

LABOR VIEWS

No. 4.

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RAIL WORKERS BETRAYED IN STRUGGLE AGAINST GOVT.

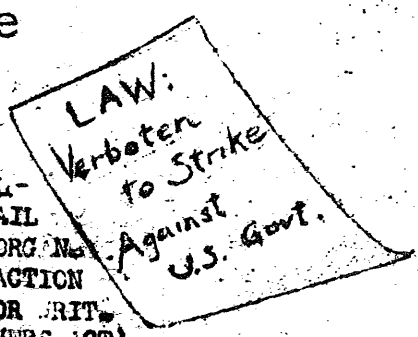
"I AM A FRIEND OF LABOR," SAYS PRES. TRUMAN STEPS IN THIS FRIENDSHIP TO RR. WORKERS

1. "Fact" Finding Board



2. Seizure

GOVT. SEIZED RAILROADS MAKING IT ILLEGAL FOR RAIL WORKERS TO ORGANIZE STRIKE ACTION BY TALKING OR WRITING (WAR POWERS ACT)



3. "Work or Else..." Ultimatum



Railroad Workers —
"... Return by 4 00 p.m. tomorrow or I shall call Upon the Army"

275,000 striking railway workers have been subjected to one of the most open, brazen and ruthless strikebreaking actions taken by the American government in its entire history.

And they have suffered from a union leadership which has proved itself completely disloyal and spineless in the face of a real struggle against the bosses of finance and industry.

SPECIAL GOVT. ATTACK AGAINST RAIL WORKERS

Government, the agent of the boss-class, had its own good reason for attacking the rail men viciously. Strikes in oil, steel, rubber, coal and railroad industries have proved that if the workers in certain key industries refuse to work they are assured of victory against the bloated bosses whose industries are soon paralyzed and whose profits vanish. In two days the railroad men had completely tied up industry in the U.S. How close they came to victory!

"That kind of strike can never be tolerated," cries Truman to cheering jackals in congress, for it becomes a strike against the government. In other words, the government cannot tolerate millions of workers imposing their will upon a few industrial barons. Indeed, Truman asked for immediate checks against this possibility! The power to arrest strike leaders and to draft striking workers into the army.

UNION LEADERSHIP DESERTS WORKERS

Step by step A.F. Whitney and Al Johnston, union heads of the trainmen and engineers, had retreated under the government pressure...yielding to arbitration, "fact" finding board, 5 day "truce", until they wilted altogether before President Truman's threat to use the Army.

Originally the railroad men had asked \$2.50 average increase per day (from \$8.67 average to 11.57) plus a revision in 45 operation rules (working conditions) which

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RAIL WORKERS BETRAYED... (from page 1)
have had no major changes since 1920. Ex-
tra pay for night work and cold drinking
water in their sabooses are examples of
these rule changes the men wanted. The
union "leadership" settled for \$1.48 per
day increase with a change in working con-
ditions not to be even considered for a
year.

These are the demands fought by the
rail companies since 1920; yet President
(I'a-a-friend-of-labor) Truman declared
last Friday night,

"This is no conflict between labor and
management."

RANK-AND-FILE STOOD FIRM

The railroad men were deaf to this Tru-
man lie. The overwhelming majority of
them completely ignored this "Go back to
work or else" radio speech.

Here in Chicago the Daily News, citing
results of Truman's speech gave "...typi-
cal reports"--

"Northwestern RR., roundhouse at Pulas-
ki Rd. and Kinzie St.--'Not a one showed
up. No phone calls asking about work.'

"Pennsylvania RR., roundhouse at 55th
St. and Normal--'Nobody called; nobody re-
ported for work'

"Rock Island RR., roundhouse at 47th
and Wentworth--'They don't seem to be in-
terested in getting back. No engineers
are here. Nobody called up.'

"New York Central RR., Englewood round-
house--'Nobody even called up.'"

James P. Shields Chicago first assis-
tant grand chief engineer of that bro-
therhood said, "The speech had no effect
on them as to whether they would work."

The rank-and-file had not quit--they
were not deserting the strike.

They remained aloof from compromise
with Truman, the agent for the bosses.

They stood courageous against his
threat to use armed force.

What stark contrast to the sniveling,
whimpering confession by union leader
Whitney "that we lost our cause", "...the
strike...was called off...due to the pres-
sure brought upon us by the President..."

...How had the rank-and-file withstood
this pressure? Against whom would the
Army's guns have been pointed? This uni-
on leadership crawled away from Washing-
ton on its disgraced belly when a quarter
of a million workers stood resolute by
their commitment to strike.

"WE ARE THE LEADERS OF LABOR"

THE RAILWAY UNION LEADERSHIP RECORD

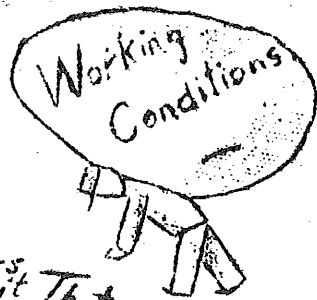
1. 24 Years of No Strike



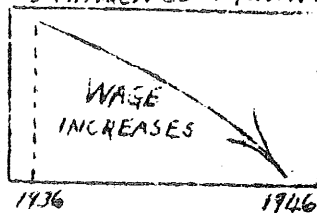
No industry-
wide strike
since 1922.

2. Results of this Labor Peace

"NO OVERALL MAJOR
CHANGES IN WORKING
CONDITIONS SINCE
1920 (CHICAGO SUN,
MAY 24, 1946)



RR Union Leaders
themselves Admit That



IN THE
LAST TEN YEARS
OF THEIR LEAD-
SHIP RAIL MEN
WENT TO THE
BOTTOM OF THE
LIST IN PERCENTAGE INCREASES IN HOUR-
LY WAGES. (Whitney and Johnston let-
ter Pres. Truman, May 23, 1946)

3. BETRAYAL

WITH A QUARTER OF A
MILLION RAIL WORKERS STAND-
ING FIRM AND IGNORING
TRUMAN'S APPEAL TO BREAK
THE STRIKE Whitney and Johnston
on May 25th settled for:

\$1.44 PER DAY AVERAGE INCREASE IN
STEAD OF THE ORIGINAL \$2.50 DEMAND.

NO CHANGE IN WORKING CONDITIONS
TO EVEN BE CONSIDERED FOR A YEAR!

GOVERNMENT ALWAYS BOSS AGENT

The history of the railroad workers
has been one long, bitter struggle a-
gainst the government. After the rail-

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Twice in two days Harry S. (Strikebreaker) Truman has declared in public speeches, "This is no longer a dispute between labor and management. It has now become a strike against the government ..."

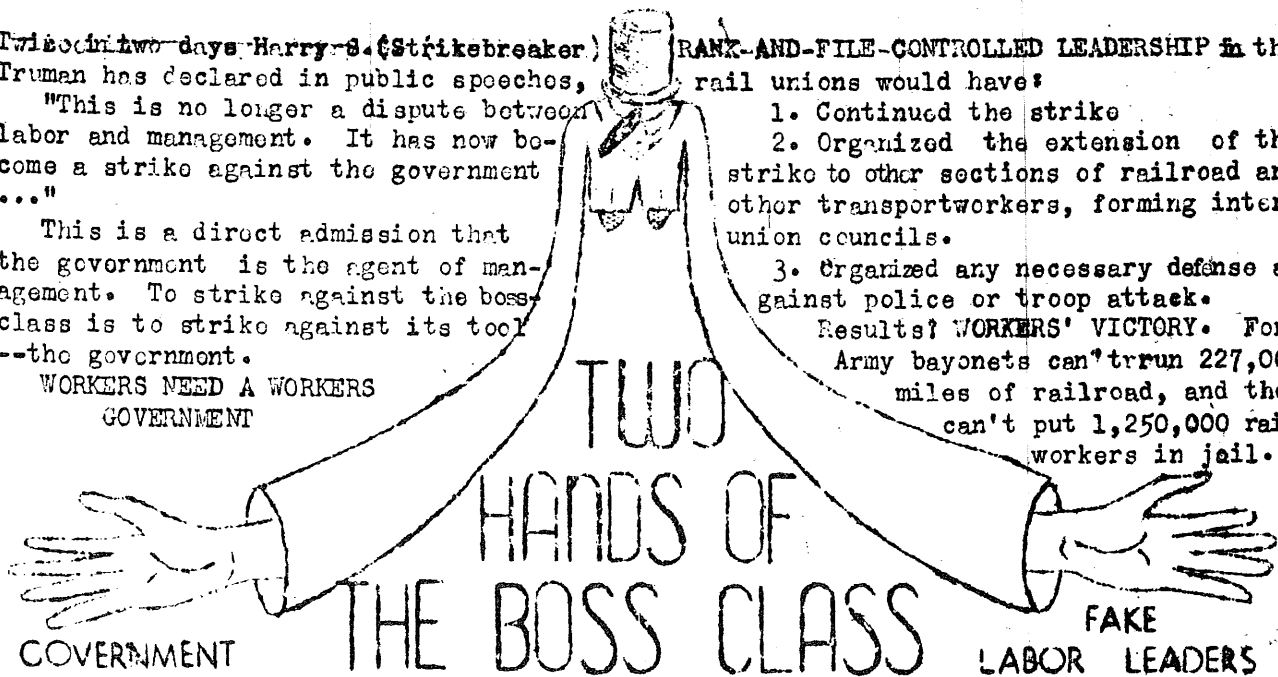
This is a direct admission that the government is the agent of management. To strike against the boss class is to strike against its tool -- the government.

WORKERS NEED A WORKERS GOVERNMENT

RANK-AND-FILE-CONTROLLED LEADERSHIP in the rail unions would have:

1. Continued the strike
2. Organized the extension of the strike to other sections of railroad and other transportworkers, forming inter-union councils.
3. Organized any necessary defense against police or troop attack.

Results? **WORKERS' VICTORY.** For, Army bayonets can't run 227,000 miles of railroad, and they can't put 1,250,000 rail-workers in jail.



RAIL WORKERS BETRAYED... (From page 2)
road strikes of 1877 against wage cuts the government passed the first railway bill against strikes.

Federal troops were used to smash the great Pullman strike of 1894. Afterwards a mediation and conciliation board was set up to allay rail strikes.

In 1916 the four railway brotherhoods united to fight for the 8 hour day and time and half pay for overtime. Railway bosses refused and to keep the roads in operation the government of Woodrow Wilson "seized" the roads and granted the 8 hour day.

But this war-time concession was immediately erased when the rails were returned to their owners in 1920 under Railway Labor Act of that year. The companies immediately asked for a wage-cut and the abolition of all industry-wide agreements made with the workers up till then. The new government railroad arbitration board granted this request as of July 1, 1921!

Court injunctions were the special government device used to break the strikes that followed.

The board became discredited when it became involved in granting recognition to a company union. A new board in 1926 with the president now empowered to appoint an emergency board when this one had run out of ways to delay strikes.

From 1926 this was policy: Delay the strike until the workers are demoralized.

Union leaders have played ball all this time until now, in the last ten years, these workers have suffered the lowest rate of hourly wage increases in 27 leading industries; and they are still asking for drinking water at their work!

Thus, Truman's railroad strike break is simply a high point in the career of a government whose chief reason for existence is to lash the workers every time they step out of line.

This latest strike proves that the railroad workers have the power to bring the tycoons of industry to their knees.

It proves that they have the will and the "guts" to meet the onslaught of government pressure.

It proves the spinelessness and cowardice of their leaders who keep them separated into 20 squabbling unions.

It proves that only a leadership which responds to the granite-like determination of the rank-and-file can lead the railroad men to triumph against the railroad barons and their government.

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FIGHTING WORKER
Monthly organ of REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS LEAGUE
And THE
INTERNATIONAL NEWS
Organ of the
INTERNATIONAL CONTACT COMMISSION