

Shortage of Steel Labor Is Gary Fake

This week we annihilate the frantic plea of Judge Elbert H. Gary and his fellow steel bandits that they must continue the 12-Hour Day because of the shortage of labor. It is shown that this Gary-manufactured fake is merely a brazen lie, seeking to draw attention away from the brutalizing two-shift, 12-Hour Day system in the steel industry. Here are the facts:

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By JAY LOVESTONE.

Author "The Government—Strike-breaker"

With blaring bands the Barons of the Satrapy of Steel have advertised the so-called "labor shortage" far and wide to thwart the growing opposition to the 12-Hour Hell Shift System.

Said the May 25, 1923, Report of Gary's American Iron and Steel Institute:

"But it would be impossible, under existing conditions, to obtain a sufficient number of men to operate the plants on a three-shift basis up to a capacity which would supply the present necessities of the purchasing public. There are not now, under a two-shift practice at the furnaces, enough men to meet the demand for iron and steel."

Here we have the fraudulent game of the Steel Trust in a nutshell. When there is depression, there is a shortage of money, and the poor Steel magnates can't afford to pay for the 8-Hour Day. When there is prosperity, big profits, then there is a shortage of labor, and the 8-Hour Day is again impossible.

The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Likewise, the proof that the Steel Trust is waging a campaign of lies and misrepresentation to perpetuate the 12-Hour Day is found in its words and deeds. In 1912 the stockholders of the U. S. Steel Corporation indorsed, in principle, the abolition of the 12-Hour Day. Since then, the Lords of Steel have swung from one excuse to another to stop the movement for the 8-Hour Day.

But what are the facts? Is there today a great labor-shortage to war-

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"We Want the 8-Hour Day!" Steel Slaves Write on Walls in Chalk at Girard, Ohio, Gary Plant

Editor, "THE WORKER":—You ask me for a letter on the 12-Hour Day. I do not work for the U. S. Steel Trust, altho two of their large plants are close to this town. Some few months ago I worked for them for about six weeks in their McDonald Plant, which is a merchant steel bar mill. They fired me as soon as their intelligence bureau found out who I was. THE PLANT AT McDONALD IS SEETHING WITH DISCONTENT AGAINST THE 12-HOUR DAY. AND ALL OVER THE PLANT THE SLAVES HAVE WRITTEN IN CHALK—"WE WANT THE EIGHT-HOUR DAY!"—W. J., Girard, Ohio.

Fake Plea of "Labor Shortage" Is Only Brazen Lie to Hide Brutal, Dehumanizing Two-Shift System in Gary's Steel Industry

(Continued from Page One)

ant the contention of the Steel Committee? Does the history of the steel Trust afford even a single instance of the slightest effort at the abolition of the 12-Hour Day? Why the so-called labor-shortage a particularly aggravated problem to the steel Corporation? Finally, would the extent of the need for an increased number of workers be great enough to warrant the Steel Committee's contention that the new workers cannot be found?

Analyzing So-called Labor Shortage
The existence of a great number of unemployed, constituting an industrial reserve army, is an inherent feature of the capitalist system of production and exchange.

Even in the best times, in the heydays of prosperity, there are hundreds of thousands of men able and anxious to work but unable to do so, because the owners of the mills and mines and factories will not give them a chance to. Today, with the great Depression of 1921 over, the army of the unemployed is far smaller than the six millions out of work eighteen months ago. The exact number of unemployed today has not been ascertained by any Government Bureau. Perhaps there are, today, even less workers out of jobs than in the average days of ordinary capitalist normalcy. That is why the employers are howling so much about a labor-shortage. The big bosses today do not have a sufficient big reserve army to enable them to lower or to keep stagnant the living and working standards as much as they would like to.

For instance, the last Annual Report of the Secretary of Labor, Davis, showed that in 240 cities of a combined population of 35,430,910 there were 2,301,588 unemployed wage earners. Mr. Davis admitted that his estimate of the number of unemployed was very incomplete and that the number out of work in the whole country was much greater. Since then, at least 250,000 were added to the total number of employable workers thru immigration. Thus even the most sanguine capitalist optimist cannot reasonably pretend that all of the million workers, still unemployed on June 30, 1922, have been absorbed in the recent industrial revival.

The huge standing industrial reserve army has not been reduced as much as the employing class would have us believe. An analysis of the figures presented by the Illinois Department of Labor in its Employment Bulletin of April, 1923, shows that on the average, for the period January-April, 1923, inclusive, there were 104,477 persons registered as applicants for every hundred jobs open in common labor. Furthermore, the New York State Industrial Commissioner, in his Report, ending May, 1923, showed that factory employment is only 15 per cent higher than was a year ago.

Besides, whatever "labor-shortage" there may have existed for a few months, is now steadily disappearing. The same New York Report, speaking of the extent of employment, points out that "decreases were reported in nearly two-thirds of the manufacturing industries of the State, most of the increases were very

Congratulations from Troy, N. Y.

I am enclosing \$2 to help spread "THE WORKER" in its campaign against the 12-Hour Day. We are conducting an organization campaign of our own here. We have 15,000 shirt and collar workers here and the Troy Local of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers is firmly established and is conducting this campaign. I feel confident that I am expressing the opinion of the organized shirt and collar workers of Troy, if I congratulate you on your noble fight against Judge Gary. I hope that these \$2 will help you to send a few more copies of "THE WORKER" into the Gary stronghold. I wish you every success in your revolutionary work.—S. G., Troy, N. Y.

slight, or were due to seasonal influences.

Commenting on this Report the New York Times of June 15, 1923, said: "Unless the signs of the times are misleading, the industries of the country as a whole will not long be suffering from a labor-shortage." It is especially enlightening to note that, according to a report of June 2d on the steel industry in the Pittsburgh District, the only important existing shortage of help is manifested in the need of skilled hands, engaged in the cutting and threading departments of the pipe and wire lines. A New York Times Pittsburgh dispatch, discussing this condition, said on June 3, 1923: "In most cases there is ample supply of help."

Further proof of the fact that the size of the Unemployed army is again on the climb is given in the following from the recent reply of Gomper to Gary. "Only the other day 20,000 men applied for work on the steamer Leviathan, when only 1,100 were needed. A few days ago 2,000 men and women stood in line, some of them all night, at the District Building, Washington, D. C., to make application—in answer to a notice that a few laborers and charwomen were needed."

Shameful Record of Steel Trust

But ice will sooner catch fire than the Steel Barons will voluntarily grant the 8-Hour Day. The whole history of the exploits of Gary and his henchmen dismisses even the faintest hope of the most hopeful. In their statement of June 6, 1923, the Federal Council of Churches, and the Central Conference of American Rabbis declared:

"The plea that a shortage of labor make impracticable the change from two to three shifts of workingmen, affords but a meagre defense. The shortage of labor was not the reason for the failure to abolish the long day two years ago when the public waited expectantly for such a step on the part of the U. S. Steel Corporation. At that time there was appalling unemployment which could have been in large measure relieved in steel manufacturing districts by introducing the three-shift system in the steel industry."

For the sake of argument let us, for a moment, accept the statement of the American Iron and Steel Institute that the introduction of the 8-Hour Day would entail the employment of an additional 60,000 men. Here the Steel Corporation must answer this question: Why did it resist with assault and battery the demands of the thousands of steel workers for an 8-Hour Day during the Great Strike of 1919 when it could easily have had an additional working force of three times that number? And why was Golden Rule Gary silent about the 8-Hour Day a little over a year ago when 6,000,000 work-

ers were walking the streets out of work and out of hope?

However, when there was a terrific overflow in the labor market Gary did not stop at silence. In the period of 1920-1921 when the Steel Trust could, without any difficulty whatsoever, have introduced the 8-Hour Day, it discharged 67,000 men, and continued the ten, twelve, and fourteen hour shifts. In 1920 the average number employed by the U. S. Steel Corporation was 200,991. In 1921 the average was 133,663.

Indeed, all this bombast about a labor-shortage making the introduction of the 8-Hour Day impossible would really be just so much comics and buffoonery were this condition not so tragic for the workers. This situation is well summed up in the following statement of the Interchurch World Movement Report:

"For example, W. B. Dickson, Chairman and Vice-President of the Cambria-Midvale and former director of the U. S. Steel Corporation, in an address in 1919 to a scientific body, spoke of the spectacle Mr. Gary as Chairman of a Committee to relieve the unemployment (in 1916 in New York), when the large proportion of his men were working twelve hours a day, and are still doing so."

Degrading Conditions Drive Workers Away from the Steel Mills

Yet, why is the steel industry the first and the worst to feel the pinch of a so-called labor-shortage? The answer to this question is just this: The terribly long working hours and low pay drive the workers away. An examination of the prevailing conditions in the manufacture of steel gives overwhelming proof of this.

Testifying before the Senate Committee, in 1919, the Steel magnates admitted that one of the reasons why their industry faced a labor-shortage was, "because you can't get Americans to work the 12-Hour Day."

Then the wages. The starvation wages paid by the Steel Trust drives the workers away even further from the mills. Comparing steel wages with those prevailing for common labor in other industries, the New York Journal of Commerce said: "Even ditch diggers of the railways are receiving 41 cents per hour." The average wage paid today to common labor is 35 cents an hour—or 15 cents per hour more than that paid to the steel worker. And yet Gary and his crew who are used to millions of dollars in dividends are condemning the workers for refusing to run after a forty-cent-an-hour job in the infernal steel mills.

According to the April, 1923, Employment Bulletin of the Illinois Department of Labor the average weekly wage in the iron and steel industry during April was \$27.61. A magnificent sum for a family to live on! Nor should anyone be stunned with terrific amazement at the menial height to which the steel wage has climbed! This average wage includes the salaries paid skilled and responsible men as well as leaders and common labor.

The Eight-Hour Day Plants Have Plenty of Workers

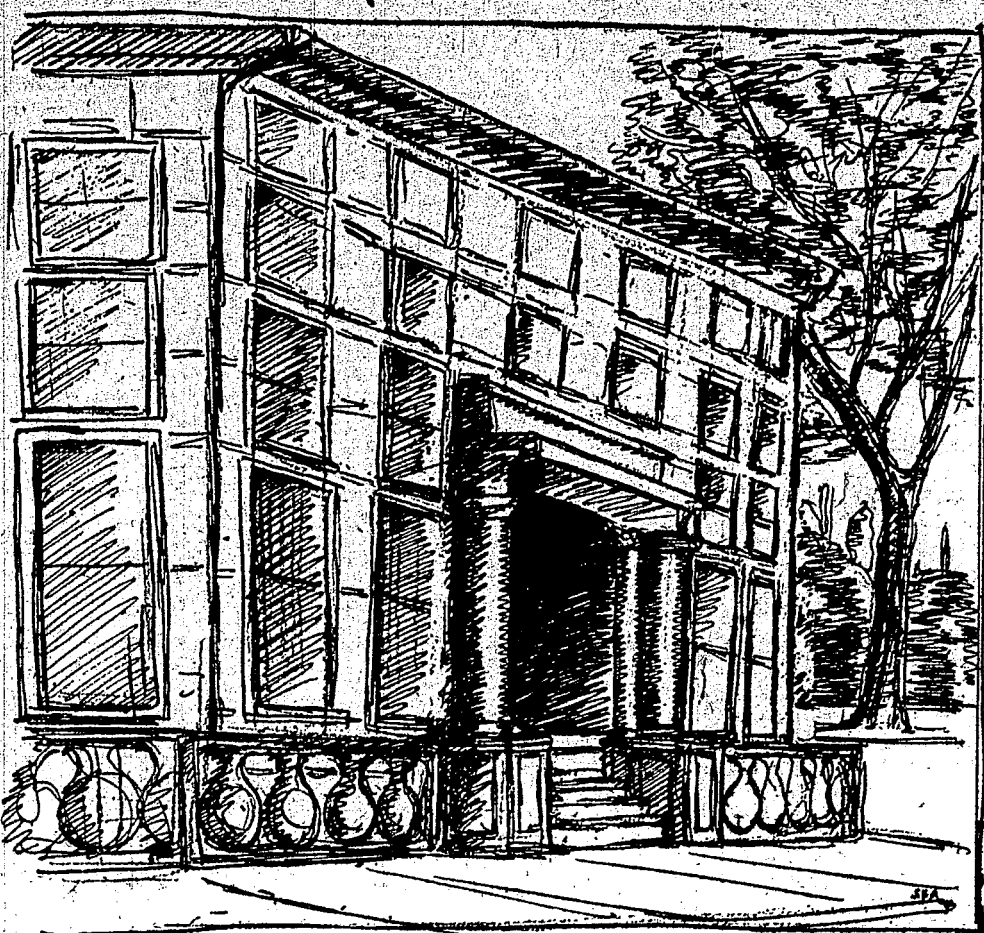
Again, not even Gary and his Committee, so highly gifted with inventive genius, can find a shred of evidence to disprove the fact that not a single steel plant working on a three-shift plan is experiencing the least bit of labor-shortage. We need but cite the experiences of the Republic Iron and Steel Co., the International Harvester Co., the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Co., and the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co.

From a letter sent by J. F. Welborn, President of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Co., to the Federal Council of Churches we learn that: "A factor of added interest is the fact that with almost capacity operations at our steel plants during the last few months and employing over 60,000 men, we have experienced no shortage of labor. Our operating officials have frequently expressed the belief that this condition is due, in large part at least, to adoption of the eight-hour shift."

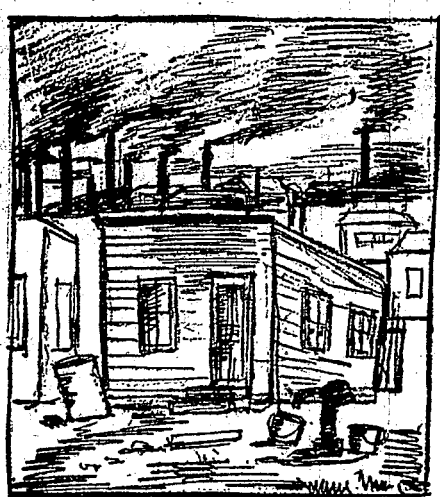
Also, in a statement issued by the American Association for Labor Legislation on June 15, 1923, we find that:

"According to the report from Youngstown, the steel companies have been able to secure the additional men needed for the 3-shift plan." It is a fact and an incontrovertible

Gary's Fifth Ave., N. Y., Mansion and the Steel Workers' Shack



To the left is a sketch of one of Elbert H. Gary's many mansions. It is located at 856 Fifth Ave., New York City. He has others elsewhere. Note the trees. There are no trees, no grass around the steel workers' shack below. Only the smoke stacks of the steel mills can be seen in the background. The 12-Hour Day helps build beautiful homes for Mr. Gary. Evidently, the steel profiteer feels that the steel workers have so little time to spend at home, that they do not need a place of any consequence in which to live. What do the steel workers think about it? They are showing what they think thru the response to the anti-12-Hour Day Campaign being waged by "The Worker," that is a step toward ending the social system that builds mansions for the rich and hovels for the poor.



To Judge Elbert Gary

By ELLA G. WOLFE

You are sleek and elegant and strong,
And we have made you so;
Your strength you've used against us
For many years, too long.
Now you are righteous and detest the wrong,
Detest the rising disillusioned mass,
Detest our aims, our thoughts, our lives.
For our toil and weary years of hope
You give contempt and scorn and prison walls.
Our work for you is done!
New visions rise—new battle we shall make,
And all this weary wretched life shall fall,
A better, brighter day shall rise for all;
Turn—and see the writing on the wall!

sentees were apt to be numerous, and it is hard fully to man the furnaces. The company kept a large number of extra men on its pay roll because of the number of absentees, and the turn-over percentage ran high."

Now turning to an abstract of an address delivered on December 3, 1920, by Prof. Horace B. Drury, formerly of the Economic Department of the Ohio State University, before a joint meeting of the Taylor Society, the Metropolitan and Management Sections of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the New York Section of the American Institute of Electrical Engineers we find that:

"By taking care, some manufacturers going on Eight Hours have been able to reduce the force of men 10 per cent; some more. Others have found that their rolling-mill output has gone up well toward 20 per cent or even more."

And in answer to Gary's latest lounge into excuses for continuing the Twelve-Hour Day, Dr. Mortimer E. Cooley, President of the American Federated Engineering Societies, said:

"In practically every major continuous industry, there are plants which have increased the quantity of production per man as much as 25 per cent. In a few exceptional cases the increase has been much larger. Evidence shows also an improvement in quality of production following the reduction in the length of shifts."

This Week's Summary

The cry of a "labor shortage" being responsible for the continuance of the Twelve-Hour Day is just another lie on the part of the steel trust in its campaign to thwart the growing demand for the 8-Hour Day.

In times of depression the steel barons oppose the Eight-Hour Day because there is a shortage of money. In times of prosperity, times of big profits, the Eight-Hour Day is opposed on the ground of a shortage of labor.

Thus the Steel Trust hits at the workers from all directions and oppresses them all the time.

Investigation shows that it is the Twelve-Hour Day which is responsible for the slightest shortage of labor ever experienced by the steel industry and disproves completely the contention of Gary that the labor shortage is the cause of the continuance of the Twelve-Hour Day.

The whole history of the Steel Trust coupled with the findings of the engineers as to increased efficiency in production on the Eight-Hour basis shows that the main reason for the Steel Trust's insistence on the perpetuation of the Two-Shift System is this: The steel barons want to keep the workers in abject slavery.

Defense Council in England

LONDON, Eng.—A Labour Defense Council, "To assist trade unionists throughout the world when persecuted by capitalist governments for their working class activities," has been formed in England, modeled upon the Labor Defense Council of Chicago which operates nationally in the United States, according to a statement issued by W. T. Colyer, one of its secretaries and member of the Workers' Union of Great Britain. Mr. Colyer was deported from America in 1920 to England and has become known throughout Europe as the author of a book entitled, "The Menace of Americanism."

Equity Players Keep Theatre

The Equity Players will continue their occupancy of the 48th Street Theatre next season. Half a dozen offerings have been presented this season, with "Sweet Nell of Old Drury" now being given. Plans are being made on a more elaborate scale for the second season.

An attempt is being made to establish closer connections between the German and Russian theatres, a German representative having arrived in Petrograd to arrange for an exchange of actors between the two countries.

The Big Punch!

Our readers, we are sure, will all join us in the desire to put more punch into the campaign against the 12-Hour Day. "POWER" is the thing that Judge Elbert H. Gary fears most, and we must, therefore, develop organization power among the exploited steel workers. But that isn't enough. Not only the steel workers are involved. This week we show that all workers are threatened by the 12-Hour Day in the steel mills. The steel trust is a great owner of railroads, it is an owner of iron and coal mines, it is behind the "open shop" campaign in the building trades. Every worker, therefore, must be enlisted in the fight on the steel octopus. This can be accomplished in part by getting tens of thousands of additional readers for "The Worker." We want to do all we can at this end. With this object in view we are making a Special Anti-Twelve Hour Day Campaign Subscription offer of "The Worker," of 15 WEEKS

FOR 50 CENTS. We want you to do your share by getting the accompanying subscription blank full of the names of new readers. This is your job! This is your opportunity to get a big punch at Gary's 12-Hour Day. What is the strength of your fist? Let us see! NOW!

15 Weeks for 50 Cents

"The Worker," 799 Broadway, New York City.

Enclosed find \$_____ to pay for _____ subscriptions, as shown below, to "The Worker," for 15 weeks. This is my reply to Gary's 12-Hour Day.

Name

Address

Subscriptions sent by

Address

An Order for 1,000 Copies!

The Franco-Belgian Propaganda Club, of Lawrence, Mass., has come to the front with a check for \$30.00 to pay for 1,000 copies of "THE WORKER" to be sent into some steel strike zone to help strengthen the forces of the steel workers against the 12-Hour Day. We have written the comrades at Lawrence, Mass., as follows:

New York City, N. Y., June 18, 1923.

Henry Victor, Secretary,

L'Union Franco-Belge,

Lawrence, Mass.

Dear Comrade:—On behalf of the oppressed workers in the steel industry, I wish to congratulate the members of the L'Union Franco-Belge on their very substantial contribution to the fund to spread "THE WORKER," containing the exposures of Gary's 2-Hour Day among the exploited toilers of the steel mills. This is the kind of solidarity that will make it possible to unionize the steel industry. Other workers will be inspired by your illustrious example to similar deeds. Best wishes,

Yours for the Cause,

J. LOUIS ENGDAHL, Editor, "The Worker."

Send in your reply on the following blank:

TO HELP FIGHT THE 12-HOUR DAY

Editor, "The Worker,"

799 Broadway, New York City.

Enclosed find \$_____ to send _____ copies of "The Worker," at three cents per copy, during its fight against the 12-hour day, to steel workers suffering under the brutal lash of the Steel Trust. I realize that the "open shop" in the steel industry is a threat to the organized workers in all industries. I, therefore, want to help.

Name

Address