

Unhealthy Conditions Among Workers Are Real Cause for Unrest in U. S.

Deportation of Radicals Is Not Cure—During War Laborers Were Promised Utopian Conditions of Democracy With Coming of Peace—Disillusioned Following Armistice—Post-War Changes Started Blind Revolt in Steel Mills.

BY RAY STANNARD BAKER
Article V.

In this article I shall endeavor to answer the question: How much of the trouble and unrest in American industry is caused by "outside agitators" and "alien radicals"; and how much is caused by conditions inside of industry? Judge Gary thinks that the trouble, as I showed in my last article, is incited from outside; Mr. Gompers thinks it due to conditions inside.

There is no doubt that what Judge Gary calls "outside agitators" did come in and organize the steel workers. At its St. Paul convention in June, 1918, the American Federation of Labor appointed a committee headed by John Fitzpatrick, president of the Chicago Federation of Labor, who was never connected with the steel industry in any way, to go into the steel towns and organize the men. There is no doubt, as Judge Gary declares, that there are revolutionaries and alien radicals, some of them holding the ex-

remist views, to be found at Gary and in other steel towns; there is no doubt that there is considerable violent "literature" in circulation in these towns. There is no doubt, also, after the workers went out, that the familiar tactics of the strike—persuasion verging always upon intimidation—did take place at Gary. All this is true.

Fine, Bright City.

But let us look more closely at Gary. Here is a fine, bright city of some 80,000 people. It has an excellent Carnegie library, an impressive Y. M. C. A. building, good churches, superlative schools. It lives wholly upon mills owned by the United States Steel corporation. A few of the workmen, largely Americans, are highly skilled and well paid, often owning their own houses, sometimes having a few shares of stock in the corporation. But the great mass of the workers are more or less unskilled foreigners. There are 42 different nationalities, speaking 20 or 30 languages. The majority work 12 hours a day and many seven days a week.

To an extent which at first amazes the inquirer, these are young married men. Forty-five per cent of the Serbians and 48 per cent of the Roumanians in the steel industry are single men, according to the United States labor reports. Even those who are married a large proportion have left their wives at home (62 per cent of the Croats, 40 per cent of the Italians). They are strong boys or young men, largely peasants (64 per cent) from farms in southern or eastern Europe. About one-third of these men are 25 years of age or under—hardly more than boys—87 per cent are 44 years old or under. The steel workers themselves assert that a man is "old at 40" in the steel industry; that men cannot stand the strain of the long hours and the heavy work.

Prohibition an Aid to Unrest. Consider these masses of young men—peasants, who came to golden America to make, instantly, their fortunes. They were willing to work all hours, all times, where American workmen would not and could not work; they got as much money as possible; in as short a time, either to bring their wives over from Europe or to go back there with their earnings. The poorest of them lived, and still live, in a crowded, crowded together—sometimes a dozen men to a room—in the very cheapest places they could rent. There are some very miserable

places in this fine town of Gary; very terrible, really, with no relation to the American standard of living." Well, these men, working under such pressure, confused and divided, could not organize, had no way of expressing themselves. But they could get drunk. Before Indians went dry, Gary had probably the largest number of saloons to the population of any city in the United States; solid blocks of them.

A population of young unmarried men, away from home, working under high strain in an unfamiliar and dangerous industry, without amusement or diversion—this was the natural outlet. There may be those who think prohibition discourages economic unrest. I do not. I believe it is one of the causes of it; for it has removed the great deadener of human trouble—and human ambition—alcohol; and has left time for the workers to talk and meet and read, and money to buy publications and support organizations.

Consider also what the war did when it came. In the first place it brought the entire working forces at Gary under the iron regime. Workmen could not go out and meet freely between Europe and America as they had always done, and they were worked harder and longer than ever; but on the other hand they got more money and had steadier work than ever before in their lives, for the steel workers raised wages, eight times during the war.

Dreams During War. This, however, was only a minor result of the war. Consider what they were taught day after day during the struggle. It was not what was put into their heads that counted. They were told that this was a war for democracy, and that when it was over everything would be different and better. The war labor board at Washington laid down the broadest and most advanced charter of the rights of labor ever laid down in America. President Wilson said that after the war "there must be a genuine democratization of industry based upon a full recognition of the right of those who work, in whatever rank, to participate in some organic way in every decision which directly affects their welfare or the part they are to play in industry."

Never before were workmen in the steel towns so courted; so distinctly made to feel that they were a part, and really an essential part, of this great American movement. For a moment a kind of thrill of partnership, co-operation, reached even to the lowest labor groups. They all bought Liberty bonds or war stamps; they all subscribed to the Y. M. C. A. and Red Cross funds—almost to the lowest man. I have heard over and over again in these industrial towns of the extraordinary feeling aroused during the war. The echo of it reached Europe and was commented on there with a kind of envy as being something better than other nations could achieve. This, the workmen felt, was a taste of true Americanism.

For one glorious moment they were accepted as men working in a great common cause, side by side with the employers, all equally necessary. Hundreds of them, indeed, had actually gone into the army and fought in France. Some had lost their lives. The soldiers who returned to the mills had new and free ideas; in the first great parade of strikers at Gary some 300 of them marched in uniform at the head of the line.

Then Comes Disillusionment. A new era of democracy and good will seemed dawning in the world.

They were simple folk; they believed it, they felt it. We all felt it! Then the war stopped and the disillusionment began. Nothing was really changed; there was no more democracy than there had been before! They had seen a vision, dreamed a dream; they had awoken, it was snatched away. Not only that, but the steel companies, not needing to speed up as much as during the war, began to discharge many men, and the workmen heard rumors that wages were soon to be reduced so as to get the industry back to pre-war standards.

I am trying here to show just what happened, just what was the psychology of these masses of men. Well, they were back in the dull mills, working 12 hours a day—they had ceased to be men, and were again mere machines. A striker quoted me that bitter cry of the "I work, work, work without end, Why and for whom I know not, I care not, I ask not, I am a machine."

Consider, then, in all fairness what happened next. Some time before the war ended the American Federation of Labor had begun its campaign to organize the steel workers. It went slowly; it was uphill business—until the war ended. And then many disillusioned workers seized upon it as the one ray of hope. The employers had done nothing. There was no way of getting at them. One man at Gary told me that Judge Gary was "as distant as God."

Not a single man who has any real ownership or any control of things at Gary either lives at Gary or is known to workmen at Gary. Not one! They are not pleasant places to live in—the steel towns. Most of the workmen I asked did not even know who was the "head man" of the Illinois Steel company; and Judge Gary—of whom they have all heard—is 900 miles away in New York. To these men the steel corporation is a vast, impersonal, inhuman, unreachable machine.

Fertile Soil for Wild Ideas. So they listened eagerly to the labor organizers, for these men told them the same things they had heard during the war; exactly what President Wilson has told them: democracy, more freedom, more life.

But the moment they began to stir for themselves—organize—they at once found against them the old set policy of the steel corporation; its opposition to unionism; its opposition to any change in the conditions which, since they had had a taste of freedom, seemed doubly irritating. In Pennsylvania when they tried to hold meetings they were suppressed by the constabulary; their organizers were arrested, their papers were seized. In Gary homes were broken into and searched. They felt the old hopeless conditions closing in around them.

Some years ago I heard deaf and dumb Helen Keller describe how she tried to express herself and could not speak, could not even make motions that conveyed any idea, could do nothing for herself. She described the wild fits of rage she went into. She was suppressed, inhibited. Something of the same kind goes on among masses of men who are not allowed self-expression. A certain number become reckless, fall into rages; are willing to do anything to escape.

This is fertile soil for wild ideas; for quack remedies; for blind revolt. When conservative labor unionism is prevented the I. W. W. leader is there with a flaming doctrine that promises much and promises it quick; there are utopian ideas from Russia. When open meetings and frank discussion are suppressed, workmen begin to hold secret meetings, make extreme demands, plot violent remedies. The ideas they hold are usually of the vaguest and crudest. Chase them around with a few frank questions—as I have done many times—and you can ordinarily drive them into a corner and show them the want of logic, or reason, or even basis of fact to support their beliefs. But you rarely convince them for what they lack in light they make up in heat. How can they get light if all association and discussion is choked off? And how can anything else be expected when these groups of vigorous but ignorant young men are left crowded together in miserable places, worked to the limit of endurance, with no one paying any attention to them—body or soul—so long as they come to work every day.

Can Deport Men; Not Ideas. Here, then, we begin to get at the bottom fact about Gary; indeed, about our entire industrial life. It is the unrest, the unhealthy conditions, that cause the bolshevism; not the bolshevism that causes the unrest. Once the process starts, however, as a disease, for what easy work of a debilitated human body, the radical agitation increases the trouble—accelerates it.

If every radical alien were deported from Gary tomorrow the causes of unrest would still remain. I spent most of the year of 1918 studying in similar conditions in Europe; in every country I visited the same kind of unrest prevails—and no one attributes it either to aliens or outside agitators. One recalls, also, that exactly the same complaint was made by the slave owners in the south before the civil war, that the slaves were contented, and that all the trouble came from "outside agitators" and "revolutionaries"—John Brown, Garrison, Lovejoy, Lincoln. As for the deportation of agitators and the suppression of opinion, that policy was tried out upon a grand scale for many years by the old Russian government; Siberia was populated with deported radicals; read George Kennan's books. It did not stop revolution; probably stimulated its more violent forms. Look at Russia today.

"While we can deport men for being anarchists," said Senator Kenyon to the Lawyers' club in New York, "we cannot deport ideas." The first instinct of a man or a nation with a pain is to treat the symptoms, as we are doing now. Both sides are trying quack remedies; the employers a sure-cure bottle marked "Deportation—Suppression," and the workers a bottle with a red label, "Bolshevism." I don't know which is worse—which will sooner kill the pain. Why not do what any sensible man with a pain finally does—learn what the underlying trouble is—the real disease—and try to reach and cure that?

Automobile Notes From All Over the Motoring World

Gilbert U. Radey, director of advertising of the Haynes Automobile company of Kokomo, Ind., gives out the information that the Haynes company distributed to its men and women employees a \$40,000 Christmas present, each employee receiving a certain sum based upon his length of service and rate of salary.

Colliding with the grandstands and backing over the finish line, Andre won the Targa Florio, the first European prize race, in the Baby Peugeot in which he made such a formidable showing in the international 500-mile sweepstakes contest at Indianapolis, a few days ago.

Annual convention of the National Automobile Dealers' association will be held January 26-27 at the LaSalle hotel, Chicago, during the week of the National Automobile and Truck show.

Henry A. Kroh, southeastern district mechanical inspector for many years of the Cadillac Motor Car company, and later with the Lincoln Motor Car company, has resigned from the latter company to take charge of the new service station at the Cadillac agency in Charleston, S. C., as service manager.

It is said that negotiations have been virtually completed whereby Dodge Brothers will open a manufacturing plant in St. Thomas, Ont.

L. S. Skelton, new head of the Premier Motor corporation of Indianapolis, has laid out an interesting schedule of production. The plant will turn out 5,000 cars in 1920.

There will be 434 exhibitors at New York's National Automobile show. This includes both the passenger car and motor truck exhibitors. There will be 83 makers of passenger cars and 67 makers of trucks and 284 exhibitors of accessories.

E. A. Bates has become manager of the Boxy Carburetor and Manufacturing company, Chicago. He was with the Bencke & Kraft Manufacturing company.

Cleveland will hold its annual automobile show January 17 to 24, inclusive, at Wagoner Coliseum, which has 100,000 square feet of floor space with the addition which has been made.

Boston's automobile show dates are March 19-20. Passengers cars, trucks and accessories will again be displayed.

Statistics have it that there are 5,000,000 farmers of which number it is claimed that 2,500,000 are truck prospects. Should 250,000 farmers buy in 1920 it would mean a sale from this source of about 1,250 motor trucks for each manufacturer in the field. Motor truck makers believe that the sale will exceed the figure named.

National Highway Traffic association will hold its convention in Chicago during the national automobile and Motor Truck show. The convention will open January 29.

Double the space used last year has been allotted to tractors for the Twin City Automobile, Truck, Tractor and Industrial exposition, which will be held in the Overland building, St. Paul, the week of January 31 to February 7. Last year the tractor exhibit occupied 24,000 square feet, and this year will cover 50,000 square feet.

The Lincoln highway from Pittsburgh to Philadelphia is to be kept open all winter. The state of Pennsylvania will keep this important trucking route open and entirely clear of snow. The cost to the state will be \$250,000.

Frank A. Steele has been named assistant superintendent of production for the Los Angeles plant of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber company.

Reports received at headquarters of the Lincoln highway indicate that the highway is now closed for travel from Cheyenne, Wyo., to the coast. Tourists are advised by the association to seek more southerly routes.

Inquiries for complete information and copies of the rules with entry blanks of the First National Motor Truck Reliability contest to start in Omaha next June for The Omaha Bee and other trophies, have been received from many of the leading makers of motor trucks at the headquarters office of the tour in The Bee building, Omaha, S. P. La Due, resident manager of the tour, with Charles P. Root, general manager, and E. Ed Spooner, promotional manager, will be at both national motor truck shows to impart information.

Daily payroll of the Goodyear Tire and Rubber company has reached \$110,000 or over \$33,000,000 a year. A big increase in the payroll for 1920 is predicted by company officials. The average wage now to each man, woman and boy is \$5.50, standing in belief that the payroll for 1920 will be \$50,000,000 with the natural growth of the business expected.

Arthur I. Phillips, general sales manager of Dodge Brothers, who overtaxed his strength to a point of nervous exhaustion requiring complete rest, is showing marked improvement. He is on the high road to recovery after curative measures extending over a considerable period. His recovery is reported to be but a matter of time and advertising.

V. W. Peterson, former advertising manager of the Stewart-Warner Speedometer Corporation, has formed the perfection company to manufacture curtain windows. Mr. Peterson was with the William R. Johnston Manufacturing company, Chicago, manufacturer of curtain windows, for a long time.

Western Motor Car Co. Building Soon to Open

The new building of the Western Motor Car company, Thirty-first and Farnam, will soon be opened to the public. Several departments, including the paint shop and repair department, are now operated on a full 24-hour basis. These departments, as well as the other mechanical departments, will give continuous service. The doors will never be locked.

Guide Battles for Life With Trapped Wildcat

Bridgewater, N. H., Jan. 10.—Battling for his life with a 45-pound wildcat that nearly tore free of a steel trap in which it was caught was a thrilling experience of Wilfred S. Morrill, a 17-year-old guide. Morrill set a trap near one of the springs that feed the brook. The location was behind an old stump. The next day Morrill went to visit the scene. The big cat was caught by one hind leg.

"With the craftiness for which the 'big cats' are noted, the cat crouched behind the stump as Morrill approached the trap. As the youthful guide bent over the stump to look at the trap the wildcat leaped at him snarling and scratching and dragging the trap with it. Morrill was carrying a small rifle

Four-Year-Old Hero Dies After Rescue of Infant

Jefferson City, Mo., Jan. 10.—Little 4-year-old Jack Wheeler, who made himself a hero recently when he jumped into a creek and rescued his 19-month-old baby brother from drowning, succumbed to scarlet fever following a two weeks' illness and was buried here the other day.

Name Too Much Like Bolshevik, Changes It

Springfield, Ill., Jan. 10.—Because his friends stuttered when they pronounced his name John Woloshevich has asked the Sangamon county circuit court for permission to change it to Wallace. He said everybody called it "Bolshevik." Woloshevich vituperatively declared he has nothing in common with the Lenin-Trotsky gang of Russia and does not want to be circumstantiated with them every time acquaintances gargled Woloshevich.

Killed by Falling Tree

Emporia, Kan., Jan. 10.—William Davis, 45, a farm hand, met with a peculiar and fatal accident near here recently. Davis was sawing through the trunk of a tree when the saw rebounded, struck him in the face and stunned him. A moment later the tree fell, killing Davis instantly.



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