months. If every member of the Commercial Club will practice "patronize home industry" as well as we cigarmakers do it, a year from now will see a hundred more cigarmakers at work at the bench in Lincoln. We will gladly welcome Mr. Pepperburg, or any other manufacturer of cigars, to Lincoln if they will pay us the scale we demand and receive from the fair employers now here. We insist that we be not put in a false light before the public by your misleading statements of this case. And we further insist that it comes with poor grace from an organization which all but boycotts local cigar factories and local cigarmakers, to criticize us because we have failed, in your opinion, to assist in "building up Lincoln industries."

We offer these facts to an intelligent and fair-minded public, confident that our position will be commended.

THOMAS W. EVANS, Pres.
 JOHN STEINER, Sec.
 Cigarmakers' Union, No. 143, Lincoln, Nebraska.

BEATRICE BRIEFS.

Work of Organization Looking Up in That Bustling Burg.

The work of organization has been progressing at a lively rate in Beatrice recently. Organizer Ireland of the Electrical Workers spent a couple of weeks in that little city recently, with the result that the electrical workers have organized with seven men members—all but two working at the craft in the city. The two men still on the outside are expected in before long.

The painters and paperhangers, catching the spirit, have also organized in Beatrice, and the local starts off with a goodly membership and bright prospects for the future.

Then the plasterers caught the infection and organized with a goodly number of men on the charter roll.

All in all, organization is looking up in "Beatrice on the Blue." But the Dempster people still oppose organization. They are the largest employers of labor in Beatrice, and organization would mean that the Dempsters would have to quit hiring boys, and would have to pay fair wages to the men. This the Dempsters think is very wrong and anarchistic. For this reason they oppose unions and have succeeded so far in hampering the work of organization. The head man of the firm, Robert Dempster, has a political bee in his bonnet. He yearns to be governor of Nebraska, and when he is nominated by the republicans, organized labor will gladly take a hand in the campaign. But the results are calculated to be disastrous to Robert Dempster.

SHOULD FOLLOW IT HIMSELF.

One of the most popular of President Roosevelt's sayings is, "Don't flinch, don't foul, and hit the line hard." To this he might add, as a hint to some of his followers, "Eschew hot air and don't bluff."—Washington Trades Unionist.

Tips About the Telegraphers

The striking telegraph operators of Lincoln, though few in numbers, are still putting up a fight, and a good one. Several of the men who walked out have struck "broker" jobs elsewhere, leaving only four on the strike list at present. Two of these are Associated Press men. Two members of the local union "scabbed" and are now to be classed among President Eliot's "heroes." These are a fellow named Johnson and another fellow named Carson.

Twenty-four years ago the Western Union telegraphers struck against almost intolerable conditions. Owing to insufficient organization the strike was soon broken by the company. Robert C. Clowry, now president of the company, was general superintendent of the western division at Chicago at that time, and then, as now, he fought the strikers with bitter energy. He promised those who remained "loyal" to the company that he would amply reward them for their "bravery." This promise was kept just like Clowry kept his promise to the telegraphers this year of 1907. He lied. In 1883 he wrote those who remained at work a letter in which he said: "This company will liberally reward you and all employees who remain loyal to it during the crisis."

For twenty-four years the men who remained "loyal" have been waiting for that "reward." What Clowry really handed to them was longer hours and two reductions in wages.

By resorting to the most extreme measures the two telegraph companies have been able to keep enough wires going to carry a portion of the Associated Press stuff—enough at any rate to daily inform the public that the strike is broken. But the claim that the companies are now working a full quota of operators is so absurd that only a man with a "bug" would make it and expect the public to believe the claim. All told, 22,000 operators quit the key. To claim that these 22,000 operators have been replaced in two months is so palpably false as to be really absurd. The companies are loaded down with trouble that only operators can realize. The Union Leader explains some of this trouble, and it makes a story so interesting that it is here given:

The layman has no idea of the handicap under which "scab" telegraph operators work during strike times. With

the assistance of chief clerks and division superintendents a line of communication is opened between two large cities. Sometimes it is necessary to go hundreds of miles out of the way. Instantly every union operator in smaller towns through which the message passes knows who is "on the other end," and the line is "broken" with: "Get off the wire, you scab." The unionist only opens his key for a second. He is unknown in the stretch of a thousand miles, but he is sure other unionists can be depended upon to keep the line "broke."

Another enemy the non-union operator is called upon to meet is the organized railway operator. Practically all of the Western Union's wires run along railway tracks, and when the railway operator hears a message passing through his station, he knows when the sender is "wrong," and it's only the work of an instant to pull the plug, thus putting the wire out of commission. It's only for a few seconds, but the unionist knows someone else will take up the work of harass and delay.

But this is not the only trouble of scab operators—union linemen on the outside are his secret enemies. The linemen are members of the Electrical Workers' union. They have a chart of every wire running into a city, and know its purposes. They know the wires of non-union operators, and when they cling to a pole, high in the air, to repair cables, they don't assist in making the strike-breaker's life a bed of roses.

Another powerful aid to telegraphers is the strictly union Hearst and United Press wires, and those in the brokerage offices. With a "true blue" on each end, valuable information is instantly forwarded, with a secret code, to all parts of the country. Messages are never "delayed in transit" for the union telegraphers' official, and he don't have to depend upon newspapers or rumors for valuable tips.

And while Western Union and Postal officials will tell of the number of men employed, they don't add that they are mostly graduates from schools that learn the "trade" in six months. And they don't tell of the numberless influences the strikers use to harass and annoy the companies. But the latter are fully alive to them, despite a bold front that makes the "foxy" union telegrapher smile.

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