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The Week

AS we go to press there seems reason for believing that the demands of the coal-miners for a wage more in keeping with the cost of living may be satisfied, in part measure at least, without a long and exhaustive struggle as preliminary. Both operators and miners say they are ready to reopen negotiations—though only the readiness of the miners is hailed by the press as a confession of “weakness.” The one most discouraging factor in the situation is the Attorney-General’s statement, in a telegram to one of the miner’s locals, that the government “has not taken sides either for or against the mine owners or the mine workers.” That is true only as a legal quibble. The injunction did nothing to the mine owners—and attempted to take away from the workers what had proved to be their one instrument of getting a hearing. The administration, taking its cue from Mr. Wilson’s first statement, has technically and officially ignored “the merits” in the case. It is the prerequisite of an early settlement and a fair one that it cease to ignore them.

ELECTION day brought an unexpectedly large Socialist vote in New York, and the defeat of Tammany; but chief interest throughout the country doubtless centered in the contest for the Governorship of Massachusetts. There

ex-Governor Coolidge has won an easy victory over Mr. Long—in a contest of which many newspapers declared “Americanism” to be the issue. Among Mr. Long’s supporters, declares a correspondent of the New York Times, were “all the Bolsheviki, the Soviet, the I. W. W. . . . the striking policemen and all their disorderly followers, the Huns, the Finns, the Scandinavians, and the Greeks who are followers of Venizelos.” Mr. Long was nevertheless the loser. But it is hard to believe that his defeat is a clear triumph for law and order—and not a triumph of one man’s interpretation of law and order as against another’s. The issue of the election, as we understand it, was not support of the police strike, but reinstatement of those strikers whose grievances were confessed to be legitimate when members of the new police force were granted terms which members of the old force had demanded. On this score the Times’ correspondent (one among many) declared Mr. Long’s “Sovietism” to be “as frank and open as that of Lenine and Trotzky.”

IT is a duty of those who warn labor against “direct action” to justify their faith that the orderly process of law will work to give each plaintiff a fair hearing. In the performance of this duty the state and many of the municipal authorities of Pennsylvania have failed miserably. Case upon case of plain suppression of the rights of free speech and assembly have been established by affidavit. Often there is an unfortunate link in sympathy between municipal authorities and the steel companies. In Bethlehem, for instance, where meetings have been prohibited—and even picketing forbidden—the mayor is also vice-president of the Bethlehem Steel Company. For fair treatment in Bethlehem, and in other cities of the steel valley, the trade union leaders have appealed successively—and in vain—to municipal authorities, to the Government, and to the Congress of the United States.

IN these circumstances the trade unionists of Pennsylvania have again sent a message to the Governor of the State and to the Attorney-General in Washington. They ask that by the most constitutional of methods—by the convocation of a special session of the state legislature—their grievances be investigated and their “lawful, reasonable and constitutional demands” complied with. Failing to win this redress they can only assume, states their message, that legal protection will continue to be denied them; they accordingly instruct their executive council “to issue a call

for a state-wide strike when, in its judgment, it is necessary to compel respect for law and the restoration of liberty as guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and of the State of Pennsylvania."

DESPITE the collapse of the first Industrial Conference it has been determined that there shall be a second one. The Cabinet has recommended that no more than fifteen members be appointed—and the newspapers announce that all who are chosen will be "truly representative of the public." In the search for an industrial peace, conferences seem to have first call over Congress. One might imagine that if any body of men were "truly representative of the public" it would be that body elected as representatives by popular ballot. But no one counts on Congress. It lacks the representation of those different economic interests which an Industrial Conference can call together. Congress draws its membership from two useless parties, split, for the most part, on unreal issues; and at a time when more genuine differences need representation it is almost forgotten.

LABOR, as well as the public, is to have a new Conference. Mr. Gompers has summoned the executives of the national and international unions, and invited representatives of the farmers to join the council. Obvious difficulties stand in the way of co-operation between farmers and trade unionists. If only the stoutly conservative organizations such as the Farmers National Congress attend the session (this Congress went on record last week as opposed to "all strikes") the proposed partnership will not get very far. But other organizations, such as the Non-partisan League and some of the co-operatives, are working toward a system of food distribution that will benefit the consumer as well as the farmer. With such aims the trade unionists must sooner or later align their movement, if they wish to serve a genuine public interest.

AMERICANS cannot read with much satisfaction the reports which have been submitted as a working basis for the International Labor Conference in Washington. Sixteen countries are listed as having eight-hour laws which apply to most industrial establishments. From that list we are missing. Twenty-one nations make special regulation for the employment of mothers before and after childbirth. From this list we are also missing. Finally, nearly every industrial country forbids the employment in factories of children under fourteen. Here again we are missing—this time along with Rumania, India and Spain. Statesmen who want to Americanize, and who have not got beyond the stage of negative decision, could study these different reports with profit.

THREE months ago the federal Administration set out to reduce the cost of living. Its efforts, say headlines in many of the papers, are now beginning to show results. The retail cost of twenty-two staple foods is estimated by the Bureau of Labor Statistics to have gone down two per cent in September as compared with August. To be

sure, the cost of nineteen other staple foods went *up*. And in the latter class are included those three essential products: milk, butter and eggs. Still, cabbages went down 8 per cent, and onions 17. If you can forget that flour is still 121 per cent above pre-war levels, and potatoes 126, it is easy to be convinced that when a labor union asks for wages enough to buy flour and potatoes it is aiming at something entirely too high.

THE Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce has declined to reopen hearings on its railway bill, and is proceeding with a measure that may bring two controversies to a head. One will be the result of anti-strike provisions carried in the bill; the other, less immediate, will center upon methods of valuation—for the Committee proposes to base freight and passenger rates on the value of railway property. In the House of Representatives a different sort of measure is being framed. It contains no anti-strike clause, and no provision to guarantee the roads a fixed income. Framers of this latter bill do not suggest how some of the less solvent roads are to be kept going. Neither branch of Congress has yet fully measured the three factors essential to a solution of railway problems: income, unification and a satisfied staff of employees.

CABLE dispatches from Helsingfors had General Yudenitch inside the walls of Petrograd on four different occasions; but it appears, now, that the attacking army is farther away than it was two weeks ago. Capture of Petrograd might have had a moral value for the anti-Bolshevik forces; but it was in the South that the real offensive was under way. Orel is a railway center, two hundred and forty miles from Moscow, the point of a salient in Denikin's line. Three times, in a little more than a week, the city has changed hands. What handicaps Denikin most is apparently an inability to hold the land over which he marches. There are revolts behind his line, and on one flank the Ukrainians, charging Denikin with atrocities, have turned against him.

DENIKIN, however, has no more trouble behind his line than Kolchak has in Siberia. All along it has been difficult for Kolchak to deal with various chieftains who chose to rule their own districts in their own manner. Recently there has been added a new difficulty for the Supreme Ruler. Ivan Yakusheff, deposed President of that first Siberian Duma which Kolchak dispersed in the interests of democracy, has called for the overthrow of the Kolchak government and the convocation of a new assembly. His proclamation declares that "as a result of Admiral Kolchak's dictatorship not a trace is left of the enthusiasm with which the population welcomed the fall of Soviet power in Siberia."

BOTH Kolchak and Denikin are apparently to be cut off from the source of their most substantial support. This support has been coming from the British Exchequer rather than from the Russian people. A government statement

in Parliament now announces that Great Britain is no longer supplying funds or supplies to Kolchak and does not contemplate supplying Denikin indefinitely. "We are approaching the end of our entanglements in Russia," declares Mr. Winston Churchill. An end to those entanglements is long overdue. The British government has gambled away perhaps a billion dollars in its Russian adventures, and a great many lives—principally Russian lives. Because the country's finances will stand no more gambling, the government is now about to pull out of Russia—relying only upon the blockade and native anti-Bolshevik enthusiasm.

AMERICA'S part in the Russian blockade is to be a cautious one. Lloyd George once informed the Council of Ten that the systematic starving of Russia was a policy to be considered by "no humane people." Mr. George has got away from that theory; but it seems still to trouble our own delegates in Paris. They are determined that the United States shall not participate actively in the blockade. We simply shall not object to what our Allies do, and we shall help a bit by agreeing not to grant clearance papers to ships sailing for Soviet Russia. Thus we preserve a certain virtue without sacrificing our effectiveness. Whether Germany can be brought into line without the use of force seems now to be uncertain. One of the first pronouncements of the young League of Nations may have to be the threat to starve Germany until she is at length willing to starve Russia.

IT could have been no great surprise to Captain d'Annunzio that he won the elections in Fiume. His precautions were painstaking. First he provided that there should be but one ticket (his own). Then he ruled that on this ticket no one but annexationists should appear. And finally he closed the bridge between Fiume and Sussak to keep the Yugoslavs from coming to the polls. These measures were entirely successful. The resultant victory, however, does not seem to be saving d'Annunzio from a growing hostility within his own camp. Frequent riots are reported in Fiume, and a good part of the business interests are going over to the moderates, led by Professor Zanella, now that they have discovered it is they who must pay the bill for d'Annunzio's visit.

IT would have been setting a low value on the moral power of the waning Peace Conference to have guessed, when the Rumanian army first marched into Budapest, that there it would be, thirteen weeks later, despite threats, pleas, bribes and commands. Rumanian occupation has exhibited every phase of terror and banditry. The stage of intelligent looting is long past. What remains is little more than savagery. Property is destroyed (telephone exchanges, for instance) apparently when the only gain is joy of deliberate destruction. Lines of bewildered Hungarian workmen are marched off into slavery. If the diplomats in Paris hope for the formation of a decent government under these conditions, or for honest elections, they will be mistaken. What can the signing of a "peace treaty" do for Hungary today?

RUMANIA'S defiance of the Peace Conference has not been limited to her occupation of Budapest. She now announces the annexation of Bessarabia. Since the armistice Rumanian troops have occupied this province, and Rumania has worked hard to get it allotted to her. Delegates of the Bessarabian people have protested. They have objected to Rumanian tyranny and demanded independence. The Peace Conference favored a plebiscite. But that solution was too risky to have any charm for the Rumanians. There was a shorter road—and they took it. After all, why not? The Peace Conference had let them hold on in Budapest for thirteen months.

IT is hard to tell at just what point the Allied Supreme Command began to disapprove of the presence of von der Goltz and a German army in the Baltic provinces. Von der Goltz did not invade the provinces. The armistice terms required his army to stay there—and until recently that army was practically under the orders of Marshal Foch, the left wing of the famous anti-Bolshevik "cordon sanitaire." So long as von der Goltz remained passive there was no objection to his occupation of the provinces. But when he began an offensive he confronted the Supreme Command with a dilemma. Either the anti-Bolshevik Russians would accept von der Goltz as their leader; or he must be stopped—and stopping him might permit the diversion of additional Soviet troops to the southern battle-line.

Americanism in the Present Crisis

THE American nation confronts one of the most serious crises in its history. The industrial wage-earners upon whom it depends for the manning of its machinery of production are actively and profoundly discontented. They are making demands upon their employers for considerable increases of wages, for an eight hour day or less, for improved working conditions and for the recognition of their unions. There is nothing unprecedented or subversive about such demands. What is unprecedented in American labor controversies and what many employers consider to be subversive is the impatient and insistent spirit in which they are presented and enforced, the flood of prolonged, often unauthorized and frequently embittered strikes, the checking of production at a time when the welfare of society sorely needs a larger volume of commodities and the increasing interest of the wage-earners in programs of radical reconstruction. For these reasons the aggressive unrest of labor has provoked an even more aggressive and irreconcilable attitude on the part of its class opponents. There is a general disposition among the employers, the politicians and the press to treat the labor unrest as a culpable and sinister rebellion—as an autocratic anti-social demonstration of power which the Amer-