

1919

GOVE 2076

# Soldiers, Sailors and Workmen, Attention!

# Mass Meeting



The Metal Trades Council of Tacoma, composed of 15,000 workmen in the local Shipbuilding Industry, asks your co-operation in solving the problems of Reconstruction and establishment of Human Rights facing us as a result of the war.

A mass meeting will be held at Tahoma Hall Sunday, Jan. 26th, 7 p. m. for the purpose of forming a Workmen's, Soldiers and Sailors' Council, to establish a mutual understanding, securing employment for all under fair conditions, and pushing legislation for the benefit of the people, particularly as outlined in the Reconstruction Program recently adopted by the Special Convention of the State Federation of Labor of Washington, and the resolution recommending payment of \$300.00 to all discharged soldiers and sailors, adopted by the Labor Unions of Seattle.

## A FEW REASONS FOR GETTING TOGETHER

We have seen the efforts made by some to mislead the soldiers and sailors, as well as the general public, by the use of the press, speakers, and other means of reaching them, into believing that the Workers were not doing their full share of the work of protecting the World against the threatened domination of the German junkers, in spite of the fact that the Working Class has furnished nearly all the soldiers of the army and the sailors of the navy, and our work has produced the necessary equipment and food to make the winning of the war possible, and thus prepare the World for the establishment of Government by the People.

The Junkers of all nations have fastened their financial and industrial bonds on all nations, during the war, stronger than ever before, and are using every means possible to retain their advantages. The freedom of the people depends on their capacity for understanding,—and united action for the common good.

The masters of all countries have led the people of those countries to believe that fighting for them is "patriotic," and this conception of patriotism has been a prolific source of war and misery, but we maintain that the truest patriotism is that which recognizes the rights of the people—the majority—and fights all enemies, including the internal enemies, if necessary to protect those rights.

In connection with the present pressing problem of finding employment for the returning soldiers and sailors and discharged war workers, it must be self-evident to you all that charity, or merely discharging other workers in order to provide employment to men from the military service, is no solution, when the workers discharged are not provided the means of making an honest living. We must find the remedy. The exploiters will not.

## "ALL I POSSESS"

During the World War thousands of cards were distributed throughout the country, asking the recipients to join an "Unconditional Surrender Club."

Mr. John T. Goolrick, Jr., of Fredericksburg, Virginia, received one of the cards sent out by The Journal of Flint, Michigan, and answered as follows:

DEAR SIR:

One of your membership cards in the club which is pledged to fight Germany until there is secured an unconditional surrender came into my hands. I would be glad to sign this card, but before I can conscientiously do so I want to take the matter up with you. First, as to the question of unconditional surrender, I am afraid to sign that condition. The Congress and the President, as I understand it, have control of the war, and it is their final terms which I must uphold, because should I pledge myself to fight until Germany "unconditionally surrenders" and should the President and the Congress see fit to make conditions at the end of the war, I would be solemnly pledged to continue the fight against the wishes of my Government, and I would either have to become a breaker of pledges and a liar or be in the end shot for a bushwhacker and a guerilla.

But there is one item of the card I want to declare my adherence to. That is the one that says:

"I pledge myself and all I possess to the cause of winning the war."

With all the power within me I am ready to stand behind that pledge. I am within the draft ages and I expect some autumn day to go forth and give all I possess, so there is little use of my making pledges, as my all is to be taken anyhow. But I know of some others who are not going and who, as the country needs money, I think would be glad to get and sign this pledge to "give all I possess," and I suggest you send them each one. As their names come to my mind they are:

John D. Rockefeller, New York, N. Y.  
J. P. Morgan, Jr., New York, N. Y.  
Thomas W. Lawson, Boston, Mass.  
H. P. Whitney, New York, N. Y.  
Mr. Swift, care Swift & Co., Chicago.  
These gentlemen, I am sure, will all

sign, as they are only called on for one-tenth the sacrifice I am ready to make. I am to pledge myself to give up my home, my friends, my position and the income from it ("all I possess"), and perhaps my life. All that you ought to ask them to do is to give up all their surplus and unused property and incomes, which surely they will be willing to do if I am willing to go to France to save them.

But now I have conceived a suggestion that I feel will make your eyes light with the glow of sacrifice. It is this. Let you and I rise above mere pledges. Let us pair. Let us sign a new card, and let us put into full effect every promise we have made. Thinking of this makes me feel like lifting my hands and thanking Allah that you and I are given so great an opportunity.

I am going soon into the army. When I go I will give up until the war is over the sight of my family and friends, and leave behind a pair of soft blue eyes that shall seek me out even in France with the look of sorrow that was in them when I said good-bye. I am going to give up my income, to eat what is given me, to work at hard labor, to put on khaki and to arise, move, sleep and have my being by rules that others make—on penalty of death.

I ask you only to do a small part of what I am ready to do. You know we need men to raise food for soldiers. Well, I only ask you to pledge yourself to give up your newspaper, your property and your profits and to leave your family and friends until the war ends and come here to Virginia, where I have for your a position on a farm at \$30 a month and board, exactly what my Government is to give me. I have already arranged about the place, as I know you will come.

I am so sure about your coming because I ask so little of you and myself am willing to give so much. For my part, I will give up all those things I ask of you, and, over and above, I **pledge my life**. I will go Over There and listen in the trenches through long nights to the song of the messengers of death that

sometime may touch me and take me back to the Gods who sent me here. I will go out in the dim dawn when the coming day is casting the sky in pearl to face the rifles and the cannonade, and maybe die, that you and yours may not have to be spattered with the blood of war or fight grimly for your lives. I (and there are three million of me) will leave behind all dreams of life and love; the sweet caresses of women and the smile of pleasure; the chance to profit and to be clothed in soft raiment and sit at feasts; to lie beneath the peaceful stars as I did last night, and to listen to the promise of the west wind that sweeps across my homeland. I will go to France to fight. Some night, when I am out there looking at the crimsoned sky, which tomorrow night I may not see, I shall be thinking of you (and there are thirty millions of you), my partners in this great sacrifice. I shall dream there, on that ensanguined soil, of the ideals for which I fight and the Justice and Liberty for which you and I are laying aside each our possessions, our loves and our friends and for which I am going nine steps further and offering my life. I shall think of the homeland for which I am bearing all, of its green hills and valleys and of those blue eyes which may not soon again, or forever, mirror the love in mine. And, glorious above the sparkle of jeweled minarets in the evening sun, I shall see the radiance of that great god Justice that we uphold and for which I am ready to die. I am willing—(and remember, I am three million) to make the supreme sacrifice. I do not ask you to follow me, but I do ask you to give up all you possess, except the simpler luxuries and comforts and pleasures of life, and to abandon all hoards of surplus wealth that were made for you by other hands. And for God's sake, do not fail me!

You must see what it would mean to me if you did fail. When I come back from over there I will come with the glow in my soul of duty done, the wonderful purification of one who, facing the ultimate of the body has felt his ideals lift him toward the heavens until he could almost see God. I will come walking with outstretched hands toward the sunrise of Liberty, Justice and Peace; not as I have known them before, but liberty for the mind, justice for the poor, peace for

those who labor. I shall come from where I have seen the naked hearts of brave men, believing in the nobility of humanity. And my heart will be beating swiftly with the thought that I have done the set task and that for mankind I have perpetuated liberty and kept murder from their throats; thrilling with the altruistic beauty of a people who can give their ease, their property, their all that the World may be safe for Democracy.

But, suppose you fail me? Suppose I come back to find you (and these are thirty millions of you) have eaten dinners and drunk wine while I was gone; that you have slept in soft couches of love and your days have passed pleasantly, and that with these days your fortune has grown and the future luxury of you and yours has become more sure by the added gold in your bank; that you have builded great places where men and women must labor on your terms for your profit, and that while my family, my arm, my leg, or eye, or health or maybe life, has been freely given by me to protect you, you have in frenzy reached for more of the coins that mean **ease for you** and for me returned penniless from the war, **industrial slavery to you**.

Can't you see what that would mean? Can't you see that my soul that had grown to beauty and become filled with love might revolt and turn to me and say:

"And that he might fill his fleshpots, you have spilled young blood and faced the last most solemn sacrifice. The mothers who weep in Germany, weep that he may have more ease, and mothers in America have borne sons to rot on French soil that he may leave his children wealth to place them in a better class than a poor and humble soldier's child may ever reach."

I am afraid to think of this. I fear that if I returned to find that you have not kept your pledge to "give all that I possess" as I have kept mine, I should turn on you and with the bayonet that has been pointed to brave men who fought strike at you. I am afraid even of the vision of this, yet I know if you fail me it may be true. If I come back elated with my ideals and find you have not given your little tenth while I have given my nine-tenths or my all, I fear I shall go blind with madness, and my gun will

be ready to beat at you and my hands to take your calf of gold.

I do not want these things to be, and so I ask you, Do not fail me. I ask of you not your all, but only what you have above your needs; and that you live on your own labor, not on that of others. We must all do our part, and so again I ask you to sign this pledge to "give all I possess" with me, and to see that the gentlemen mentioned in the first part of

my letter, and others like them, do the same. Yours,

JOHN T. GOOLRICK, JR.,  
Fredericksburg, Virginia.

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The editor of the Journal of Flint, Michigan, has not so far answered the letter, and I am afraid I am going to have to look elsewhere for some one to work on that farm. J. T. G., JR.

### *U. S. Industrial Relations Commission*

Gives as the First Cause of *Industrial Unrest* the following unjust distribution of the Nation's wealth:

The "Rich" 2 per cent of the people own 60 per cent of the wealth.

The "Middle Class" 33 per cent of the people own 35 per cent of the wealth.

The "Poor" 65 per cent of the people own 5 per cent of the wealth.

**Organization, Education and Reconstruction must change this condition in order to, "MAKE THE NATION SAFE FOR DEMOCRACY".**



Inasmuch as none of the men mentioned have answered the letter or fulfilled the pledge, but the millionaires and profiteers have piled up useless wealth, and more millionaires were made during the war than at any other period in history, at the expense of the people, as proven by Government reports, and soldiers and sailors are being discharged and set adrift practically penniless, after sacrificing their all, we again call your attention to the necessity for co-operation and ask you to attend the meeting and join the Council.

**Representing the Tacoma Workmen's, Soldiers' and Sailors' Council of Tacoma.**