

# Rail Strike Shows Price Workers Pay

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The railroad shopmen's strike, begun on July 1st of last year, still drags its weary course. Approximately half of the mileage of the country is still affected by the struggle. Prospects of anything like a real settlement grows less and less. Only the indomitable courage of the rank and file makes possible the continuation of the battle.

It is a bitter price indeed that the shopmen are paying for their faulty form of organization. Had they been properly organized, so that all the railroad crafts could have stood together, this great strike would never have happened.

But as it was, with the unions divided against each other, solidarity depended upon the whims of reactionary labor officials like Grable, Fitzgerald, and others. Consequently united action was impossible in the crisis. These men double-crossed the rank and file and encouraged the companies to press on in their offensive against the shopmen.

## The Great Northern Settlement

In the past month or so, several roads have "signed up", including the Great Northern. Efforts have been made, notably by the railroad paper labor, to make it appear that these settlements are important victories. While the unfortunate fact is that they are very little short of complete surrender.

How little the shopmen had to say in drafting the Great Northern "agreement" is shown by the fact that it was negotiated by O. F. Schoonover and P. C. Bradley, Chairmen of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen respectively.

Under the "agreement", the union men have no rights whatever. Their unions are not recognized, the presumption being that the company unions will be the ones to deal with the company for the men hereafter. The men are to be taken back just as the company needs them, supposedly in the order of their seniority, but in reality just as the bosses see fit.

## A Light in the Darkness

The one hope for the railroad men and the one cheering prospect in the present welter of reaction, is the amalgamation movement centering around the International Committee for Amalgamation in the Railroad Industry. This movement constantly takes on greater and greater scope. Everywhere the rank and file are waking up to its true significance.

At the famous amalgamation conference in Chicago, Dec. 9th and 10th, 1922, the International Committee was instructed to write to the presidents of all the sixteen unions, inviting them to participate in a general amalgamation convention.

Only three have replied, Ryan, of the Carmen, Kline, of the Blacksmiths, and Fljoridal, of the Maintenance of Way. The latter alone endorsed the proposition.

This lack of response has moved the International Committee to proceed to the next step in bringing about amalgamation. It is now taking a national referendum on the proposition among the 12,000 local unions of the sixteen Standard organizations.

This will serve to still further arouse the rank and file to the necessity for amalgamation and to crystallize into action the sentiment already existing among them for this vital measure.

Every militant in the railroad industry will do his utmost to make effective the work of the International Committee. Our unions must be remodeled, their reactionary leadership swept away, the workers given new hope and new ideals, and a general renovation in the labor movement brought about.