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A Labor Day Message

THIS Labor Day the workers have many gains to chalk up on the positive side of the ledger. A progressive spirit runs high in the labor movement. Millions of workers are taking steps to ensure their economic and political emancipation from the rule of the economic feudalists of capitalism. Great organizing drives are taking place in the mass production industries.

But there are ominous clouds on the economic and political horizon. In this Presidential year labor has the problem of how to organize the unorganized workers in the big open-shop industries. It must meet the danger of growing political reaction.

The answer is a unified powerful labor movement. This is the first essential, if American working men are to protect and raise their living standards, if they are to beat back and destroy the Hearst-Liberty League menace to their civil liberties and democratic rights. Without a strong and unified labor movement, reaction cannot be defeated. We have learned this lesson from other countries: in Germany a disunited labor movement brought the victory of fascism; in France a unified labor movement has been able to beat back the fascists.

That is why Wall Street directs its hardest blows against labor's efforts to organize the unorganized. A successful organization drive in steel, in rubber, in auto, in all the industries where the monarchs of monopoly keep the workers in economic serfdom, would mean higher wages, a shorter working week, a higher standard of living for everybody. The Liberty League and its spokesman, Hearst, seek to paint labor as the enemy of the middle class and the farmers. At the same time, they tell the workers that the farmers and middle class people

wax fat at their expense. This is their scheme to divide and rule. It is the Liberty League, Hearst, Wall Street and their little man, Landon, who are the enemies alike of labor, of the farmers, and of middle class people. It is they who have grown rich by foreclosing on our homes, by throwing us out of jobs. Wall Street gives the farmer three cents a quart for milk, while it gets fourteen cents a quart in the city. Wall Street pays the farmer two cents a pound for wheat and charges the housewife twelve cents a pound for a loaf of bread. It is Wall Street which loads taxes on the middle class, while the millionaires cheat the government and pay nothing on the millions which they have taken from the poor.

It is to the interests of everyone except the rich that labor be strong and unified. A strong working class, a powerful united labor movement—this is a necessity for democracy, for progress and for higher standards of living. In turn this means better living standards and more security for the farmer, and the middle class people. Together the 95 per cent of our people, who toil while Wall Street lives off our backs, can defeat the fascist plans of the reactionaries, can maintain and extend the traditional rights of our country. Together we can really build a free, happy and prosperous America, instead of an America in which Hearst is bloated with wealth while babies die of starvation.

It is the duty of every progressive person in this country to support those trade unionists who are valiantly battling the steel trust, the auto trust, the rubber trust. Our progressive people have always hated and fought the trusts since first they established their stranglehold on our country. Today, it is the duty of all of us to help labor haul down the black flag of Wall Street piracy which flies over our basic industries.

The heart of the progressive fight against reaction today lies in the right of labor to organize without interference from employers. One cannot speak of democratic rights when workers are coerced and murdered by company thugs, when the trusts are permitted to rule their company towns with spies, blacklist, gun and blackjack.

It is against the dictatorial rule of the corporations that labor is fighting. Labor seeks a living wage, and the restoration of those traditional American liberties which have been nullified by the trusts. The fight of labor is the fight of everyone who strives for a decent and happy life. The victory of labor is a victory for progress. A defeat for labor means opening the doors wide to the hell of fascism, to the rule of Lucifer Hearst.

The Communist Party stands squarely for the right of labor to organize and strike. We stand for federal legislation which will establish labor's full right to collective bargaining, which will outlaw the company unions, the spy and stool pigeon systems, and all other coercion by employers. Employers guilty of discharging workers for union or political activities should be punished with heavy penalties up to imprisonment. Wretched working conditions must be abolished throughout industry. Every working man and woman must be guaranteed a minimum annual wage by law. We must establish a thirty-hour week without reduction in earnings at trade union rates and conditions, in private industry and on public works. In this way we can achieve a real American standard of living in line with the great productive capacities of our country. A real charter of liberty for labor should be written into the law of the land. So long as labor is denied its rights, so long will there be no real democracy in the United States.

Every working man and every progressive must, therefore, test the Presidential candidates and their programs by their attitude to union labor. About Landon there can be no doubt in the mind of any thinking person. He stands on the platform of the Republican Party whose labor clause was written by the open-shopper T. E. Weir of the Iron and Steel Institute and other such "friends" of the working men. We all know that the notorious declaration of war by the Iron and Steel Institute against the American people contained precisely the same anti-labor clause as the plank of the Republican platform which would outlaw genuine trade unions. Landon is the candidate of those who seek to perpetuate the

sweatshop, the candidate of those who would destroy the trade unions. Only a reactionary, or a radical of the type who rushes in where angels fear to tread, could write letters to Mr. Landon which help whitewash his Wall Street anti-labor policy. Landon's stand on labor is best shown by his record in Kansas. He sent troops to break the strike of the miners of Treece County. Five thousand of these miners and their families are affected by silicosis. Four hundred of their children have died from the dread disease during the Landon administration. Another fifteen hundred children are dying. The mine inspector, appointed by Landon, has not lifted a finger to enforce the state laws for safeguards against silicosis.

President Roosevelt's attitude to labor is indecisive. The Democratic platform maintains that workers should have the right to organize without interference from the employers. But labor has learned by experience that it cannot depend upon Roosevelt. He hesitates and yields to pressure; he yields to pressure from the reactionaries as well as labor. This was seen in every major struggle of labor during the Roosevelt administration. The only way to make Roosevelt move even a little more in the direction of labor is through the independent activity of labor on the economic field combined with independent action of all progressives in a Farmer-Labor Party on the political field. This is the only guarantee for a higher standard of living, for effective checks against reactions.

Let us all on this Labor Day pledge ourselves to build a fighting labor movement which will make human rights supreme over property rights. Let us pledge on this Labor Day once and for all to strike the shackles of economic serfdom from the unorganized workers of this country. Through organizing the unorganized workers, we lay the basis upon which labor, united with the farmers and the middle class, can build a Farmer-Labor Party, that political instrument of the people which alone can defeat the plans of the reactionaries.

Labor Day this year has been darkened by the unlawful suspension of the unions comprising the Committee for Industrial Organization by the reactionary members of the Execu-

tive Council of the American Federation of Labor. This is a stab in the back against labor and the progressive movement generally. This illegal action can only serve the interests of Wall Street and labor's enemy No. 1—William Randolph Hearst.

This illegal action by the Executive Council is a colossal crime against the true interests, the further growth, and the all-embracing unity of the American working class. It is illegal because the constitution of the A. F. of L. specifically forbids the Executive Council to suspend or expel an international union unless granted authority by a two-thirds vote of a national convention.

Mr. William Green and Mr. William L. Hutcheson dare to prate about democracy as the issue. What kind of democracy is it when they illegally suspend unions with a membership of over 1,000,000? As head of the Carpenters' Union, Mr. Hutcheson has prevented that union from holding a convention for eight years. At this moment he denies voting rights to 100,000 lumber worker members, and yet he dares to raise the false issue of democracy. The members of the craft unions have expressed in innumerable resolutions and in meetings that they are against the splitting action of the Executive Council which serves the interests of Wall Street, of Landon who broke Kansas strikes with state troops, of Hearst that arch enemy of labor.

Is it any accident that it was William L. Hutcheson, the chairman of the so-called labor committee to support the Hearst-Landon candidacy, who introduced the motion to suspend the C.I.O. unions? This reactionary who is openly campaigning for Landon, who supports the open-shop labor clause of the Republican Party, who stifled democracy within his own union—it was this Liberty League agent within the ranks of labor who was instrumental in suspending the C.I.O. unions.

The destructive action of the Executive Council is applauded by the reactionaries. They call it the zero hour; they would make it the zero hour for a frontal assault of all reactionary forces against the labor movement. We must unite

every central labor council and state federation to refuse to carry out this split. We must not permit Wall Street to take advantage of the treacherous action of the Executive Council. The answer of all labor and of all friends of labor to suspension order must be a ringing cry for *unity* which will defeat all those who seek to weaken or destroy the labor movement. With unity, labor will conquer.

Every vote for the Communist Party strengthens the organization of the unorganized workers, the building of the Farmer-Labor Party, the gathering of all labor and progressive forces, young and old, white and Negro, men and women, in a People's Front against reaction, fascism and war.

Broadcast over a coast-to-coast network of the National Broadcasting Company, September 7, 1936.