

Bolshevism in Winnipeg?

This newspaper is issued because of the unquestionable necessity for placing before the great body of the citizens of Winnipeg the actual facts of the strike situation from the standpoint of the citizens themselves and in order adequately to inform them of the issue that faces Winnipeg in this, the most serious hours of her history.

It must be stated at the outset that this publication is not issued on behalf of the workers, nor on behalf of the employers, nor in opposition to either of them as such, but simply and solely in the interests of the hundred and fifty thousand or more non-participants in the issues which served the cause of the strike – or as the excuse for it. It is issued only on behalf of the great mass of the public which is suffering from the strike's effects.

It is to the general public of Winnipeg that we speak, in stating without equivocation that this is not a strike at all, in the ordinary sense of the term – it is Revolution.

It is a serious attempt to overturn British institutions in this Western country to supplant them the Russian Bolshevik system of Soviet rule.

Winnipeg, as a matter of plain fact, is governed by the Central Strike Committee of the Trades and Labour Council...

To those who think that the mere dickering of trades unions for schedules is in issue and that the strike is a strike for higher wages, for shorter hours, for better working conditions, for the "closed shop" or even for the principle of collective bargaining, we say it is no longer that.

It ceased to be anything of the sort from the very moment that the first Trade Union struck work in sympathy with the previous strikers on Thursday, May 15, at 11 a.m. From that hour the dictum of the Central Strike Committee became effective, viz., that no one union would return to work until all the current demands and disputes of every union were conceded by all employers.

Let us take that at face value: Who, for one moment, imagines that this condition would end if the strike were settled at this moment by all demands of all unions being granted in full? Does anybody think that such a course would prevent a repetition of this dictatorship?

Or would it not strengthen the "Reds" and enable them to do the same thing over and over again whenever they felt like it....

Let us repeat – this is not a strike; it is just plain, ugly revolution. Two-thirds of the unions now on strike have struck in defiance of their Internationals, knowing that they sacrifice strike pay and that they lose all the benefits they have been paying for thirty or forty years. They have burned their bridges behind them; the railroad unions have been expelled from their Internationals. What do they hope to gain by this? They knew, that is the Reds among them knew, quite definitely, what they hoped to gain – the destruction of the present industrial system and the present system of government, so let nobody for one moment imagine that any degree of famine or starvation will drive them back to work. Instead, it will drive them to excesses, if the lessons of history are any guidance...

The only way to defeat Bolshevism is for the people, the injured, the sufferers, those who are put to hardship, through this strike, those who stand in the position of the proverbial 'innocent bystander' who always gets shot in a riot, to organize. They must

consolidate and stand solidly behind those public-spirited bands of citizens who are protecting the city from fire, who are helping the constituted authorities in every possible manner – and they must be prepared to answer the call at any time when necessary to defend and uphold the free institutions under which we live...

Certain work is being carried on – by permission of the Strike Committee. The government of this city is out of the hands of the constituted authorities. The Strike Committee rules. You can see the printed signs everywhere – “Permitted” – by the Central Strike Committee.” The police force is only at work by order of the Strike Committee.

How long must Winnipeg submit to such outrage as this defiance of constituted authority – yes, of law and order?...

There is but one way out – the Strike Committee has pronounced in print for “A Fight to the Finish”; the sway of the Strike Committee and the rule of the Bolshevik must be decisively ended.

All true citizens must unite to defeat the Revolution...

Source: *The Winnipeg Citizen* (May 19, 1919): 1.