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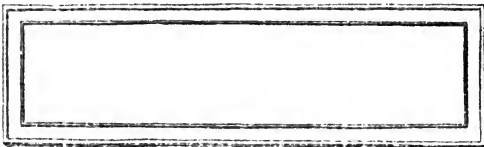
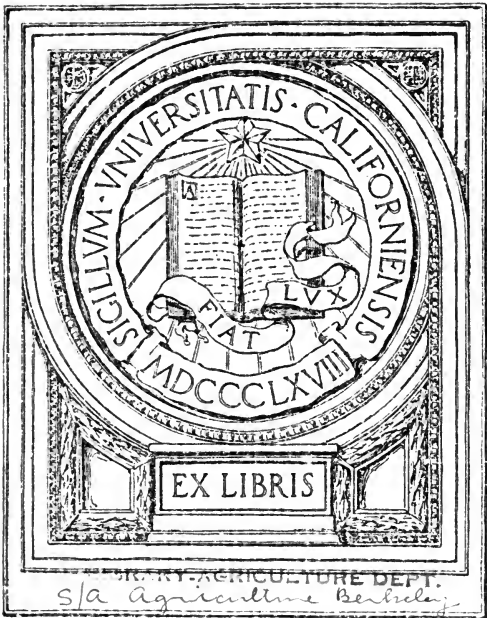
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**The Farmers' Union  
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and Guide**

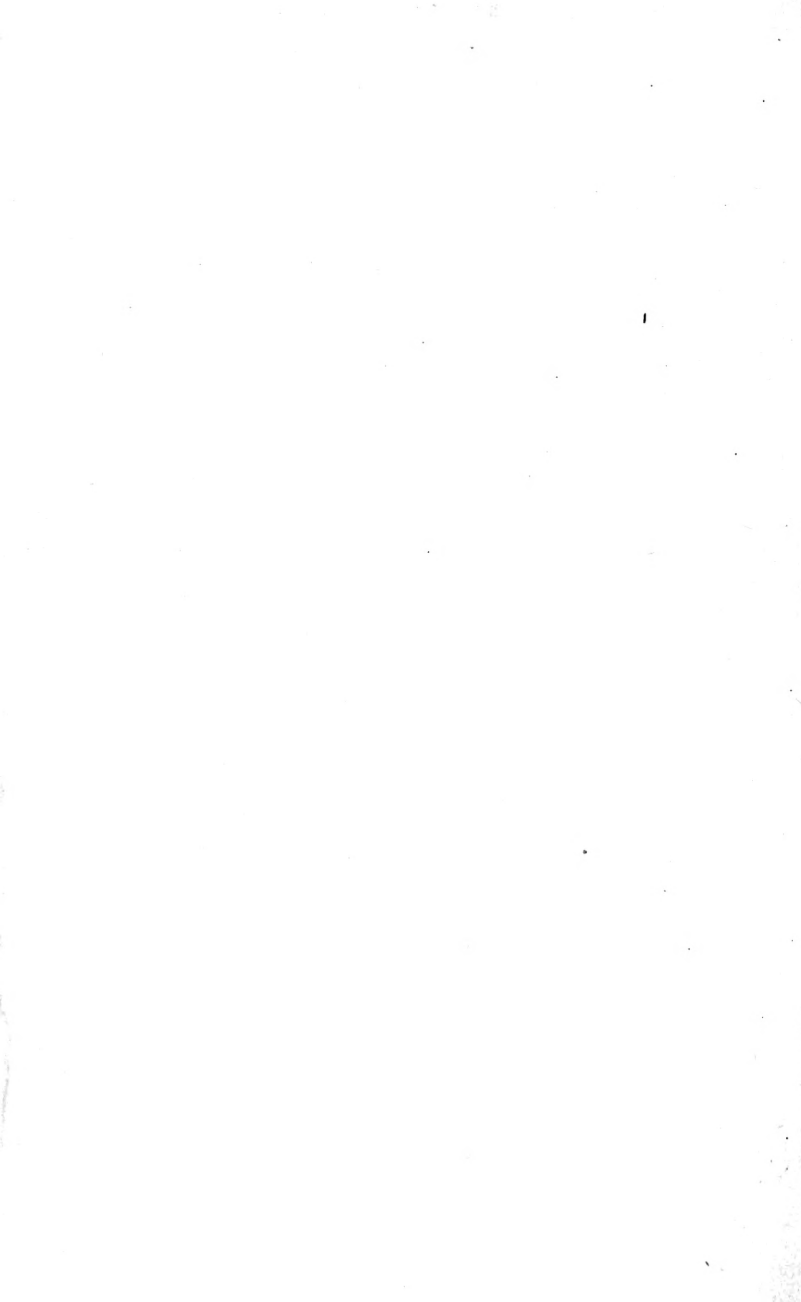


**THE MINIMUM  
PRICE SYSTEM**

**BY W. H. KERR**



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# Farmers' Union — and — Federation Advocate and Guide

One Hundred Reasons why Farmers Should Unionize to Adopt the Minimum Price System for all Farm Products, Especially Wheat, to be Based on Skilled Union Wages and Overhead Expenses, Enforced by Concerted Non-Delivery, if Necessary.

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**The Minimum Price System for all  
Farm Products, Especially the  
Big Five—Wheat, Cotton,  
Corn, Cattle, Hogs.**

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**TWENTY QUESTIONS ANSWERED**  
By a Wheat Raiser of Forty Years' Experience.

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Topeka, Kansas:  
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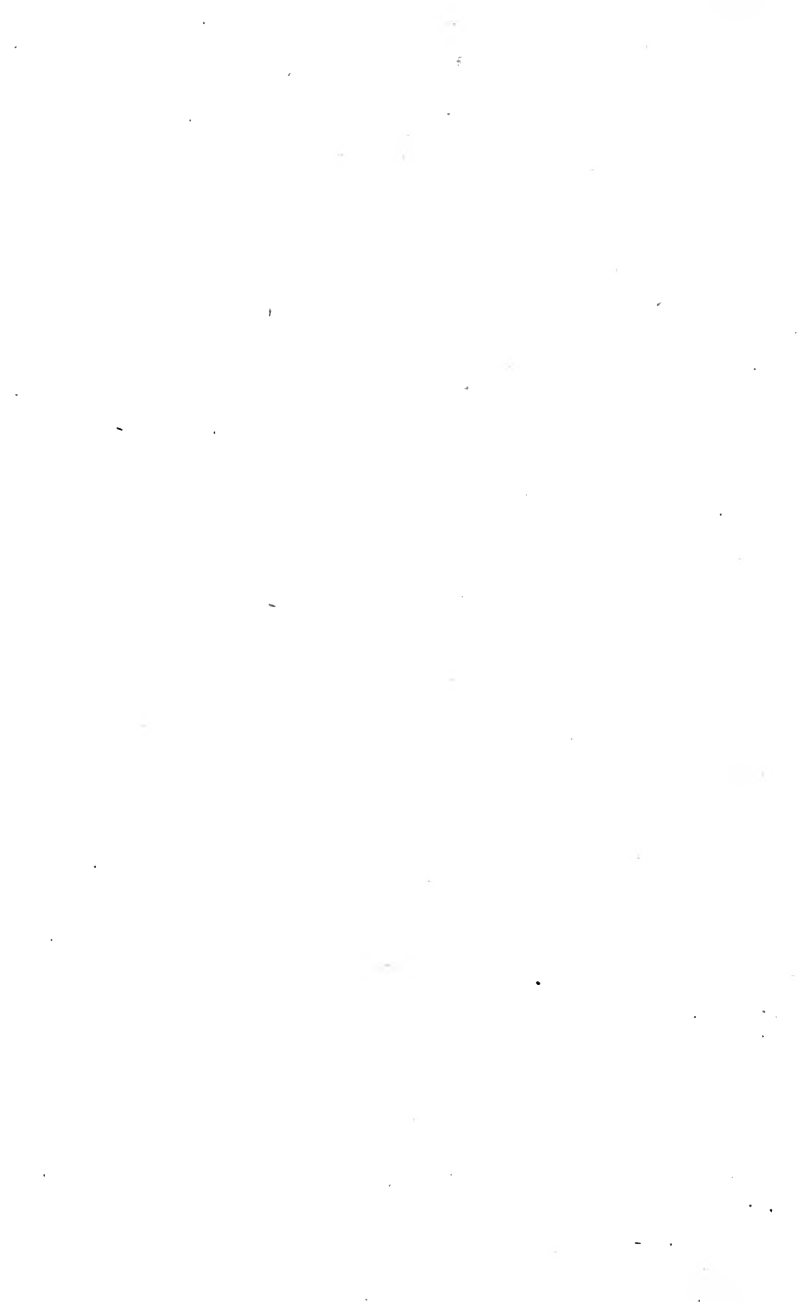
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# Farmers' Union and Federation Guide-Book.

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“Grafter!”

Oh, no, Reuben. I am a central Kansas wheat producer. Have been on the job over forty years. Came to Barton County in '76. Uncle Sam gave me 320 acres. Couldn't live on buffalo grass, and had to go East to get work. One claim, 160 acres, jumped by a home-seeker. No, couldn't make a living and improve the farm off 160 acres. None of my neighbors could, either. That was all the consolation I had. It was very poor, I admit. Prices of crops too low. Had no money to buy teams, machinery or improve with. Most of those who went in debt for them lost everything. Farms were mortgaged and lost. Prices of products would not allow a decent living. In a few years most of them starved out, after mortgaging their farms and using up the money. They couldn't succeed on the finest producing prairie land where every alternate section was free government land and the other railroad land at \$2.50 to 3.50 an acre on eleven years' time.

“What the Sam Hill was the matter with them?”

Well, Reuben, the principal matter was too low a price for everything they produced, especially wheat, their main crop, and too high a price for everything they had to buy.

“What brought about such discriminating conditions against the farmers?”

Well, it was like this, Reube. The manufacturers in the East have been running this government for a long time, and they would naturally run it in their own financial interest. They organized into unions, and had men of their own class-interest elected to Congress. They would enact a law to

eliminate the competition of foreign goods by a high tariff; that would enable them to more than double the price of their goods to the farmers, while leaving the farmers' products mostly free to compete with the pauper-produced crops of Europe and Asia, and, being unorganized, were unable to get the benefit of what tariff was given them. Big grain dealers and packers formed unions among themselves and manipulated the prices for grain and stock in such a way as to get it from the farmers at pauper-labor prices. All that was because the farmers were not unionized to enable them to set a fair price on their products and to secure it through a strike, as union labor does, by concerted non-delivery, and to elect members of their own class to protect their interests in Congress and State Legislatures. Now, this unionizing of the wheat growers is to enable them to remedy that condition by putting them on an equal footing with unionized labor and unionized capital in their commercial and political relations.

"Oh, rats! Farmers should tend to their own business of farming and keep out of politics."

There, there, Reuben, don't blow off like that again. Just have patience to hear me through, and then you may see it in a new light if your name is against you. This is to be a presentation of one hundred reasons, with sustaining arguments, why wheat growers should unionize. But as the producers of all other farm products should organize into separate unions, this array of reasons will fit their case also, and they can name their product in place of wheat. Then a federation of these separate unions should be organized, with an executive head to represent and defend their common interest as Mr. Gompers does the American Federation of Labor.

"Well, well! What a delusion! The farmers have had scores of unions and organizations, and they never did stick together and never will. There are too many of them for that."

Now, see here, Reuben; the farmers never were organized on the right basis, nor for the proper object, nor in the proper way, and of course they failed to accomplish much good. Were wheat producers assured of one hundred dollars each within a year if they would put up one dollar apiece to finance the deal, wouldn't they all do it?

"Sure they would, if they could be convinced the plan would work out that way."

Well, please keep quiet now while I try to convince them by overwhelming proof that it will. Then you may give me your opinion on it. But first I shall point out a few of the reasons why the farmers have so far failed to get adequate results from their efforts at organization.

### **Why Farmers' Organizations Fail.**

Farmers' organizations have so far failed to do much general and permanent good in advancing the prices of their products because :

(a) Some were only local social or neighborhood affairs of no general interest, and meetings were discontinued when the busy season came on.

(b) National organizations accepted producers of all farm products as members, thereby incorporating those of conflicting interest. The cotton grower and the wheat grower, and producers of any other special product exclusively had no interest in boosting the prices of other farmers' products of which they are only consumers. This was a fatal error. Labor does not unionize that way. As labor is very successful at unionizing, farmers should follow their plans and tactics by unionizing the producers of each product separately, and then forming a federation of farmers' unions as labor is federated, and for the same purposes. Each of two score products is big enough to justify unionizing.

(c) Local farmers' unions, or jobbing associations, are simply merchandising for their stockholders. While they occasionally save a few pennies on their purchases, they are

losing dollars on their products—a case of penny wise and dollar foolish. No farmers' unions were ever organized for the purposes herein outlined, and therefore no failure has been made in it. This is to be a radical change in the methods and objects of unionizing. Farmers are to take over the entire business of fixing the minimum price throughout the nation on their products and enforce it through a temporary concerted national suspension of delivery of their products should gamblers and speculators attempt to force a lower price. That price is to be based on overhead expenses and skilled union labor wages to the farmers and the working members of their families while producing and marketing the crop.

“Great Scott! Farmers working for wages! I should say not! They will work for profit, but not for wages on their own farms.”

Now, see here, Reuben, you stop butting in. It makes a break in my explanations. You are a farmer. Were you to get two to four times the price of your product under the name of wages and overhead expenses than under the name of profit, wouldn't you be better satisfied?

“I guess I would be.”

I know you would be, and so would every other sensible farmer.

“But it would cost a lot to unionize, maintain offices, pay the officers and executive committees, etc. Who is going to put up that initial expense money?”

There you go off half cocked again, and I have to divert to explain. You never harvested a crop before you had to advance labor and expense in financing its seeding. Likewise, those who are to harvest the wealth from unionizing must advance the yearly cost of that union. That cost is then added as part of the overhead expense of the product to its minimum sale price, and in that way returned to the members of the union. You see when farmers unionize in

this way they are to become business men and use their approved business methods.

"I never thought of that. It begins to look good to me."

If you will just keep quiet until I get through it will look better to us both, and you will see many more advantages in becoming a business man in addition to being a farmer. You may then even admit that it would be a good thing for farmers to go into politics, also, and elect members of their unions to the Legislatures and Congress to look after their interests as business men do, and as union labor is beginning to do. There is absolute certainty, much more than that you will raise a crop next year, that if the wheat producers will put up the necessary labor and money to unionize, like they have to do in advance for next year's crop, that they can sell that crop for two or three times the price they will get for it if they leave the price-making to gamblers and speculators as heretofore. The only task for me is to point out to them the desirability and advantages of receiving that increased price until they are convinced that it is worth while to stand the work and expense of unionizing in advance.

I have listed one hundred reasons why the wheat producers should unionize to win that increased price and other advantages. Some more reasons got away before I could list them, and many wheat growers will think of some that I did not.

I shall index them and make some sustaining arguments briefly for each. The reader can elaborate on them *ad-infinitum*. No claim is made that these reasons are arranged in logical order in their relation to the subject. I listed them as they occurred to me. Some of the arguments apply to two or more reasons and repetition may occur.

### **Minimum Price to be Set by the Wheat Growers.**

Of the thousands of articles the wheat grower buys, and of the many professional services he needs, the price of not even one is dictated by him. Those who provide them set the price, and he can either pay it or do without. Not having the price, he does without four-fifths of his needs. The seller sets the price in this case. But when he sells his wheat the buyer sets the price. All a one-sided game. The cards are stacked against him. Hundreds of trusts, combinations, agreements and unions are formed to raise the price on things he needs. Others are formed to juggle, swindle and beat him out of a living wage for his wheat. There is no justice in that, and never will be until he acts to aid himself by unionizing as the others do to price his wheat himself to cover wages and expense of production.

Somebody or combination must necessarily set the price on wheat. Who is more qualified or entitled to do that than those who produce it? Only through unionizing can the wheat grower do that.

### **Price Based on Wages and Overhead Expenses.**

All I ask for the wheat growers is skilled labor wages and overhead expenses as a minimum price for their wheat. Who would dare deny them the right to unionize to demand it, and enforce it by any means in their united power? Are they not as justly entitled to fair wages as any labor union? Are they not as much entitled to necessary expenses as any other business?

Only through unionizing to dictate the price of wheat can its producers command fair wages and overhead expenses in its production.

### **Wages Same as Skilled Union Labor in Cities.**

It requires skill and experience to operate all machinery used in producing wheat, and the operator should have the



same wages as skilled union labor in cities. The hour is the unit of time wages are reckoned by in cities, and should be adopted by the wheat producer. If the average union wages in cities are found to be seventy-five cents an hour, then that should be his wages also. As union wages are incorporated in the price of everything the wheat grower buys, then he must incorporate wages for himself and family in the minimum price of his wheat and collect when he sells it. Their wages must be computed on every hour put in to produce wheat, such as plowing, packing, harrowing, disk-ing, cultivating, fertilizing, drilling, harvesting, stacking, threshing, marketing, and care of teams and machinery, even repairing fences to protect it. As the services of a two-horse team is of equal value, the wages for it should be the same as for the man, and figured in the wheat price the same way. But only by unionizing can the wheat grower collect these wages for himself and teams through the pricing of his wheat.

### **What Overhead Expenses Shall Include.**

Every business that produces commodities the wheat grower buys includes overhead expenses when setting the price on them. The wheat grower must do that also when computing the cost of wheat.

His overhead expense should include interest on the value of the land, or its cash rent; improvements, teams and machinery; insurance and taxes; pasture and feed for teams the year round; operating expenses and repairs for machinery; a per cent for depreciation of improvements; teams, machinery, and depletion of soil fertility; seed; fertilizer; and all cost connected with organizing and maintaining the wheat growers' union. This latter is a proper expense account recognized by all business men and unionized capital and labor, since the organization is to be both a sales agency

and a collecting agency through which the wheat grower is to sell his wheat and collect his wages and expenses.

But only by unionizing can the wheat grower have the power to price his own product and collect wages and expense of producing it. Will it pay to unionize?

### **Elimination of Free Wife and Child Labor.**

If for no other reason, the wheat growers should unionize to free their wives and children from the necessity of farm drudgery. They have been freed in the cities; why not on the farms? All other classes of producers and laborers have unionized and demanded a wage that would maintain their families without their labor, and it is granted them. All professional people have done the same thing. You never hear of the wives and children of lawyers, doctors, teachers, preachers, merchants, mechanics or laborers who have unionized having to work to aid in making the living. Why should the wives and children of the wheat growers have to do that? Simply because they are not unionized to demand and enforce a price for their own labor that will maintain their families as city families are maintained. Yes, it will pay to unionize.

### **Price-making to Insure Wages and Expenses.**

Only by taking over the price-making power through unionizing can wheat growers be assured of return of wages advanced to hired help so they can discontinue using the free labor of wives and children. When wives and children do work in producing wheat they should be paid union wages for every hour they work, and the growers should unionize to see to it that their wages, too, are added to the price of wheat. There is absolutely no justification for expecting or requiring them to give free labor that bread may be cheap to the idle rich of the cities, or to those who include high union wages in the price of everything the wheat grower buys.

When wheat growers have a little money saved up they are afraid to invest it in hired help and machinery to put in another crop through fear of the price being too low to justify it. That will be remedied when they unionize and take over the price-making on their wheat to insure the return of money invested in it. It is of much greater importance that favorable conditions for making a living be provided posterity than that great wealth be given it.

### **Wheat Grower to Get Benefit of Favorable Weather.**

Under the gambling plan of regulating the price of wheat by the board of trade, future prices for wheat for a year ahead are sold down whenever a rain or snow or other favorable weather cover one or more of the big wheat-producing States. That carries down the present cash price of last year's crop. Thus, what should be a joy to the wheat grower is made a sorrow. By that method of price-making the bumper crop is a calamity instead of a benefit to the wheat grower, since he is made to take less money for it than for a poor crop. Only by unionizing can the wheat growers take over from the board of trade to themselves the power to dictate the price of wheat and change favorable weather into pleasant anticipations instead of gloomy foreboding.

Will it pay to unionize to secure the reward of industry?

### **Desirability of Stabilized Price of Wheat.**

None but the gamblers and speculators are benefited by violent fluctuations in wheat prices, while all other people are injured by it. The farther the big gamblers swing the price back and forth the more millions they make. By that method they not only juggle the wheat out of the growers' hands at the low price and sell it at the high price, but they beat the small gamblers generally out of the margins they put up on either side of the game. Only by unionizing to

fix and control the price of wheat can it be maintained at a uniform price the year round; and that would be best for all necessary business in handling wheat and its products:

(a) FOR THE WHEAT GROWER.—The wheat grower could then buy his land, make improvements, buy teams and machinery and hire help, with the assurance that he will get the interest and wages returned in the price of his wheat.

(b) FOR THE ELEVATORS, MILLS and BAKERIES.—These interests, knowing in advance the sure price of wheat, could operate on a much smaller margin of profit. They would not have to deal on the board of trade to protect themselves against loss by a violent depreciation of values. A normal, uniform supply need only be kept in storage. That would make the demand for wheat constant the year round.

(c) FOR UNION LABOR IN CITIES.—Knowing the stable price of wheat, union labor in cities could feel protected against a corner in wheat that would increase the price of bread. They would also be better satisfied to know the most of their bread bill went to fellow union laborers on the farm instead of to wheat gamblers and speculators. They would know that it would aid in giving them steady employment, as it came back in the increased demand for all the things the wheat growers need.

Will it pay to unionize for these advantages?

### **Local Benefits from Higher Wheat Prices.**

From every live town, village and rural neighborhood there is a perpetual flow of money going out for supplies of commodities needed, and a perpetual return stream of money for their products needed elsewhere. Upon the size of this return stream depends absolutely the degree of prosperity of that community. In strictly agricultural States and localities where wheat is the primary crop, its price determines the size of the return golden stream to that locality.

The higher the price the greater that return stream and the greater degree of prosperity.

Of course, it flows into the wheat producers' pocket first, but it don't stay there long. He pours it out with a prodigal hand for his needs, which are unlimited. The merchants get theirs at once for long-wanted supplies. The doctor, dentist, lawyer, printer, teacher, carpenter, painter, and other professionals soon get theirs for the postponed services until they had the price. Towns and villages soon feel this increased life-giving energy pulsating through their commercial veins. They take on new life that is reflected in many improvements. Heavier orders begin to flow back to the cities for greater supplies of all things needed, and herein is where the manufacturers and union labor in cities get their reward.

Everybody will be satisfied and hurrah for the wheat growers' union.

### **Uniform Price Over Same Territory.**

Under present methods of pricing wheat by independent local buyers there is no uniform price. One buyer, if he has a monopoly of a certain territory, or several buyers will combine to control the price in a given territory and set the price from ten to twenty-five cents a bushel lower than is being paid hundreds of miles farther from market for the same grade of wheat. Often in towns only ten miles apart there will be a difference of five to fifteen cents in prices. The wheat grower sometimes hauls his wheat past one or more stations to get to the better market, causing needless time and labor. It is also unfair to the towns that lose part of the wheat growers' patronage by that practice of its wheat buyers. Through the control of prices by the wheat growers' union there would be uniform prices established in the same territory. Wouldn't that be more satisfactory?

### **Prevention of Monopoly Buying?**

Another line of monopoly buyers are the big speculators and cash dealers who form an agreement to divide between them the wheat-raising territory, thus eliminating buying competition among themselves. Each one then has a monopoly of bidding on wheat to the local elevators in his allotted territory.

A third line of monopoly buyers are the wheat importing nations among our Allies. The papers reported last summer that Mr. Hoover, the Food Administrator, induced them to pool their requirements with that of the United States and all buy through one agency to eliminate competition among nations for our wheat. That is the most powerful buying monopoly that could be organized. It put the boards of trade and big wheat speculators out of the wheat speculating business.

That monopoly will doubtlessly be the most oppressive ever organized to beat the wheat raiser out of living wages for his wheat. It will have the wheat raisers of this and all other wheat exporting countries absolutely at its mercy. The foreign nations will continue the combine, though they may operate through the boards of trade after the war. Nothing but a complete unionizing of the wheat growers can possibly save them from all being forced to pauper wages for their product.

Will it pay to unionize to save yourselves from this powerful combine that can enslave you?

### **Maintaining Prices After the War.**

When the war is over there will be radical changes in our economic and industrial conditions. Released armies will make an over-supply of laborers, added to the vast number of women who have taken their former places in industries. There will be a general demand for lower wages all around by employers. Union labor in cities will put up a stiff fight

against it. Then governments will place surplus labor on farms to produce food to lower the price of farm products. Nothing but the unionizing of producers of all farm products to enforce fair wages and expenses through a strike by concerted non-delivery can save them from the calamity of peonage through over-supplies.

Will it pay to unionize to fight for your rights and interests as city union labor does, or will you be supine slaves to any unjust burden put upon you?

### **How to Eliminate Foreign Competition.**

All nations will be so impoverished after the war that they will not only seek to provision themselves, but where possible will endeavor to produce food for export. This will be produced by the cheap unorganized labor of their teeming millions.

It was reported before the war that wheat producers of India hire their help for five cents a day, and those of Russia, one of the greatest wheat-producing countries, for only eight cents a day. Do American wheat producers wish to be forced to compete with them in the open markets of the world? There is only one plan to avoid it; that is to unionize for self-protection. The government will not protect you, neither will your Republican or Democratic Congressmen. They are from the cities. Their sympathies and financial interests are in the cities, with their demand for cheap food, and they want all the decline in prices to be borne by the farmer.

The only course left, then, is self-protection through unionizing as other business and labor does. Then the wheat grower will have two opportunities to eliminate that foreign competition. One is to send an organizing commission to all wheat-exporting countries to unionize the wheat growers there and induce them to put the same price on their wheat as Americans do. If this plan fails, then try the other.

That is to elect wheat producers to Congress and have them put a tariff on wheat to equal more than the difference between prices here and abroad to protect the home markets for the home producers. That is the course pursued by the New England manufacturers for over fifty years, and resulted in building up great cities at the expense of farming populations. To protect the farmers' interests by the same methods and build up the country at the expense of the cities would only be a just retribution, and a healthy condition of society readjustment to be desired by all well wishers of our populations.

Will it pay to unionize to use your united power for self-protection against the mighty powers organized against you?

### **Each Farm Product to be Unionized.**

Every division of industrial labor is separately unionized to enforce fair dealing, good conditions and big wages for their special occupations. Then most of them are united in the American Federation of Labor to use their united voting power to elect Congressmen to protect their interests in laws enacted, and to defeat adverse legislation proposed by their enemies. They elect heads of unions and of the common federation to represent them collectively before government arbitration boards and commissions, to plead their cause, defend their rights, and demand their object. The union stands ready to back up their elected representatives with a strike order to enforce their demands if not granted voluntarily. Only by following the example of labor in cities can the farmers enforce their demand for as good wages through the price of their products.

It is to their common interests that the producers of each product should unionize to fix and enforce a minimum price to cover expenses and good wages. Then they can pool their vote to elect their own candidates to Congress to protect their economic and political interests by enacting favor-



able laws and defeating or repealing unfavorable ones. Then the authorized heads of their unions can meet government boards and commissions to defend their union and prices, and to represent them before Congressional committees having the consideration of bills affecting their interests. If all other means fail to get justice, then they can resort to the strike of concerted non-delivery of products to obtain it. Farmers then will become class conscious, and their unions will order sympathetic strikes until justice is secured to the injured one, as union labor in cities do.

Of course, a mighty howl would be raised against "class legislation" did the united power of farmers' unions secure a favorable law; but that howl would only come from those organized classes who have put through nothing but class legislation for decades, and object to competition in that business.

Will it pay to unionize to have authorized representatives to defend your rights and interests in Congress, and to secure fair wages and expenses for your crops?

### **Numbers a Great Advantage.**

The great number of farmers, instead of being a detriment in unionizing and a handicap to securing justice, as many believe, is the greatest factor in their favor. Their vast numbers can easily be unionized now with the aid of the phone and daily papers they nearly all have to inform them of meetings for that purpose. When unionized their numbers will give them a corresponding political power. With it they can reward members of Congress and State Legislatures for working in their interests by re-election, and punish those who are their enemies by putting forward a candidate of their own union. Congress will listen to their grievances and remove them if possible. All who deal with them unjustly can be punished and put out of business by a concerted boycott. Their combined power can be

used in many ways to better farm conditions, build up rural enterprises, make farming attractive and profitable, and rural homes desirable.

Will it pay to unionize for these advantages?

### **To Improve Standard of Living.**

The standard of living in cities is far ahead of that of the farmers; any one traveling will soon notice that. In many sections of the country one can travel for hundreds of miles by rail and seldom see a new farm building, or a newly painted house, or any other improvement indicating prosperity on the farms. School houses and churches are old, out of repair, and too large now for the ever diminishing population. Preachers and teachers are not so well paid as in cities, consequently poorer services are rendered. Families are living in old, ramshackle, unpainted buildings or log cabins put up by their pioneer grandfathers before the war, three-fourths to a century ago. Outbuildings are few and dilapidated, tools are few and out of date, people are poorly dressed. They evidently have very little money to spend on such things.

How different is the scene in going through the towns of that same section of country. Many new houses are seen; nearly all are painted and in good repair; schools and churches are being constantly increased and enlarged; walks and principal streets are paved; water, electric light and sewer systems have been installed; homes are modernized with these services and furnace heat; people are better dressed. The proof of prosperity is everywhere. Money has been plentiful and expended lavishly to improve conditions and make pleasant, comfortable and beautiful homes.

Why is this difference? There is only one answer. Every interest has unionized and set a minimum wage or price on

their services. That price is high enough to not only keep themselves and families in luxury, but to provide the money for all their improvements.

Will it pay you wheat raisers to unionize so you, too, can secure better wages for your services to enable you to have as good conditions as city people? It is for you to say, and unionize if you desire it.

### **Put a Bottom to the Wheat Price.**

There being no one, or combination, to put a bottom to wheat prices except the big speculators, it is to their interest to sell the price down to the lowest possible notch before loading up with cash wheat and options for expected higher prices when the bulk of the wheat is out of the producers' hands.

These speculators make a secret agreement among themselves to force the price down to a certain figure before they begin loading up, as big speculators do in other farm products. When options are the highest for the future months, when the farm deliveries are made, they sell for delivery millions of bushels. As the new crop begins to move freely they make concerted bear raids on the market to sell it down. Every item of bullish news and lots of lies about bumper crops and over-supplies are dished up in the daily papers until the producer begins to feel he will be lucky if he can sell his wheat at all. As the price of wheat goes down the mills, bakers, foreign buyers and other dealers in wheat and its products refuse to stock up through fear the prices have not reached their lowest point of the delivery season. They dispose of surplus stock and buy only their daily needs, hoping for ever lower prices before laying in supplies. Small gamblers, seeing the fortunes "bears" have made in the decline of prices, now come in on the selling side. The big speculators in the bear combine, though not having raised a bushel of wheat, now openly flood the boards of trade with

selling orders in one supreme effort to force the price down to their mark as the maximum farm deliveries come on. The producer, seeing his daily loss, and no bottom to prices in sight, now becomes panic-stricken and rushes his wheat to market on double-quick time. He has already lost the year's wages of himself and family. Creditors are clamoring for theirs, the mortgagee demands his, expense bills for threshing and other labor must be paid at once. Wheat has lost its security value, as no one sees a bottom to its price except the big gamblers, and they won't tell. They now quietly change over to the buying side, fill their million-bushel granaries with the surplus wheat, fill their contracts on options they sold months ago at double the price, and now buy options on millions of bushels in later months which they expect to sell then at twenty-five to one hundred per cent increased price when the growers are sold out. A few of these big wheat gamblers and speculators get more money out of a wheat crop than ten thousand wheat raisers do.

Will it pay to unionize to take from the gamblers and speculators the power to price your own wheat, and set the bottom price high enough to get for yourselves those millions of dollars they swindle you out of? If you are wise you will say it will, and proceed to unionize. No existing organization of farmers, nor all of them combined, can put a bottom to prices of farm products. They are not organized for that purpose. It will require this plan of unionizing.

### **Natural and Artificial Supply and Demand.**

Farmers have been taught that supply and demand regulated prices. But there are two kinds of supply and demand—one natural and one artificial. With a demand for only an average yield a big crop would give an over-supply, while a short crop would cause an over-demand. The board of trade is a device for making an artificial supply or demand on short notice. When the "bulls" make a concerted

buying raid on the board of trade they create an artificial demand that sends prices up; but when they change into "bears" and sell, it creates an artificial supply and prices decline. They may not own a bushel of real wheat.

By this artificial method the big speculator throws millions of imaginary bushels into the market in competition with the growers' real wheat, creating an over-supply where an over-demand would have occurred. His object is to keep prices from advancing, or even to lower them, until he loads up with more cheap wheat. Then when farm supplies are gone, this same "bear" changes into a huge "bull." He takes his cash wheat off the market and throws large buying orders on the board of trade. That creates an artificial demand that no one cares to try to fill, since the growers have sold out. Up and up goes the price now. He is making thousands of dollars on his cash wheat and options for every cent it advances. He puts out columns of bull news about such great demand for wheat and no supplies, a condition he and his fellow-conspirators created to boost prices. He even predicts in the papers that some mysterious interest has cornered wheat and will double its price. Everybody gets the "bull" fever. Those who have wheat hold it for the expected top price. Millers and bakers and other dealers in wheat and its products now get panic-stricken to secure supplies before wheat gets too scarce.

Thus supply and demand is a made-to-order condition by the big manipulators. When they get the price up to where they want it, they quietly unload their huge stocks of wheat at a price twenty-five to one hundred per cent more than they paid the wheat growers. Flour and other wheat products advance to correspond with this top price of wheat, and the wheat grower buys back what he needs on that basis. City union labor demands higher wages on account of dear bread. The wages are granted and added to the price of every article the wheat grower buys. The general public

does not get the benefit of the low price of wheat paid the producers of it. Now, the question is, would it not be better for the general public, city union labor, and most everyone else, were the wheat growers to unionize and take to themselves as their wages and expenses the millions made by the gamblers and speculators in wheat on the board of trade? Then it would be invested in better wages, improvements, machinery and in other ways to make farming successful and desirable.

Will it pay the wheat raisers to unionize to secure and invest those millions for themselves to better their condition? Well, I guess it would. Why not go after them, you wheat raisers, by unionizing for that purpose?

### **Reimbursement for Lost Labor and Capital.**

In placing the minimum price on wheat, the wheat growers' union would set it to not only cover the cost of the bumper crop, but to cover the loss in wages, interest and expenses of the poor crop, and that of the total failure also. In no other way can the grower be reimbursed for the loss he now must stand on crop failures. No other class of laborers are required to stand the loss of their labor; why should the wheat raiser be required to stand his?

City union laborers get their wages though their work be destroyed by the elements to the extent of billions of dollars. Doctors and lawyers get their fee though they lose their case. The wheat grower likewise, to be upon an equality with them, should add his loss by the elements in wages and expenses on crop failures in computing the minimum wheat price. This would act as an insurance against loss by the wheat growers caused by the elements such as hail, drought, floods, storms, lightning, rust, freezing, etc., and by insects such as the chinch bug, hessian fly, green bug, grasshopper, etc.

Wheat growers, wouldn't it tickle you most to death to have your wheat insured against all these calamities without a dollar for the insurance? Well, you can have it by unionizing and collecting it through the minimum price of what you sell. Will it pay to unionize?

### **Prevent Capital Leaving the Farms.**

The insurance idea just discussed would not only give the wheat growers a larger working capital, but prevent what little they have leaving the farm for more profitable investments. Not getting any interest on their investments on the farm those who happen to get a little money to spare are loaning it, or investing it in any kind of a wildcat scheme whose agents first come around. They think it as safe and as sure of returns as investing it in farming enterprises, such as modernizing the home and equipping the farm with other good buildings and up-to-date implements. But with the insurance against loss of capital and interest invested on the farm through the minimum price system, it would be safe and sane to invest it in such improvements.

If wheat growers wish their business to be safe and sane they will unionize to make it so.

### **Union to Own All Elevators.**

When the wheat growers are unionized they should own all elevators in the principal wheat-raising States and build or buy terminal elevators and wheat-storage granaries at grain centers and seaports. That will give them an investment outlet for any surplus cash they may have for a while. Those elevators will be needed in the business of placing the wheat on the market at distributing centers and for export.

It is contemplated the national executive of the wheat growers' union will control the price of wheat until it is in the hands of the millers, thus eliminating boards of trade gamblers, speculators and profiteers in wheat. The union

will not speculate in wheat, but always sell it at the minimum price paid growers plus only handling, transportation and storage charges. Then none will buy wheat for speculation, as they will know none would buy it at a profit to them when it can be had from the growers without profit.

The present farmers' union elevators and farmers' cooperative elevators can be used by the wheat growers' union, but on a different plan. The wheat raisers would be paid all that is due them for the wheat as they brought it in, instead of holding a portion of it back to give them at the end of the year as interest and dividends. That plan would prevent the building and operation of several elevators in a town when one could take care of the business, and thus save supporting the surplus ones. I have been informed that in some places where the farmers' union elevators overbid other local elevators for the wheat, they can't get as good bids for it from the buyers' monopoly as their competitors can. But with the wheat growers themselves monopolizing the price of wheat, it will put all other price manipulators out of business. This plan would appeal to all present union elevator companies as a much better plan on which to run their elevators if they are wheat growers.

### **To Publish a Daily Wheat-trade Bulletin.**

Another necessary adjunct to the union will be a daily wheat-trade bulletin to keep the members informed daily of true conditions in the wheat line everywhere, and the minimum price in their district, so that all will know the price they should receive, and of any other matters of special interest to them. This is a very important thing to do once they are unionized. Accurate and dependable information will be of great value to them. Through it they can also keep in touch with their various officials and executive heads and receive suggestions and instructions from them.

Each unionized product should publish a bulletin for their members.



### **Union to Establish Sales Agencies.**

When the national wheat growers' union is organized, they will take over the entire business of storing, distributing, and selling their wheat. That will give employment for lots of their surplus cash and some of their sons and daughters. Territory will be divided up into districts and salesmen provided for each with samples and price lists, and orders taken as other producing and distributing concerns do. Sales agencies will be established in all large cities and in foreign wheat-importing countries. These agencies will supersede the exchanges and boards of trade, in so far as they deal in wheat, and will put them out of business in that product. Since those institutions have cheated you wheat growers out of billions of dollars, you should take a delight in taking your business from them and tending to it yourselves. Your own sons and daughters can do that.

### **Surplus Carried Over to Famine Years.**

As it has been established by records that a few good crops are generally followed by very poor ones, prudence would dictate that the surplus supplies should be carried over in such cases. This course would be provided for by the union, so that prices would not decline much in the one case nor advance too high in the other. This arrangement would be best for all parties, and a great improvement over the boards of trade methods. It would go a long ways in justifying unionizing.

### **Union to Employ Expert Wheat Statisticians.**

One great advantage in unionizing would be the ability to employ an expert wheat statistician to gather correct information on the world's production and requirements of wheat, its monthly condition and supplies in all countries, and relative prices. A summary of world information on

wheat could be given weekly or monthly through the bulletin to the wheat growers. The union's price-making boards would partly base the yearly minimum price on this expert knowledge of world conditions. Their advisory board would give the growers expert advice on the raising, care of, storage, when and what amount to deliver, and other valuable information. It would be a great consolation and advantage to the growers to have this information and advice from their own officers, knowing they could rely on it.

Another advantage in unionizing would be the ability to send agents to the peoples who do not eat wheat bread, to establish instruction schools in the milling of wheat and making and baking of the flour into its many varieties of edibles to increase the demand for wheat.

Wheat producers: Wouldn't it be a good plan for you to unionize so you could attend to your own business of pricing and marketing your wheat through your own agencies? There is fifty to one hundred per cent more wages in it for you than to leave this most important business to others to attend to.

The present system of farmers' union elevators can only follow the wheat price up or down, but can do nothing to control the national or international wheat market. That is left for the speculators on the boards of trade to do. This plan of unionizing to adopt the minimum price system is to take over the control of the market.

### **Aid "Stay on the Farm" Slogan.**

People may shout the slogan "Stay on the farm" until they burst their wind-pipes, but until the wheat growers unionize to enable them to set and obtain a price that will return as good wages and interest on investments as city industries pay, it will be in vain. Money will go where it will be safest and get the best returns. The smartest sons and daughters will continue to go to the cities where wages

and working conditions are much better than on the farms. You wheat growers are the only ones who have the power, if you will unionize, to make conditions on your farms so desirable in good wages and living conditions that you can not only keep your children on the farm, but win back many of those who left it to seek those things elsewhere.

Will it pay you to unionize to make your homes and farms more desirable to your children than the cities? It is for you wheat growers, who alone have that power, to say what you will do. All other professions, business and city union labor have so increased their wages, salaries and profits through unionizing that they can keep their children in schools, colleges and universities until they are of age and prepared to go into business of their own, or to take the soft snaps at high salaries. By unionizing farmers can give their children the same chance.

### **Farmers' Children to be College Educated.**

Some wheat raisers object to giving their children a college education, even when able, because they are then lost to the farm, taking no interest in it afterwards. That is because they are offered much better wages and working conditions in the cities than the farm can offer them under present methods. By unionizing and taking over the selling business, those conditions could be reversed for the educated farmers' children. Then they could make their applied knowledge and labor as remunerative in raising wheat as in other industries and business. Tens of thousands of them could be given employment by the wheat growers' union as elevator operators, wheat salesmen, central distributing clerks, foreign representatives, bookkeepers, accountants, stenographers, etc.

Of course, all that would require millions of dollars to give them as good wages as such positions now pay, but it would be added to the price of wheat as now, and collected

as part of the expenses in the minimum price. The difference would be that the wheat growers were giving their children employment and retaining their interest and services in the wheat business.

Will it pay you wheat raisers to unionize to enable you to give your children a college education and still retain their interest, labor and acquired knowledge for the farm? It is for you to say.

### **Farmers' Wives Released from Drudgery.**

Women everywhere are beginning to shun the farm for the better opportunities and more comfortable homes of the cities. Some women refuse to marry farmers unless they will give up the farm for a city home. This growing prejudice against rural homes will become greater every year until conditions are improved equal to that of the cities. That can never be done until the farmers get higher wages for their labor and investments.

The wheat growers' union will remedy all that on the wheat farms by collecting through the minimum price of wheat wages for the producer that will enable him to support his wife without her working at all. The wives of doctors, lawyers, tradesmen, and even city union laborers, are not obliged to work for their living. Why should the wives of wheat growers be required to do so? It is simply because the wheat producer is not getting an equal price for his labor as those men, and consequently is unable to hire house work done as they do. Besides doing all the house work, many wives of wheat producers work in the fields three or four months of the busy season, taking the place of a hand they are unable to employ. Such wives should be paid the highest union labor wages in cash to spend as they please.

Wheat growers should unionize, so they can collect enough for their services to enable them to pay for help as other business men do, and dispense with free wife labor.

### **To Modernize the Wheat Growers' Homes.**

Another important contrast between the homes of wheat growers and of city business and professional men that is causing dissatisfaction of farmers' wives and their college educated children, is the lack of home modernizing on the farms. When they experience once the comfort and convenience of a city modernized dwelling with its ever ready electric or gas lights, furnace heat, hot and cold water, inside toilet, bath, electric washer and wringer, electric iron and fan, etc., they want to go where labor and service are paid so well people can afford them.

Why not bring those luxuries and comforts to the wheat farms and satisfy your wives and children. Of course you have no money under present conditions to pay for them. But those conditions can be changed to give you wheat growers the necessary income to modernize your homes. The only way you can change them is to unionize to fix the price of your wheat high enough so it will give you as good wages and as good interest on your investment as the owners of modernized city homes get for theirs.

It is up to you to unionize for this reward that will be sure to follow. All other classes of business and most of the laborers have unionized to secure good wages and conditions. Why not you?

### **Equalizing Rural and Urban Advantages.**

Owing to unionizing both business and labor in cities to increase their income and enable them to have better homes and living conditions, the urban population is increasing over three times as fast as the rural. While the United States census for 1880 gave the total population as 50,155,783, divided into 29.5 per cent urban to 70.5 per cent rural, the census for 1910, with a population of 91,972,266, the urban per cent had grown to 46.3 and the rural declined to 53.7,

and this included villages and towns up to 2,500 population. While the urban population increased 34.8 per cent from 1900 to 1910, the rural population increased only 11.2 per cent. In that decade the total population increased 15,977,691, and the cities above 2,500 got seven-tenths of it to three-tenths for the rural. Including the smaller towns, 55.1 per cent were living under more or less urban conditions in 1910. Nearly one-tenth of the total population lived in the three cities of New York, Chicago and Philadelphia, while 22:1 per cent live in cities of over 100,000 population. Over 75 per cent of the people of five States live in cities, and from 50 to 75 per cent in cities in eight other States. This proves conclusively that returns for both labor and capital are far better in cities than on the farms.

There is only one way to equalize the advantages and stop this ever increasing city population over the country population: that is to unionize and go after more wages and interest on investment as they do. The opportunity is yours. Will you wheat growers accept it? It is for you to say.

### **Smaller Farms Made Possible.**

In 1870 there were only 3,400 farms in the United States containing over 1,000 acres, but they had increased to 50,135 in 1910.

Only by following the example of city labor and business in unionizing for more wages and interest can the wheat growers make it possible to divide up their farms among their children to keep them from moving to the cities. As it is now, it requires a wheat farm of 640 acres or more to keep a family and make one set of improvements, when forty to eighty acres should be made to do that. But only by increasing the growers' wages and interest on investment can that be made possible. And only by unionizing to set and enforce a higher wage and interest through the minimum price system can that be accomplished.

The present effort at price-setting on farm products by a city paper is utterly useless. Only by a national union of all producers of each product separately, and operated on the same plans as city labor unions, can they succeed in raising and maintaining their wages and interest on investment. And only by this increase can smaller farms be made possible and rural population made to keep pace with the urban.

Will it pay you wheat growers to unionize to make it possible for a small farm to make a living and a modernized home for a family so you can divide up your big wheat farm among your children as they marry and desire homes of their own? That is the only way to keep them from moving to the city for employment.

### **Defense Against Unionized or Predatory Capital.**

Under this caption I shall take the opportunity to sound a warning that it is within the possibilities of the comparatively near future when unionized or predatory capital will take over the wheat-producing business out of individual hands as it did manufacturing, transportation, communication, butchering, and many other industries carried on once by individual owners. That it has not been done is because more could be made by speculating in wheat than in raising it, or in other business. However, it is being done now on a small experimental scale.

In this and other countries large tracts of cheap wheat land is being bought up and managers put on them. By using great tractors and other wheat-farming machinery, and the cheapest of unorganized seasonal labor, with no improvements to make or families to keep the year round on the land, they can make expenses and good interest on a much lower wheat price than can be done on individual small farms. This is competition wheat that the wheat growers' union should use their political power to put out of

business, by putting through a federal law limiting the number of acres one man or company may raise wheat on to 160 acres, or any number the union agrees upon by a referendum vote.

Will it pay you wheat growers to unionize so you can use your political power for self-protection against unionized capital that is forcing you to compete with unorganized pauper labor in the production of wheat? It is for you to say.

### **Defense Against City Unionized Labor.**

It is as necessary and important for wheat growers to unionize for self-protection against city union labor as against capital. Capital unionized first to control legislation in its favor and to dictate wages, conditions and terms to labor. Then labor had to unionize for self-protection. For years a titanic economic and political battle has been waged almost continually between them for mastery. One uses the lockout and the other the strike as weapons. Both sides are in politics for favorable laws and to prevent unfavorable ones. The government's greatest concern is to get both parties to agree to an armistice, or truce, during the great world-war. Many times each side has won local victories, and many times the government has been obliged to take part to adjust their differences. Both sides at times appeal for government protection of armed force. When employers are forced to surrender and increase wages and expense of operating they promptly add it to the price of their goods or service, and the wheat grower pays his part of it in the advanced cost of lumber, coal, flour, machinery, groceries, dry goods, freight, car fare, and everything else he and his family buy. Now he has only one method of self-defense against this continual advance in city union labor wages, and that is to unionize and promptly add it to his minimum wheat price.



Mr. Wheat Grower, when you have to pay double price for all you buy, wouldn't it please you to be able to double the price of your wheat? You can do it by unionizing. Others unionize to double their wages. Why not you?

### **Save Mortgaging the Farm.**

The business of wheat raising should be made to pay its own way without having to mortgage the farm for improvements or anything the family needs, even to an automobile; and it would do it if the price was high enough to cover skilled wages and interest on money invested.

The U. S. census shows a steady increase in number of farms mortgaged, until over one-third of them were mortgaged in 1910. The big wheat States have the highest per cent of mortgaged farms—48 per cent. There is something radically wrong with a producing business when half the plants will not pay expenses and have to be mortgaged. No wonder people leave such a condition for the city to seek work where wages are better. Shout "Back to the farm" until you are hoarse, but people with good sense who have been there are not going back until conditions are changed for the better. When they can make better wages raising wheat, and get as big interest on investments, and can afford as good living conditions as in cities, they will go back to the farm without coaxing.

Then the proper thing is to quit shouting "Back to the farm," and make conditions there so profitable and attractive people will choose farming to anything else. You wheat raisers who have followed me so far, need not be told again how you can do that to save the necessity of mortgaging the farm, and win back your children who have deserted you.

But your State and National misrepresentatives will tell you the remedy for farm desertion, tenantry and mortgages is more mortgages. So they consulted the bankers, and together they devised the Federal Farm Loan Act. The

second annual report of the Farm Loan Board is declared to be one of "evident progress" because of so many loans to farmers, and is discussed under a Washington date as follows:

"WASHINGTON, Dec. 31.—Increase in the lending power of federal land banks and the grant of authority for them to write fire insurance on farm property were advocated by the Farm Loan Board in its annual report submitted today to Congress. Modification of the Federal Farm Loan Act so as to make the minimum loan \$500 instead of \$100, and maximum loans \$25,000 instead of \$10,000, also was urged.

"The report, which was the second made by the Board, was described as covering 'the first year of operation' of the farm loan system, the first year of the Board being spent in organizing. The year was one of very evident progress, declared the report, which contained a table showing that farm loan associations increased from 1,839 to 3,439 during the year; that the capital of the twelve federal land banks increased from \$10,488,230 to \$16,250,285; that loans in force increased from \$29,816,304 to \$140,004,439; that joint stock land banks increased from four to nine, and that their loans now amount to \$7,380,734, and that interest rates on the land banks was 5 or 5½ per cent, and that of stock land banks was 6 per cent. Interesting information as to the applications by borrowers of loans from the banks was given in a detailed statement, dealing with about one-third of all the loans closed by the banks. This statement showed that 8 per cent of the proceeds of the loans were used to buy land; 10 per cent for buildings and improvements; 60 per cent to pay off existing mortgages; 10 per cent for payment of other debts; 5 per cent for purchase of bank stocks; 4 per cent for purchase of livestock, and 3 per cent for implements and equipment. 'The loaning of over \$150,000,000 has been of distinct and direct benefit to more than 64,000 borrowers,' declared the report, 'and has been of indirect benefit to every applicant for a farm loan through private agencies. While the loans made by federal land banks in the last year probably represent only about one-eighth of the total loans made by all agencies, they are far greater than any other single agency. Another illustration is therefore afforded of the truth that a market can be usually controlled by one large buyer or seller, if all the rest of the buying and selling is split up into small lots.' Despite the large production and high prices, net returns of agriculture in the 1918 crop year 'was much less than is popularly supposed,' declared the report, which explained that big profits were eliminated by the scarcity of farm labor, its high cost, as also that of fertilizers, implements and machinery."

If this institution loaned only one-eighth, then the farmers borrow \$1,050,000,000 annually. But if 60 per cent of this goes to pay off previous mortgages, they still went in the hole \$420,000,000 on their year's product.

Farmers should unionize to raise their wages through the minimum price system until they can decrease their mortgages annually instead of increasing them.

### **Government for Increased Yield, not Price.**

All the effort the government, state or county has made to aid the wheat grower has for its single object an increased yield. Not a plan or suggestion, much less aid, is offered or provided to increase the price. That is because the government is controlled by the organized classes who desire ever declining prices for farm products.

When prices decline to where products are not worth hauling to market after being raised, the agricultural colleges, farm experiment stations and county farm agents "point with pride" to the grand results they have achieved and ask for more state and national appropriations to continue them in the good work of reducing prices through overproduction.

It is a great benefit to the captains of industry to have their laborers fed free by the farmers so they will not have that excuse to ask for higher wages. But the wheat grower has learned by bitter experience that it is more to his interest to raise ten bushels per acre for one dollar a bushel than twenty bushels for fifty cents a bushel, and no one can convince him it isn't. Until they come with a plan that will insure as much per bushel for a big yield as a poor yield they need not come to the wheat grower at all. But I am a fellow wheat grower, and come to them with a plan that will do that very thing, and a plan no government agency will ever bring them. I ask them to examine it and try it out if it appeals to their best judgment.

Another very important matter is to have practical and representative farmers in the state and national agricultural departments, to head agricultural colleges, county farm bureaus, etc. It is the height of absurdity and misrepresentation to fill those positions with men who are not farmers, never were, but who are interested only in big production and little price.

Only through unionizing can farmers develop able, capable, authoritative representatives in their own unions, and have the political power to put them in those places to represent them. This is supposed to be a representative form of government for all its citizens. But how can it be when over one-half are unrepresented?

### **Protection Against Government Discrimination.**

Our government, like all others, is controlled by classes, always has been and always will be. He who says it is not is fooling himself or trying to fool others. Organized classes generally get what they want from Congress if they put in by their votes a lot of Congressmen from their class to plead their cause and vote for what they want in the way of legislation, or investigating, or trade commissions. Therefore, it is up to the farmers to become class conscious and protect their class interest by organizing to nominate and vote for people of their own union to represent them in Legislatures and Congress.

The farmers, not having become class conscious, are the greatest unorganized class, and always aid by their votes to put in office the representatives of other classes whose interests are opposed to their own. That is why they get no favorable laws for their class. They are the goat; but it is their own fault. They should unionize as capital and city labor has done.

When capital fails to get what it wants it closes its pocket-book, and Congress comes across with the laws. When

union labor fails to get what it wants it strikes, and Congress, the President, and everybody else promptly comes across with its demands. Note the case of the Big Four Railroad Brotherhoods in 1917 getting what they wanted by a threat to strike.

When, the first time in the memory of wheat growers they were getting a fair price, with prospects of it being continued during the war, the government sat up and took notice of them and promptly knocked a dollar a bushel off the price and prohibited it coming up again.

Had the wheat growers of the United States been unionized and some of their members in Congress, the head officials of their union would have been called in for consultation before taking any action, like union labor officials were on wages. These would have made such good pleaders for fair prices to wheat growers that prices would have been raised instead of lowered, especially had their pleading been backed up with the wheat growers union ready to go on a concerted non-delivery strike were fair demands of their officials ignored.

Where union wages were lowered a strike brought them up again. In most instances wages were increased. In loyalty to the government and patriotism the wheat growers are the equal of any class. But it is unfair to make them the goat to bear the sins of unionized capital and labor both.

When wheat prices were forced down by speculators below forty cents to the grower, and thousands of them lost their farms and other property, the government did not come to their aid by enforcing a fair price. Seeing that your only hope is in self-aid, like other unionized classes, you wheat growers should unionize also to protect and defend your rights and interests. Had the government knocked two dollars off the wheat price instead of one you would have stood it because, not being organized, you were absolutely

helpless and at the mercy of the government or any speculators that conclude to take your wheat at any price they choose to give you.

Do you intend to remain such a helpless class, when by unionizing you will have such great power?

### **American Federation of Farmers.**

While the wheat growers' union would look after all matters for the wheat growers exclusively, it would be a member of the American Federation of Farmers to look after the political and economic interests of all unionized farmers generally, as the American Federation of Labor does for all unionized classes of laborers in the federation. This would make the farmers the most powerful factor in our government, owing to their numbers, instead of the weakest. If the wheat growers will lead the way there would probably be a score or two of other farm products unionize in a short time. All producers who raise for sale cotton, corn, oats, barley, rye, broom corn, alfalfa, hay, cattle, hogs, horses, mules, sheep, poultry, potatoes, sweet potatoes, cabbage, apples, peaches, grapes, strawberries, butter, eggs, etc., should unionize separately to fix and enforce a minimum price on their special product. Then all such unions should join the American Federation of Farmers to protect their common interests against the encroachments of unionized and nationalized labor, capital, bankers, manufacturers, railroads, lumber, coal, and scores of trusts, syndicates, and monopolies. Each farmer should be a member of all unionized products he raises for sale. They should then elect members from their own number to State Legislatures and to Congress. In a government ruled by organized classes the unorganized classes get no consideration.

Then farmers should unionize to use their great latent power.

### **Lower Prices to Consumers.**

From the preceding article some consumers might get the impression that to enforce a better price to farmers would require raising it to the consumer; but it would not necessarily have that effect. It would mean lessening the great difference between the price the consumer now pays and what the farmer gets—a part going to each. For instance, an article that the farmer now gets one dollar for costs the consumer four dollars, leaving three dollars, which could be divided by three, giving the farmer one dollar more, the consumer one dollar less, leaving one dollar for legitimate business, and the speculator and profiteerer eliminated. It would tend to increase both production and consumption to thus divide between them the great difference in prices now prevailing. It should never cost half as much to distribute products as to produce them.

Were the producers of all farm products unionized they could aid greatly in the distribution of their products, and by using their influence to induce the government to take over and operate all public utilities would further lessen cost of distribution.

With so much to be gained by unionizing, no class of farm products should long remain unorganized after the wheat growers demonstrate that it can be done.

### **Dependable Expert Advice.**

Wheat growers are often advised to act against their interest to the advantage of conflicting interest, thus aiding speculators to beat them out of their wheat. The advisory board of their union, composed of their own members, would study their interest from every angle on all matters pertaining to the raising, care, storage, grading, marketing, etc., of wheat. They would be advised how best to not only raise the largest possible yield but how to sell it without lowering the price. They could rely upon this advice as being for

their best interest. As it is now they cannot know whether the advice they get from government agencies or newspapers are for their interest or for others. They would be advised through their local officers or daily wheat bulletin when to deliver wheat and how much, and when to cease delivery to keep from glutting the market and congesting transportation facilities, and to maintain a stable price. This expert and dependable advice would be of great consolation and aid to the wheat grower, and go a long ways in justifying the little effort necessary to unionize.

When wheat growers are unionized they would learn to obey their head officials, as other union labor does, when they know it is for their best interests to do so. Some propositions could be left to a vote of the members as union labor does. Union farmers could learn much of interest by a study of union labor methods.

### **Co-operation Between Land Owner and Renter.**

Since both wages and interest on investments depends on the price of wheat, there should be harmony and co-operation between the landowner and renter to secure good crops and good prices. Both should be members of the union to work for their mutual interests, subject to the laws and regulations of the union on membership admission. Both should share proportionately in the price of wheat according to the labor and money each has invested, and both gain or lose according to good or poor crops and prices. The renter should receive the same rate of interest on money invested in seed, teams, labor, machinery, etc., that the landowner does on money invested in the land and improvements. Renters could not continue to give a fixed cash rent that crops and prices would not justify. Both helping to keep the price up to cover wages and interest on improvements would justify good, convenient and necessary improvements being made by the owner, and more work put in on crops by the renter. The union might eventually find it advisable



to require of owners a standardized set of modernized improvements for different sized farms, and of the renters a standardized amount of work on crops and care of farm and improvements. This would aid greatly in building up and making attractive many rented farms to the mutual benefit of owner and renter. Labor unions generally require a certain amount and quality of labor performed by their members, and farm unions might find it advisable also.

### **Division Between Renter and Land Owner.**

There are often disagreeable disputes between renters and owners that are settled by law to the dissatisfaction of all except the lawyers, and some believe their interests not the same. But that is all wrong, as co-operating and unionizing would demonstrate. The union might find it agreeable to both owner and renter to prepare a standardized lease prepared by a commission selected by owners and renters of wheat farms to do justice to both parties. Arbitration courts could also be provided to settle all such disagreements between members of the union. While the union should not be made a social or society affair, there would be many good acts it could do to aid the wheat growers locally and generally.

As a general proposition the owner should have out of the wheat price a good interest on the value of the land and improvements, taxes, insurance, per cent of depreciation of improvements and soil fertility. The renter should have the same rate of interest on all investments for farming equipment, depreciation of same, seed, feed, fertilizer, skilled union labor wages for himself and any members of his family aiding, or others employed, and all expenses for harvesting, threshing and marketing, etc.

Both landowner and renter should unite in the wheat producers' union to aid in maintaining a minimum wheat price that will pay all these just and proper expenses.

### Fear of Overproduction.

Even with fairly good prices on most farm products, and the prospects of some of them continuing until the war ends, the ever present nightmare of fear of overproduction haunts the farmers who remember the calamity that befell them from overproduction of farm products a few years ago. Tens of thousands were broken up, and many had to seek work in cities after losing their all from raising too much. Think of the monstrously chaotic condition which makes it possible for producers of the most important grain, one that can be kept for years, bankrupting themselves through producing good crops. It disproves all the finespun philosophy of our ancestors on how to get rich.

The old advice to work faster, put in longer days, raise bigger crops, if one wishes to prosper better is all wrong, and the reverse has proven more successful, as statistics on wheat raising will prove.

I shall give a few sample cases from the Yearbook of the U. S. Department of Agriculture of February 8, 1918, to prove that under present methods of pricing wheat it pays better to put in fewer acres, get a smaller yield and less bushels. And this should be done until the wheat growers unionize to insure themselves against loss from an increased production.

TABLE I.

Year	Acreage Harvested	Average Yield	Production	Average Price Dec. 1	Farm Value Dec. 1.
1887	37,642,000	12.1	456,329,000	68.1	310,613,000
1888	37,336,000	11.1	415,868,000	92.6	385,248,000
1889	38,124,000	12.9	490,560,000	69.8	342,492,000
1893	34,629,000	11.4	396,132,000	53.8	213,171,000
1894	34,882,000	13.2	460,267,000	49.1	225,902,000
1899	44,593,000	12.3	547,304,000	58.4	319,545,000
1900	42,495,000	12.3	522,230,000	61.9	323,515,000
1902	46,222,000	14.5	670,063,000	63.0	422,224,000
1903	49,465,000	12.9	637,822,000	60.5	443,025,000
1904	44,075,000	12.5	552,400,000	92.4	510,490,000
1905	47,854,000	14.5	692,979,000	74.8	518,373,000
1906	47,306,000	15.5	735,261,000	66.7	490,333,000
1907	45,211,000	14.0	634,087,000	87.4	554,437,000

The foregoing table shows a decreased value following an increased acreage, yield per acre or total production over that of the year before or the year following. Thus:

TABLE II.

Years	Increased Acreage	Inc. Yield	Increased Production	Loss Per Bu.	Total Loss
1887-8	306,000	1.	40,461,000	24.5	\$74,635,000
1888-9	788,000	1.8	74,692,000	32.8	42,756,000
1893-4	253,000	1.8	64,135,000	4.7	+12,731,000
1899-0	2,098,000	Same	24,074,000	4.5	3,970,000
1902-3	-3,243,000	1.6	32,241,000	+2.5	20,801,000
1903-4	5,390,000	.4	85,422,000	31.9	67,465,000
1904-5	3,779,000	2.	140,579,000	27.6	+7,883,000
1905-6	-518,000	1.	42,282,000	8.1	28,040,000
1906-7	2,095,000	1.5	101,174,000	20.7	64,104,000

A summary of the above pairs show that by increasing the acreage, or the yield, or both, there was raised 605,060,000 bushels more in nine years than in the others, while the wheat growers received \$281,157,000 less. That is, they not only raised and gave away free that many bushels of wheat, but had to take that many dollars less for raising it, as compared with the smaller crops. In other words, the wheat growers actually paid over 46 cents a bushel for the joy of raising 605,060,000 to donate to the public. No wonder so many went bankrupt. They could not afford such generosity. Nor did they get a "thank you" for it, nor a five-cent article free on account of it. Now, that is not good business.

Union city labor has found by experience that it is more to their interest to shorten the day and increase the pay. Eight hours a day at 75 cents an hour is preferred to twelve at 40 cents. The wheat raiser should follow their example and unionize and elect an executive board to direct them.

You have lost hundreds of millions of dollars by not unionizing, and will lose billions more if you do not. You ought to be able to see that it will pay big to unionize.

## Personal Experience in Overproduction.

I published some of my experience in overproduction of farm products in a local daily and had it printed on a card to mail to Congressmen and government officials, and it may be of interest here :

*The Tribune:*

"It might be of some value to President Wilson and other government officials seeking the cause and remedy for the scarcity and high cost of farm products to get a little inside first hand information on the subject from an ex-farmer.

"In a nutshell the cause is too low a price when a good crop is raised and ready for marketing. The remedy is to unionize the producers of each product into a separate union to fix in advance a minimum price on it at maturing time and a gradual monthly increase throughout the coming year. The minimum price to be based on overhead expenses plus skilled union wages while producing it. The monthly increased price thereafter to be based on cost of holding.

"Now for personal experience in detail :

"CASE 1. *Broom Corn.*—Seeing broom-corn quoted at \$200.00 a ton when in the possession of the speculators, I thought there would be a good price for it and raised a crop. But I found quite a difference in the price when the same speculators came to buy it of the producer, when I had to let them have it at their own price of \$25.00 a ton. I then and there said good night to broom corn, and never would plant nor allow a seed of it planted on my farm again.

"CASE 2. *Cattle.*—I bought a few cows and calves with the intention of raising cattle for the market, thinking I could in that way utilize my otherwise waste rough feed and give myself and family remunerative employment in taking care of them.

"Result: My cattle increased twenty-five per cent in number annually and decreased in market value at the same rate. After three years' experience in working for nothing and boarding myself, I concluded I had enough of it in that direction, and sold out the herd for less than its original cost, and never would try it again through fear of a like experience.

"CASE 3. *Hogs.*—I had been taught that to be a successful farmer I must keep at least a few hogs on the farm. This I did for several years, though I could see there was nothing in it for me at three to five cents

if I happened to hit the top market. But when I had to sell my finest bunch of fat hogs for \$2.90, it put the everlasting quietus on the hog-raising business for me, and I have bought my meat for family use ever since.

“CASE 4. *Corn*.—Having been taught diversified farming by those interested in the production of cheap food, I thought of course I had to raise corn. After raising a few thousand bushels annually a few years for which I got 12 to 18 cents a bushel, I swore off on corn raising and never planted another grain of it.

“Diversified farming is based on the theory that one of a dozen different products might be in luck, and from it the farmer realize enough to pay his taxes, enabling him to give the other eleven products away.

“CASE 5. *Wheat*.—Through experience I found I could make a living by raising wheat exclusively and discontinued all other products.

“But I observed whenever we had a rain or snow and I planned to pay my children for their help in the field owing to the expected larger yield, that the board of trade beat me to it by selling the price down to offset the expected increased amount.

“There was no incentive in trying to raise either a larger yield per acre or a better quality, as the board of trade saw to it that I received less money for the crops in such cases. So I rented my farm, moved to town, gave my children a business education to enable them to do something they could get pay for, and advised them to keep out of the farming business until the farmers developed sense enough to unionize and take over the price-fixing and control of their own products to insure reasonable wages and interest on investments.

“We farmers learned by bitter experience that the more we raise of any product the less we get for it under present methods of price-fixing.

“Hundreds of thousands of us gave up the struggle because we were unwilling to make perpetual slaves of ourselves and families for the benefit of Board of Trade gamblers and warehouse manipulator of prices.

“When the farmers unionize each separate product to insure fair wages and interest on their investment through minimum price-fixing then plenty will be produced for all at fair and reasonable prices.

“The government should not only permit the farmers to thus unionize and fix prices but should aid them in doing so for the protection of all from short supplies and exorbitant prices.”

### **Changing Overproduction Into a Shortage.**

Whether we have a good or poor crop, somebody or organization must set the price on it. So far it has never

been the wheat growers. The speculators point to overproduction as an excuse to justify a low price to the producers while they juggle it out of their possession. Then they lock up their warehouses, buy options and point to the big demand and no supply to boost prices. They have changed an overproduction when in the producers' hands to a shortage when in theirs.

Now, the wheat growers must take over for their own use this little device of changing overproduction into a shortage if they wish to harvest the dollars the gamblers do. And wouldn't it be more sensible to harvest dollars direct than wheat since it is the dollars you are really after? There is no patent on that device of the speculators, and the wheat raisers can take it from them whenever they wish to by unionizing. Wouldn't it pay better to have a dollar-harvesting machine than a wheat-harvesting machine? You can have it free simply by unionizing.

The moment granaries are locked up in unison all over the United States the supply ceases, and as demand cannot cease it will soon raise the price to the minimum demanded.

### **More Money for Big Crops.**

Table I shows that in 1905, 3,779,000 acres more were harvested than in 1904, and the yield per acre was two bushels more, making 140,579,000 more bushels than the crop of 1904. But owing to the price being 17.6 cents a bushel less it gave only \$7,883,000 more, or about 5½ cents a bushel for all that increased production, allowing the same price as 1904—92.4 cents for the balance. As it cost about twenty dollars an acre to raise wheat then at union labor wages and overhead expenses, there was a direct net loss of \$67,697,000 on that surplus yield, when at the same price of the previous year there would have been a gain of \$129,894,996.

Had the wheat raisers been unionized they could have easily changed their wages of \$7,883,000 into wages of \$129,894,996 without raising the 1904 price, by using that method of the speculators for changing a surplus into a shortage.

Such an opportunity exists every year. Why not unionize to grasp it? Had the wheat growers been unionized they could not only have had proportionately as good a price for all these good crops as for the poor ones, but could have had much better prices for the poor crops.

### **Chicago's Erratic Market to be Eliminated.**

Uniform and regular daily purchases of wheat can be had only by stabilizing the price, and that can be done only through unionizing to fix a minimum monthly price for a year ahead. As it is now, with such erratic prices no regular buying is possible. When prices are advancing rapidly everybody stops selling to wait for the top, and when they decline rapidly everybody stops buying to wait for the bottom to be reached. This aids in forcing the pendulum of prices to extremes.

The following table of high and low prices on wheat in Chicago each month from 1911 to 1917 inclusive for No. 1 Northern, given in cents and fractions per bushel, shows its extremely erratic nature and justifies its permanent elimination. The price after August, 1917, is uniform because of government-made price of \$2.20, and options in wheat being discontinued. It will be resumed after the war if the wheat growers do not unionize and take over the price-making on wheat. Now is a very favorable time to do it while Chicago has suspended temporarily.

Remember that prices at the wheat raiser's home market for the bulk of this wheat was always twenty to thirty cents below this Chicago price, and also that the most of it was marketed during the months of lowest quotations.

TABLE III.

MONTH		1911	1912	1913	1914	1915	1916	1917
JAN.	Low.....	\$103.00	\$107.00	\$88.50	\$90.00	\$128.00	\$119.75	\$178.25
	High.....	112.00	114.00	93.00	93.25	154.00	139.50	205.00
FEB.	Low.....	97.00	108.00	90.50	91.00	146.00	112.00	162.50
	High.....	107.00	115.00	94.00	97.50	167.00	138.00	199.00
MAR.	Low.....	95.00	108.00	87.25	94.00	138.00	109.38	183.75
	High.....	102.00	115.00	92.50	97.38	162.50	123.00	213.00
APRIL	Low.....	93.00	108.00	90.00	93.75	152.50	118.75	205.50
	High.....	104.00	122.00	95.50	97.50	165.50	128.00	295.75
MAY	Low.....	98.00	115.00	90.50	96.00	141.00	116.00	258.00
	High.....	106.00	122.00	96.00	100.00	164.50	126.00	340.00
JUNE	Low.....	94.00	113.00	91.50	89.00	123.00	106.50	249.00
	High.....	103.00	120.00	96.00	99.00	149.00	118.00	310.00
JULY	Low.....	93.50	105.00	88.50	88.50	132.00	110.00	217.00
	High.....	108.50	116.00	95.00	109.00	153.75	131.88	300.00
AUG.	Low.....	96.00	95.00	89.62	94.25	108.00	126.12	223.00
	High.....	115.00	111.00	94.25	127.00	131.00	164.25	300.00
SEPT.	Low.....	100.00	90.50	88.00	108.00	99.50	150.00	220.00
	High.....	112.00	97.00	95.25	133.00	114.00	171.50	230.00
OCT.	Low.....	108.00	91.00	85.00	105.50	99.00	164.00	220.00
	High.....	117.00	97.00	90.50	117.50	115.50	202.00	220.00
NOV.	Low.....	107.00	85.00	88.00	114.00	102.50	165.00	220.00
	High.....	112.00	92.00	91.25	118.12	111.00	200.00	220.00
DEC.	Low.....	105.00	85.00	89.50	115.00	106.00	155.50	220.00
	High.....	110.00	90.75	93.00	131.00	128.50	190.00	220.00
YEAR	Low.....	\$93.00	\$85.00	\$85.00	\$88.50	\$99.00	\$106.50	\$162.50
	High.....	117.00	122.00	96.00	133.00	167.00	202.00	340.00

It is claimed by many that the Chicago board of trade is a necessary stabilizer of prices, but this table, and all other price tables, disprove it. Nothing is more unstable. It is not to the interest of gamblers and speculators to have a stable market; but it is to all others. Millers and all dealers in wheat and its products must have a greater margin of profits to cover a fluctuating market.

You will note the great differences between the low and high prices in the same months, when there should be little difference; and the big difference between the lowest and highest prices of the year when a drop of eighteen cents to



twenty-four cents, from old to new wheat, should suffice. You will also note that the lowest point is when farmers are unloading the bulk of the crop.

There are on a crop generally hundreds of millions of dollars difference each year between the lowest and highest prices per bushel, and everybody has stood for the highest prices when exacted by speculators, and they will stand for it with still more satisfaction were the wheat growers to be the beneficiaries.

When business will be pleased with a stabilized, though it be the highest price, and wheat growers' wages and interest increased by hundreds of millions of dollars annually, without increased work or expense, why not just unionize and grab it away from gamblers? Are not your wife and children, who help to raise the wheat, more entitled to it than the gamblers and speculators? Who will look after their interest if you do not? Before anyone works for you or produces anything for you they set the price and know in advance what wages or price they are to receive. Why don't you wheat growers do the same thing before you begin seeding? You have the same right to do it that others have. Are you going to remain too stupid and indolent to do as other classes are doing by you?

### **Government Indorses Future Price-Setting.**

In August, 1917, when wheat was \$3.00 on the Chicago board of trade and prices expected to go much higher, the government set a price limit of \$2.20 in Chicago until July 1, 1918, when it was to be reduced to \$2.00 for the crop of that year. Thus the government recognized the principle of not only pricing the entire wheat crop of the United States in advance of threshing it, but also in advance of preparing to plant it, or for two years ahead. In February, 1918, there was an agitation to raise the price of wheat to stimulate a greater spring wheat acreage. Senator Gore, from

Oklahoma, introduced a bill to raise the price of wheat to \$2.50 per bushel at the farmers' home market, and Senator McCumber, of North Dakota, one to increase the price to \$2.75, Chicago basis.

In order to stop the holding of wheat caused by this agitation for higher prices, President Wilson by proclamation on February 23, 1918, raised the price of the 1918 crop twenty cents a bushel, making it equal to the 1917 government price. A newspaper clipping of that date says:

"The prices fixed, the President declared, would insure the producer of a reasonable profit. On the basis of No. 1 northern spring wheat and its equivalents, the President fixed the prices as follows: Chicago, \$2.20; Omaha, \$2.15; Kansas City, \$2.15; St. Louis, \$2.18; New York, \$2.28; Galveston, \$2.20; New Orleans, \$2.20; Fort Worth, Tex., \$2.09; Oklahoma City, Okla., \$2.05; Wichita, Kan., \$2.08. The equivalents of No. 1 Northern to which the same price applies, are No. 1 hard winter; No. 1 red winter; No. 1 Durum, and No. 1 hard white. The wheat must be harvested in the United States during 1918 and sold in the market before June 1, 1919."

This firmly establishes the precedent and legality of price-setting on crops in advance of seeding. It is a most valuable and necessary duty for wheat growers to perform for themselves when the government quits and leaves them again at the mercy of profiteers. But only by unionizing can they do it. Teachers and preachers, lawyers and doctors and the scores of other professional people have the price of their services fixed in advance of the performance of it. Before union labor strikes a lick of work at anything they see to it that the wages they are to receive are settled. They know in advance what it is to be. Even the most unskilled common laborers know in advance what their daily, weekly or monthly wages are to be. Not so with the farmers. They are the only class of laborers who go it blind by performing the work first before anything is said or done about the price he is to receive. All this can be changed by unionizing and pricing the wheat for a year ahead.

Under the present board of trade gambling in prices of farm products it is more alluring to thousands of men than growing the crops. They hear of the successes but not the losses made by the small dealers in options, and at once take the get-rich-quick fever.

Two cases widely advertised will illustrate the demoralizing effect of such gambling on young farmers. A farmer in McPherson County, Kansas, sent his son to a school in Hutchinson a few years ago and gave him \$250, with the admonition that he must make it last him through the school year. His uncle in Hutchinson was dealing in wheat futures on the Kansas City board of trade and persuaded the lad to let him have \$200 to invest in wheat margins for him. At the close of the school the boy went home in his first tailor-made suit, a new touring car, and with a bank deposit book showing \$7,000 to his credit. Of course, all were astonished, and he was the hero with the girls and the envy of the country boys.

A Northern man, visiting in the South, fell in love with a Southern girl whose father was a cotton planter, and had been a colonel in the Confederacy, and, of course, would not allow his daughter to marry the Northerner. But the chap found out that the Colonel's home was heavily mortgaged and would be sold at auction in the fall if not paid. The Colonel was relying on one of those bumper "mortgage-lifting" cotton crops then in sight to turn the trick. The young man having observed the unusual cotton prospect sold it heavily on the New Orleans cotton exchange. Down went the cotton price until the old man's bumper crop would not pay expenses, to say nothing of lifting mortgages. The young man collected his margins and attended the sheriff's sale of the Colonel's farm. As it was about to go under the hammer to the highest bidder and the old man saw the accumulation of his life's work and home slipping from his grasp, the young man stepped up, called a halt, asked for

the mortgage, paid it off and handed it to the Colonel. Of course, the planter was so grateful to him he consented to the marriage.

This story was dramatized, filmed and exhibited in movies all over the country. No wonder boys get dissatisfied with the old slow farm life when they see the choicest prizes going to the gamblers in farm products.

There's a remedy. It is this: Let the big five—wheat, cotton, corn, cattle and hog growers—unionize separately, then federate. Adopt the minimum price system through which to control prices and put the boards of trade gamblers out of business in their products. A few farmers may oppose this program, but that might expose them to the suspicion that they had been fortunate gamblers themselves, or else lucky a few times in selling products at the top price speculators put them to and thus gained a relative advantage over neighbors who sold at lower prices, or they may have a covetous eye on a farm they hope the owner will be obliged to sell cheap or be unable to pay off the mortgage on it, so he can bid it in. Be that as it may, a very large majority of the farmers will favor encouraging and protecting their sons in the slow but honest, industrious way of home building and ownership through production by knocking out this tempting gambling device of boards of trade.

### **Objections to Government Price-Making.**

Of course, it would be much better for the wheat growers were the government to continue setting the price on wheat than to return that function to the gamblers. But the government should in that case price everything the wheat raisers must buy to do them justice. The time will probably come when the government will find it necessary to take over the entire business of price-making for all classes to prevent oppressive monopolies.

Were the government to continue pricing wheat it would still be necessary for the wheat growers to unionize to have authorized and qualified representatives to plead their cause before the price-making authorities to get a square deal. All unionized classes are clamoring for cheap wheat, and would influence a class-ruled government against the interest of unorganized wheat raisers.

In May, 1917, when speculators had the wheat, the price went to \$3.40 a bushel in Chicago, but the government saw no way to interfere with profits of gamblers and speculators. But when the growers had a new crop about ready to put on a \$3.00 market with a good prospect of it rising, the government got busy and reduced it to \$2.20 for the entire year, and \$2.00 for the succeeding year after a timely tip to the speculators and gamblers to unload. This shows that the government could not be trusted to deal fairly with the wheat growers unless they were unionized to bring their united influence to bear against other organized classes.

### **Tariff Discrimination Against Farmers.**

Placing a duty on foreign goods to protect the domestic market for native producers is a device to allow the home producers to unionize and arbitrarily raise the price of their products to the foreigner's price plus the tariff. That compels the consumer to pay that much more. The placing of that tariff on goods the farmers buy while leaving foreign agricultural products to come in free of duty shows the class nature of the device in its discrimination against the unorganized farmers.

A partial list of articles and amount of *ad valorem* duty on them, from the United States Customs Duties of 1913, that farmers buy are as follows :

Earthenware, porcelain, decorated.....	40%
Earthenware, common.....	15%
Glassware, plain and cut.....	45%

House or cabinet furniture.....	15%
Cotton cloth.....	10 to 30%
Cotton clothing, ready made.....	30%
Yarns.....	15%
Cloths, chiefly of wool.....	35%
Blankets and flannels.....	25%
Leather, manufactures of.....	30%
Soap, toilet.....	30%
Table and kitchen utensils, metal.....	25%
Dress goods, women's and children's.....	35%
Clothing, ready-made.....	35%
Carpets and rugs.....	50%

These are a few of the things farmers buy when they have the price on a monopolized market protected from foreign competition, while the following products of foreigners are allowed free importation: Bacon, beans, beef, broom corn, cattle, corn, corn meal, cream, fowls, grains, hams, hides, lamb, lard, meats, milk, mutton, pigs, potatoes, rye, sheep, wool, and wheat.

The manufacturing class unionized years ago to go into politics to control the government in their interest. They control the tariff policy of both parties. That policy is to protect themselves from the competition of foreign-made goods by a high tariff, while forcing the farmers to compete in a free market with foreign farm products. They want cheap food for themselves and employes, and cheap raw material for their factories, but high prices from the farmers for their goods.

The farmers should unionize and go into politics to protect their interests. Their tariff policy should be to force the government to either take the tariff off all goods they buy, or put a high tariff on all products they raise to sell. If they must sell on a free world market, they should demand the chance to buy their goods on a free world market also.

But they could get no benefit from a tariff on their products without unionizing and adopting the minimum price system.

A current news item on the expected tariff changes after the war should warn farmers to unionize so their executive officers could with authority represent their demands before the Tariff Commission. Quotations from it are as follows:

“After the war, and there are some who think that this means this year, a question of far-reaching importance by common consent is to be readjustment of tariffs. It is very fortunate in this situation that thanks largely to organized business men of the country, who insisted that the tariff should be made a business and not a political question, the government has already established a Tariff Commission, and this body, with its employed experts, has been busy for nearly two years compiling data that should be of incalculable value to Congress in determining what necessary duties are in a given industry.

“Industries generally have shown a disposition to give the Tariff Commission helpful co-operation. It will be fortunate for the country if this spirit of mutual co-operation and helpfulness prevails generally, for after the war, as never before, trade competition will be acute, and the question of tariffs will be questions of business strictly, to be determined by facts.”

All unionized manufacturers of goods farmers buy will have their officials before this Tariff Commission to advocate and plead for high protective tariffs on importations of foreign-made goods to protect their monopoly of the home markets. There is just as much justice and necessity for a high protective tariff on farmers' products as on those he has to buy, and they should all unionize to give them influence enough in our government to enforce it and thereby secure a monopoly of the United States markets for their products. Buying on a monopolized market and selling on a free-trade market has bankrupted many of them, and will many more.

### **Wheat Producers Should Go Into Politics.**

Yes, wheat producers and producers of all other farm products should unionize and go into politics as all other classes have done. Politics simply means advocating, supporting, voting for, lobbying for, and having enacted into law such

policies as are thought to be best for one's interest, or to defeat policies of others that are to one's injury or disadvantage. Of course, all classes now unionized and in politics for class legislation will advise the farmers to keep out of politics; but that is because they can get and keep the advantages they want over farmers that would be jeopardized did they unionize and go into politics.

Unionized city labor has had its officials prepare and lobby through Legislatures and Congress scores of bills for their special benefit. Unionized manufacturers, bankers, employers, packers, railroads, speculators and profiteers have had their officials do the same thing for them. Many of the laws thus enacted have been against the interest of the wheat growers, but not being unionized they had no one authorized and qualified to protect them.

A few current news items will illustrate how organized classes seek favorable legislation continually:

"CHICAGO, Feb. 26.—Following revelations that the packers 'scooped the world' on the appointment of Herbert Hoover as Food Administrator and packed Washington with friendly 'dollar-a-year men,' Wisconsin and Missouri butter and egg men are here today to throw light on alleged attempts to monopolize their industry. Francis J. Heney, who is directing the probe for the government, planned to introduce further letters in support of his contention that the Food Administration is honeycombed with men friendly to the packing interests. Correspondence between officials and representatives of the Chicago packing industries indicating a contemplated monopoly of the country's food and virtual control of the Food Administration was made public by Heney. He read more than 100 letters. They show that the largest packing houses are represented in the Food Administration by more than a half dozen trusted employees. They are on the payrolls of their former employers at lucrative salaries. Mr. Heney declared these silent 'payroll patriots' hold positions which have jurisdiction of practically every phase of the meat industry. 'Dollar a year from the government—\$10,000 a year from the packers, and services rendered accordingly,' Heney said. Since the start of the war, according to Mr. Heney, all of the larger Chicago packers have had private wires into Washington."



“WASHINGTON, Feb. 4.—Wage increases ranging from 30 to 40 per cent for railroad employees will be asked of the railroad wage commission by the four brotherhoods, it was stated today by one of the brotherhood representatives here. It is declared to be the purpose of the four brotherhoods not to embarrass Director General McAdoo by extravagant demands, but to ask increases amounting to approximately 66 per cent of the increased cost of living occasioned by the war. For the conductors, Garretson asked a flat rate of \$5.20 per hundred miles for the freight conductors and \$3.25 per hundred miles for the passenger conductors. The present rate for the former is \$4.00 to \$4.18 and \$2.90 for the latter. Next week W. S. Carter, president of the firemen, and Warren Stone, the engineers' chief, will testify as to the needs of the employees they represent. Mr. Garretson said today that while the executives of the four brotherhoods had organized to act together when the Adamson bill was before Congress, this time they are acting independently.”

“WASHINGTON, Sept. 1, 1917.—The fight for the 5-cent loaf of bread will be up to the consumer, and in this they will be reinforced by experts. The administration is on the side of the master bakers, and Hoover officials believe that with wheat selling at \$2.20 per bushel, a 16-ounce loaf cannot be made to retail for less than eight cents, but the agricultural experts and the consumers' representatives to the wheat price-fixing board agreed to the \$2.20 standard only upon the agreement for a 5-cent loaf of bread. Henry J. Waters, of Manhattan, Kans., was one of the \$2.20 supporters, while James Sullivan, of the American Federation of Labor, and William Doak, of the Trainmen's Brotherhood, advocated a \$1.84 standard.”

You will see from above items how unionized labor, while clamoring for ever increasing wages for themselves, had the nerve to take seats on the wheat-pricing commission and try to hammer it down from \$3.00, the price it was then, to \$1.84. You will also note that they were “reinforced” in their \$1.84 demand by “experts” and by the “administration” and “Hoover officials” and the “master bakers,” because they wanted a pound loaf for five cents, and would agree to the \$2.20 price only on that condition.

There was not a wheat raiser on that price-making board, nor an elected, authorized and qualified representative of the wheat producers. That is because the wheat growers

are not organized. Had they been unionized their officers would have been on that board to plead for better wages, and at least a dollar more would have been added to the price. The 650,000,000 bushels you produced in 1917 would have brought you that many more dollars, and the 1918 crop probably more than that.

Don't you think it would pay better to unionize and go into politics to increase your wages, as other classes do, than to go into the mud or dust of the field to raise more wheat to lower your wages with?

### **Farmers Punished for Capital and Labor Profiteering.**

Because farmers are not unionized and in politics to protect their interest against classes that are, they are punished by both foreign and domestic laws for the greed of others. Because unionized manufacturers had a high tariff put on imports of foreign goods the manufacturing countries put a high tariff on imports of farm products from the United States in retaliation. Thus the farmers not only have to buy their supplies on a protected market, but sell their products on the basis of foreign protected markets. Because we have some wheat to export every year—about an average of sixteen per cent of annual crop in the ten years from 1904 to 1913 inclusive—it affects the price for the entire crop. In other words, we must sell all our wheat at the foreign market price minus their import tariff, transportation and commissions to place it there.

In this matter wheat growers should follow the example of manufacturers to be on an equality with them. That is to unionize, go into politics, have a tariff of \$2.00 a bushel put on wheat importations, charge the domestic consumers the foreign price of wheat plus transportation, commissions, and \$1.90 of the protective tariff. If your wheat is not all taken at that price, feed it to your chickens, pigs and calves, or store it away for famine years, or ship it abroad for half

the home price. That last plan is what the manufacturers do with their surplus goods that the home people cannot buy at their inflated prices.

Because speculators and gamblers put the price of wheat up to \$3.40 a bushel last May, when they had gotten it out of the farmers hands at from \$1.00 to \$1.50 a bushel the fall before, the government punished the wheat raisers by pricing their two following crops unreasonably low for war and famine conditions.

Because warehouses, packing houses, jobbers, wholesalers, commission men, union labor and retailers, take such exorbitant tolls out of farm products, the price to the farmers is forced down to the lowest possible point to make it possible for consumers to buy them. This is often less than one-half to one-fourth what they should have to cover skilled labor wages and overhead expenses.

Producers of all farm products should unionize and set minimum prices on them that would cover those two classes of cost. They should take theirs out first, as they are entitled to do, and then let other classes fight it out among themselves and with the public for theirs.

What do you think of that plan, Mr. Farmer? That is the minimum price plan. I am sure you would like to get the good wages union labor is getting and all the overhead expenses it costs you to produce your products. You can have both by unionizing to inaugurate and follow that plan in selling your products. Will it pay to unionize for that? It is up to you to decide.

### **Cost of Raising Wheat in Argentina.**

A copy of a letter from our consul at Rosario, Argentina, Mr. Wilbert L. Bonrey, dated October 29, 1917, was mailed to me February 23, 1918, by the Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., on my request for statistics on cost of wheat production in this and foreign countries. It is an interesting view of our far off competitors in wheat raising, and I give it in full:

TABLE IV.

"ROSARIO, ARGENTINA, October 29, 1917.

"Deputy Alfredo Echague, chairman of a committee appointed to study the question of an export tax, has published certain figures calculated to show the cost to the producer of raising wheat as it is produced in Argentina. The calculation is based upon the expense of cultivating a wheat farm of 220 hectares (543.62 acres), of which twenty hectares, or 49.42 acres, are devoted to pasturage for the horses, leaving 494.2 acres for wheat. The figures are as follows:

*Capital.*

Two double plows.....	\$169.84
Two harrows.....	59.44
One seeder.....	161.35
One header.....	382.14
Three wagons.....	551.98
Implements.....	212.30
Corral and pasture fence.....	212.30
Tools.....	84.92
Ranch hut and water tank.....	127.38
Canvas covering for stacks.....	127.38
Fifty horses at \$21.23.....	1,061.50
Seed wheat.....	866.18
	<hr/>
Total capital.....	\$4,016.71

*Expenses.*

Eight per cent upon capital.....	\$321.33
Ten per cent depreciation on tools and animals.....	315.05
Plowing, harrowing, sowing.....	849.20
Seed, 54 pounds per acre.....	870.00
Sulphur.....	23.78
Insurance against hail.....	148.61
Cutting and stacking.....	849.20
Threshing.....	1,019.04
Bags.....	509.52
Cartage to station.....	509.52
Freight to port.....	573.21
Support of farmer and family.....	849.20
	<hr/>
Total expense of production.....	\$6,837.66

“Production : 2,000 quintals, of which 25 per cent goes to the owner of the land. The 1,500 quintals, or about 5,513 bushels, have thus cost the tenant about \$1.24 per bushel, allowing the owner of the land 1,838 bushels, or 3.38 bushels per acre as rental, the tenant furnishing seed, tools, animals, insurance, and paying threshing bill and family expenses. The estimate is based upon the presumption of a yield of approximately 14.87 bushels per acre for the land actually cultivated.

“The figures throw some light upon methods of wheat raising in Argentina, upon prevailing prices, and indicate the outfit considered necessary and the status of the tenant. The prices of machinery may appear high, but are actually based upon the prices prevailing before the war, and are lower than the present prices. The low price of farm horses is an interesting feature of the estimate, and the primitive arrangements for the living accommodations of the tenant are also suggested. The rental of the bare land, amounting to 3.38 bushels per acre, or more than \$7.00 per acre at prevailing prices for cash wheat, may appear high for naked land without house, well, fence, barn, or stock, the landlord furnishing nothing except the use of the land. The amount of land worked by one family is large, and if a good crop and a good price is realized, both landlord and tenant are usually satisfied. The figures indicate the amount of capital which the tenant farmer of Argentina is supposed to command, although as a matter of fact it is commonly advanced to him by some one interested in his operations, and as it is advanced without other security than the crop, an element of speculation is injected into the activities of the farmer, whose effort is directed to raising wheat to the exclusion of poultry, vegetables, fruits, and all other side-products incidental to farming in older countries. The raising of wheat is an industrial undertaking and is not associated with the idea of a homestead or permanent residence. Having only one product to sell, a failure of the wheat crop places the wheat farmer in a distressing position, and also embarrasses those who have advanced capital to him, and is reflected in the general trade situation, in railroad receipts, and in public revenues.

“Over against the estimate of \$1.24 for the cost of producing wheat, must be sent the claim of millers to the effect that wheat can be produced under normal conditions for eighty cents per bushel, and the further fact that the cost depends largely upon the personal equation of the producer.

“A true copy of the signed original.—S. R. P.”

The millers there evidently want an export duty on wheat, but not on flour or other mill products. That would give them a fine monopoly of the wheat at their own price, and shows the need of wheat growers there unionizing.

The most interesting thing about our South American competitor is his \$127.38 dwelling and water tank. If the tank costs as much as they do in Kansas it would leave about \$50 for the dwelling, when there should be at least \$15,000 worth of buildings on a farm that size for comfort and convenience for a family and force large enough to operate it.

The next is his \$21.23 horses, while they cost us from \$150 to \$250 each; then comes plowing, harrowing and sowing for \$1.72 an acre, while it should be about \$6.00 for preparing and seeding an acre; next is cutting and stacking for \$1.72 per acre, when it should be \$3.50 to \$5.00; then comes ten cents freight to port, while we pay double that from our central wheat belt.

Now the question for you wheat producers to answer is: Do you wish to continue in competition with this Argentina wheat grower until your standard of living is reduced to a par with his? If you do not, then you simply must unionize yourselves and then unionize him to stop his foolishness, or else put up a high tariff wall to fence his wheat out of competition with yours in your home market. If you adopt the latter course, you must go into politics to make high tariff on wheat a campaign issue in all elections, put up candidates of your own class and send them out as spell-binders to win votes for a protective tariff on all farm products that are unionized. They can borrow a few barrels of campaign speeches from the Republican Party used by their spell-binders for the last half century in advocating a protective tariff on "infant industries" on the pretext of saving their laborers from the alleged low standard of living prevailing in Europe. Those speeches will fit the wheat growers' case. They need protection from the competition of pauper wheat raisers of Argentina who have no home, and evidently will never be able to own one, as the above letter shows.

The millers there as here are unionized, and because they can take advantage of the wheat growers' necessity for cash and take his wheat for 80 cents a bushel that costs him \$1.24 to raise, and then claim it can be raised for that price under "normal conditions." Evidently they mean by "normal conditions" a man with a robust wife and large family to be worked as slaves without compensation. That is the kind of "normal conditions" the millers desire here, and they aided in beating down our good 1914 wheat crop to 60 cents a bushel. Millions of bushels were sold in Kansas that year at from 60 to 65 cents a bushel, and had it not been for the war coming on the price would probably have gone much lower than that.

Such prices will prevail again after the war if you wheat raisers fail to unionize to protect yourselves from the pauperized growers of other countries and profiteers at home. It is now up to you.

### **To Give First Market to Needy Producers.**

One of the good things to be accomplished by wheat growers unionizing is to enable them to give the first market each year to those who must sell right after harvest on account of debts, having no granary room or having to move, and to pay those able to hold a monthly increase equal to interest and shrinkage for keeping it off the market. That can be done through the minimum pricing by a monthly increase of from two to three cents, as the executive board may determine is necessary. As it is now, many who are able to hold their wheat dump it on the market through fear of lower prices, or at least no increase to pay them for holding it. That gluts the market and overtaxes railroads, elevators and mills to take care of it, tending to force prices ever lower.

The same price the year round is a serious defect in the present government pricing. Were we to get a big crop this year (1918) and good threshing weather right after harvest

the wheat would be dumped on the market in two or three months, swamping the government to take care of it. The other plan, of a gradual increased price, would insure an even delivery throughout the year.

As the government will not price your wheat after the war, it is the right and duty of wheat growers to unionize now to take over that most important duty when the government quits.

### **Greater Security for Borrowed Money.**

Unionizing to stabilize and put a bottom to the price of wheat high enough to cover skilled union wages and overhead expenses will greatly increase its security value. Wheat raisers who are obliged to borrow on wheat could get larger amounts at a lower rate, and not be harassed for payment for fear of its price decreasing. Wheat would then be good security for anything wanted on credit up to its minimum price when the union demonstrated it was able to keep it from going below that.

Wheat raisers should change tactics, and instead of increasing the yield go to unionizing to put worth and value into what they now raise. They take worth and value out of it by raising more unless they unionize. Take the sensible plan all other classes are taking.

Union labor now gets more wages for eight hours a day than in three days of twelve hours each before unionizing. All classes have found out by experience they can increase their income and decrease their labor by unionizing. Wheat raisers can do that also by following that plan. Why not try it? It is up to them to unionize. No others can do it for them.

### **Foolishness of Kansas Wheat Growers.**

Nothing so demonstrates the need of wheat growers unionizing to set and maintain prices on wheat as the foolish-



ness of producing large crops for less money than smaller ones. Nobody but farmers are now foolish enough to work for others free and board themselves, and pay a big bonus for that privilege. That is because all other classes are unionized to fix in advance the price they are to receive for labor or service. They look after price-making first and perform the service afterwards, while the farmers produce first and allow others to set the price afterwards.

To illustrate the foolishness of Kansas wheat raisers, a few of the worst cases of misapplied energy will suffice. In the even millions only, in 1883 we raised 30,000,000 bushels, worth \$22,000,000. Then we got work crazy and raised 40,000,000 bushels in 1884, for which we got \$20,000,000. Raised 18,000,000 bushels to give away free and had to put up \$2,000,000 to get them to take it off our hands, as compared with the price the previous year. Could anything be more foolish except more of it? And here is more: In 1891 we raised 58,000,000 bushels for \$42,000,000. Then the working fever struck us harder and we put in 395,919 acres more, raised 74,000,000 bushels in 1892 and got \$40,000,000—16,000,000 bushels given away with the same bonus for taking it—\$2,000,000. What do you know about that for a clear case of work brittle stupidity? In 1893 on 24,000,000 bushels \$11,000,000 was realized, while 28,000,000 bushels in 1894 brought the same price—four million bushels given away after paying all the expense of raising and marketing it. But, of course, we are glad they didn't charge anything that time for taking it. We didn't get off so easy the next time, for in 1897 we got \$34,000,000 for 51,000,000 bushels, while only \$32,000,000 for 60,000,000 bushels the next year. They held us up for \$2,000,000 for being so generous as to raise and give away 9,000,000 bushels. In 1904 we realized \$51,000,000 on 65,000,000 bushels, while the year before we got only \$52,000,000 for 94,000,000 bushels—42,000,000 bushels for only \$1,000,000 more— $2\frac{1}{3}$  cents a bushel. In

1906, a crop of 93,000,000 bushels brought us only \$55,000,000, while 74,000,000 bushels in 1907 brought \$56,000,000—19,000,000 bushels more realized one million dollars less in 1906 compared with the 1907 crop.

And so the story goes on. If not always less money for bigger crops, at least much less proportionately. What a punishment for industry! What a punishment for neglect to unionize! No wonder our sons leave the farm. No wonder girls refuse to marry them unless they do. No wonder the farmers are the butt of ridicule everywhere. No wonder they are considered the stupid mudsills of the population to be swindled by every grafter and profiteer.

Wheat growers, arise and unionize! Demand and enforce skilled labor wages and good interest on investments through the minimum price system; put members of your union in Legislatures and Congress to work for your interests as other classes do; have executive boards of your own members to advise and direct them and you; follow their advice and orders in unison; work, act and vote as one; learn to obey your chosen leaders and do team work. Then you will be respected and wield a power the government will recognize and consult.

### **Can Wheat Growers Afford to Unionize?**

With the foregoing record of billions of dollars lost to the wheat growers through failure to unionize and adopt the minimum price system, there are still some who will ask, "Will it pay to unionize? Will it pay to take the time to attend a meeting to organize? Will it pay to pay a membership fee to employ organizers? Will it pay to pay monthly dues to employ elected members of our union to look after our interests and aid and direct us what to do and when and how to do it to increase our wages?" Ask members of any labor union, or any trade union, or any industrial union, or any association that fixes minimum prices for their product

or services, and over ninety-nine per cent of them will tell you they wouldn't be without it; that their expenses for maintaining their union is only a small fraction of the additional money received through the power and advantages of it.

With your losses herein shown you and your gains assured, the questions in the minds of wheat growers should be, "Can we afford to remain unorganized? Can we afford to continue raising hundreds of millions of bushels to give away free as in the past? Can we afford to work for such low wages, and invest at so low a rate of interest? Can we afford to work and invest and leave to gamblers and profiteers the fixing of our wages and interest? Can we afford to see our sons and daughters continue leaving us for better wages in cities? Can we afford to neglect longer to unionize to demand and enforce skilled labor wages and reasonable interest on our investment as other classes do?" It is for you wheat producers to answer these questions, and act to realize your reward as others do by unionizing.

Union laborers would be considered crazy were they to propose to work twelve hours a day for less wages than for eight hours, yet wheat growers will continue to raise twelve bushels of wheat for less money than for eight bushels until they unionize to enable them to stop such foolishness.

### **Menace of Big Farms.**

Probably one of the greatest menaces to the average wheat grower is the mammoth farm that can and may put them out of the wheat raising business unless curbed by the wheat growers themselves through their united political power. The following news item from Canada, dated March 30, 1918, indicates the trend of the big farm menace to the small wheat farms:

"All plowing contests since plows first were made will be eclipsed by a contest next month among the twenty-six units of a 50,000-acre farm, each unit being 1,920 acres, where iron horses will plow, seed and

harrow in ten days' time or less, two-thirds the entire acreage of each unit. Individuals and corporations, returned soldiers and retired farmers are vying with each other and the government in Canada's gigantic effort to grow a maximum quantity of wheat. Not only has the Dominion government ordered one thousand tractors delivered this spring for distribution among the wheat growers, but the government of Saskatchewan alone will put in crop an immense government tract, if it follows the lead of the Chicago capitalists headed by Frederick S. Oliver, who will operate 50,000 acres in the Snipe Lake district, Saskatchewan. The great plowing contest will be on that Snipe Lake farm of Mr. Oliver, and a purchase of tractors amounting to \$75,000 has been made for it. The match will be under the supervision of the world's champion sod-turner, J. E. Hauskins, of Eston, who boasts he is no 'silk shirt farmer,' but a real one bred on the soil. So determined is Canada that its wonderful wheat-growing prairies shall not lie idle for lack of the population to work them as the wheat-growing valleys of the United States are worked, that not only on the great Snipe Lake farm, but throughout the Province, whole armies of workers with a fleet of tractors like the battle tanks of Flanders will go into action as soon as the spring opens. According to the suggestion of the Hon. George Langley of the Saskatchewan government, who proposes a government enterprise on a bigger scale even than the Oliver farm, 3,300 tractors and 20,000 men enlisted as soldiers of the soil, could seed and harvest a million acres this year and add at least a quarter of a billion bushels of wheat to the storehouses of the Allies."

"GREAT FALLS, MONT., Jan. 9, 1919.—Wheat will be harvested next fall from one of the world's largest farms, comprising about 200,000 acres of Indian lands in Montana and Wyoming. Of this big tract, about 33,000 acres of irrigated land has been plowed and seeded, and the remainder, it is announced, will be cultivated during the coming summer. The land is located on the Crow, Blackfeet and Fork Peck reservations in Montana and the Wing River reservation in Wyoming. To make this land productive a corporation with \$2,000,000 capital was organized last spring when Thomas D. Campbell, a North Dakota farmer, conceived the idea of cultivating the thousands of acres of the Indian lands in Montana and Wyoming. He lacked capital, but obtained the approval and assistance of the Secretary of the Interior, Franklin K. Lane, and J. P. Morgan and other leading New York bankers. The corporation was then formed with several of these bankers as members of the board of directors and Mr. Campbell as president. On this huge farm not a horse will be used. Instead, large tractors capable of turning over large quantities of prairie sod were purchased. In all fifty-two

of these machines are now the property of the corporation, and the plowing record for last summer was more than one acre a minute for the working time. On one day 1,880 acres were turned and broken. It is proposed to organize the farm into 5,000-acre units, each with its own group of permanent buildings, modernly equipped and in charge of a competent farm manager. Each farm will be separately managed. Contracts for the leasing of the land on long term agreements have been executed with the government through Secretary Lane. Many acres of similar land exist in practically all of the Pacific Coast states as well as in Colorado, and steps are being taken to open that land to the returning soldiers. No steps have thus far been taken in Montana to invite soldiers to settle on the uncultivated land."

While nothing should be said or done to discourage food production during the war, yet wheat growers should unionize at once and prepare to put the above kind of wheat raisers out of business as soon as peace is restored.

There are only two courses to follow: either put them out of competition with you or go out of the wheat growing business yourselves. The small farm operator cannot possibly raise wheat as cheaply as can be done on the above magnitude. This competition is more to be feared than that of Argentine previously referred to. There are only two ways to get rid of it: First, make the wheat growers' union international and limit by law the number of acres one person or company may farm in all countries; or, second, put a protective tariff on wheat and its products and thus eliminate competition in the home market.

Herein is a lot of political work for the wheat growers' union to do when organized. It should be international as labor and capital unions are. It should elect its own members to Legislatures and Congress where possible as they do. Governments should be put out of the wheat raising business or else be compelled to go to producing things wheat growers buy. Only through unionizing can wheat growers have any political power to aid themselves and protect their interests. Wonderful inventions take the place of scores of men in producing things farmers buy, yet their price is higher than

ever and still advancing; therefore, farm products must be advanced in price regardless of increased facilities for production, not for spite or retaliation, but for economic necessity to put farmers on equality with other producers to enable them to buy their necessities. Only through unionizing and adopting and enforcing the minimum price system based on skilled union wages and overhead expenses can that be done.

To have equality with all other organized classes in economic and political power and government influence the wheat raisers must unionize and go into politics to demand and work for their interests through their elected officers and representatives as they do. Only through that plan can they get their wages, and interest on investments increased and guaranteed. And this course should be followed at once by the producers of each farm product organizing into separate unions and then all federating into the American Federation of Farmers to checkmate and offset the economic and political power of other unionized and federated classes of labor and capital.

The later news item concerning the 200,000-acre farm shows the growing danger in this country of capitalists' competition in the farming business that could and probably will put the small farmers out of business unless they unionize to prevent it by law. There is no time to lose in unionizing and investigating the terms of Morgan's land leases from the government, and have them annulled.

### **Labor Wages Based on Cost of Living.**

It is a mistaken idea that farmers can live cheaper than city people if they indulge in the same luxuries they do. And why shouldn't they? This thing of expecting and compelling farmers to live on less than city people is driving them to the city. Through prices of their products they must receive wages equal to skilled union wages in cities or

else desert the farm for city employment. Interest on capital invested in land, improvements and farming equipment must be as good and as well secured by adequate returns as that invested in city property, or capital will also desert the farm for city investments.

The basis of city union wages is now regulated by the ascertained cost of maintaining an average family in necessities, luxuries and idleness, or in school, by the head of the family. And this should also be the basis of the farmer's wages collected through the minimum price system herein advocated.

I shall here introduce two news items to show that the government recognizes the cost of maintaining a family to be the basis of wages and what that cost is ascertained to be :

“WASHINGTON, March 29, 1918.—A national labor policy for the duration of the war and giving a sweeping victory to trade unionism, was signed this afternoon by the representatives of capital and labor, in the labor planning board. The document was drawn up in the form of a letter to Secretary of Labor Wilson signed by ten of the foremost labor leaders and representative employers of the nation and by former President Taft and Frank P. Walsh, as representatives of the public. It provides for virtually complete recognition of the rights of the union workers, and it was conceded by labor men this afternoon to be their most signal victory in the annals of trade disputes. It includes a declaration of principles and policy to govern workers in industry during the war, and a further declaration of the machinery by which future disputes between labor and capital may be adjusted, and provides definite and exact terms and means for what might be called ‘a supreme court of capital and labor.’ This includes a board along the lines of the planning board to adjust labor difficulties. Among the principles, it is understood, there is a guarantee that the common laborer will receive wages proportionate to the high cost of living and will provide for his comfort and health. This alone means that the so-called day laborer will have his wages amount to at least \$4.00 a day.

“WASHINGTON, April 10, 1918.—The average American family spends as much today for food alone as it did in 1900 to maintain the entire household. The cost of living has grown double since the beginning of the century, according to a report issued today by the bureau of labor statistics. The average cost of household maintenance in 1900

was \$769. During 1917 the cost for the same commodities was \$1,401. Food alone in 1917 cost only \$53 less than all items combined in 1900, when \$327 represented the expenditures for food in the average working-man's family. By 1911 it had swelled to \$430, and in 1917 increased to \$716. The landlord's toll has gone up 59 per cent and clothing has doubled, rising from \$108 to \$210. Fuel and lighting have increased from \$40 to \$82. The largest advance in these items occurred between 1914 and 1917. The 1917 figures, the report shows, are already incorrect, because of the continuous advances. The minimum standard of comfort today, the bureau shows, requires a wage approximately of \$1,500 a year. The average of twenty-four American cities is that the minimum amount necessary for a reasonable standard of health and comfort is \$1,650, of which \$660 is spent for food. Investigation made by the department of health in New York City fixed the figures for that city at \$1,682. In compiling the figures the bureau omits the costs of such things as amusements, charity, books, insurance, taxes and expenses incidental to sickness."

### **Wheat Raisers Not Getting a Living Wage.**

I shall now introduce statistics giving the yield, price per bushel and value per acre of wheat in the United States, and in Kansas separately, for the last fifty years preceding 1916, to show that the price of wheat should be greatly increased to give the grower wages equal to skilled union wages and adequate interest on investments, which he should have to be on equal footing with city labor :



TABLE V.  
BULLETIN 514, U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.  
*Wheat, yields per acre and prices, by States.*

YEAR	UNITED STATES			KANSAS		
	Yield	Price	Value	Yield	Price	Value
	<i>Bushels</i>	<i>Cents</i>		<i>Bushels</i>		
1866.....	9.9	152.7	\$15.05	21.4	\$1.33	\$28.46
1867.....	11.6	145.2	16.83	14.0	1.32	18.48
1868.....	12.1	108.5	13.17	15.6	1.00	15.60
1869.....	13.6	76.5	10.38	18.5	.63	11.66
1870.....	12.4	94.4	11.73	15.0	.77	11.55
1871.....	11.6	114.5	13.24	15.9	1.02	16.22
1872.....	12.0	111.4	13.35	11.6	1.26	14.62
1873.....	12.7	106.9	13.56	14.0	.92	12.88
1874.....	12.3	86.3	10.65	13.7	.76	10.41
1875.....	11.1	89.5	9.91	17.0	.76	12.92
1876.....	10.5	97.0	10.16	14.6	.79	11.53
1877.....	13.9	105.7	14.65	13.5	.80	10.80
1878.....	13.1	77.6	10.15	16.3	.59	9.62
1879.....	13.8	110.8	15.27	11.0	.89	9.79
1880.....	13.1	95.1	12.48	10.0	.70	7.00
1881.....	10.2	119.2	12.12	9.1	1.05	9.56
1882.....	13.6	88.4	12.02	19.9	.67	13.33
1883.....	11.6	91.1	10.52	17.5	.78	13.65
1884.....	13.0	64.5	8.38	16.5	.45	7.42
1885.....	10.4	77.1	8.05	10.6	.65	6.89
1886.....	12.4	68.7	8.54	11.4	.58	6.61
1887.....	12.1	68.1	8.25	9.6	.61	5.86
1888.....	11.1	92.6	10.32	15.2	.88	13.38
1889.....	12.9	69.8	8.98	18.4	.55	10.12
1890.....	11.1	83.8	9.28	13.7	.77	10.55
1891.....	15.3	83.9	12.86	15.5	.73	11.32
1892.....	13.4	62.4	8.35	17.4	.52	9.05
1893.....	11.4	53.8	6.16	8.4	.42	3.53
1894.....	13.2	49.1	6.48	10.4	.44	4.58
1895.....	13.7	50.9	6.99	7.7	.45	3.46
1896.....	12.4	72.6	8.97	10.6	.63	6.68
1897.....	13.4	80.8	10.86	15.5	.74	11.47
1898.....	15.3	58.2	8.92	14.2	.50	7.10
1899.....	12.3	58.4	7.17	9.8	.52	5.10
1900.....	12.3	61.9	7.61	17.7	.55	9.74
1901.....	15.0	62.4	9.37	18.5	.59	10.92
1902.....	14.5	63.0	9.14	10.4	.55	5.72
1903.....	12.9	69.5	8.96	14.1	.59	8.32
1904.....	12.5	92.4	11.58	12.4	.89	11.04
1905.....	14.5	74.8	10.83	13.9	.71	9.87
1906.....	15.5	66.7	10.37	15.1	.58	8.76
1907.....	14.0	87.4	12.26	11.0	.82	9.02
1908.....	14.0	92.8	12.97	12.6	.88	11.09
1909.....	15.8	98.4	15.58	14.4	.96	13.82
1910.....	13.9	88.3	12.28	14.1	.84	11.84
1911.....	12.5	87.4	10.96	10.7	.91	9.74
1912.....	15.9	76.0	12.12	15.5	.74	11.47
1913.....	15.2	79.9	12.16	13.0	.79	10.27
1914.....	16.6	98.6	16.41	20.5	.95	19.48
1915.....	17.0	91.9	15.58	12.5	.89	11.12
10-YEAR AVERAGE						
1866-1875.....	11.9	108.6	12.79	15.7	.98	15.28
1876-1885.....	12.3	92.6	11.38	13.9	.74	9.96
1886-1895.....	12.7	68.3	8.62	12.8	.60	7.85
1896-1905.....	13.5	69.4	9.34	13.7	.63	8.60
1906-1915.....	15.0	86.7	13.07	13.9	.84	11.66

By multiplying the number of acres in wheat by the average value of the wheat, you can find out approximately your wages and interest. The average returns from eighty acres the last forty years shows \$763.40—about one-fourth of what is necessary to keep a family now and give interest on investments.

### **What an Eighty-Acre Wheat Farm Should Yield in Money.**

If the children are to remain on the farm it must necessarily be divided into smaller farms as they marry and establish homes of their own. Therefore, eighty acres should be the maximum-size wheat farm, and wages and interest based on it. The eighty acres farmed to wheat should yield an income of \$1,650 in wages to the farmer; \$800 in interest at ten per cent on its value at \$100 per acre; \$500 in interest on \$5,000 invested in improvements and equipment; making a total necessary income of \$2,950.

But the average income from eighty acres of wheat in the United States for fifty years is herein shown to be only \$883.20. If this be applied on the interest it falls \$416.80 short of paying it and nothing for wages. If it be applied on the wages necessary to maintain a family as above ascertained by the bureau of labor statistics (\$1,650) it falls \$766.80 short of doing it, and nothing for interest. No wonder people and capital leave the farm. They will continue doing so unless wages and interest are raised through the minimum price system to equal that of unionized labor and capital in cities. It may be suggested by some that the farm should be increased in size instead of decreased. But that would result in driving more people to the cities; or that increased yield per acre should be attempted. But I have herein shown by statistics that that results in reducing money returns instead of increasing it. So the only solution is to unionize and fix a minimum price on wheat that will

yield \$2,950 from an eighty-acre farm. That would be about \$2.80 per bushel at the farmers' home market on the 1,046.40-bushel average per eighty-acre farm for the fifty years recorded, or nearly three and a third times the average price received of 85.12 cents per pushel.

Wages of city union labor have been advanced to reach the \$1,650 mark in most industries, and farmers' wages should follow suit to put them on an equality. Land at \$100 an acre is low priced, since it is now more than double that price in many localities. Ten per cent on it and improvements and equipment is reasonable, since it covers taxes, insurance and depreciation also. Double that rate can be made in good industrial or city investments. There is no profit whatever figured in the \$2.80 price. That, then, should be the fixed minimum price in the farmer's home market at harvest time, and a monthly increase of three cents a bushel thereafter to cover storage, shrinkage and interest.

After the war union labor will fight to maintain war wages and to force farm products to prewar prices. It will pay you big to unionize now for self-protection.

### **Price of Wheat Unimportant Factor in Living Expenses.**

On mentioning the necessity of a wheat growers' union to maintain, or increase, the price of wheat to one wheat raiser, he expressed his opinion that wages and prices are too high now, and that if the wheat price came down so would all other prices, and that would be a benefit to the farmers. He had the erroneous idea that the prices of all things depended on the price of wheat, while the facts are that the price of nothing else necessarily depends on the wheat price, not even its own products—flour, bran, bread, crackers, etc.—

since other parties can and do fix the price on them regardless of whether wheat be \$1.00 or \$3.00 a bushel, as the following press items conclusively proves :

“WASHINGTON, Nov. 25.—A statement showing average family expenditure for food during the past year has just been issued by the Labor Department. The figures, which are based on price quotations received monthly by the department from more than 2,000 retail stores throughout the country, and which are taken from twenty-two of the most essential articles, show that the average family expenditure from September, 1917, to September, 1918, increased sixteen per cent.”

Remember that during all that time the price of wheat was stationary, having been set by the government. It was not one of the twenty-two articles that increased the cost of living sixteen per cent in one year.

But here are some of the producers and dealers in the products of wheat that did contribute to that increased cost of living :

“‘To make a barrel of flour takes 264 pounds of wheat,’ declared Mr. Hyde, at a convention of farmers at Kansas City, Kan., March 21. ‘From this barrel of flour the bakers get 300 sixteen-ounce loaves of bread. The farmer gets \$8.80 for the wheat that goes into the barrel of flour. The consumer pays a total of \$31.36 for the 300 loaves of bread. That makes a difference of \$22.66—and who gets it? When wheat was ninety cents a bushel, soda crackers sold for five cents a pound. Now, when wheat is about twice that price, the price of crackers has gone up to twenty cents. Hoover recommended the people eat substitutes for wheat flour, and through a patriotic spirit the people obeyed. Immediately the price of corn meal and other substitute flour products ascended.’”

Had wheat been \$3.20 instead of \$2.20, Chicago basis, what a boon it would have been to the wheat grower and his family. It would have given them fair wages and overhead expenses while not adding one cent to the cost of living. It would have simply been deducted from the excess profits of the foregoing profiteers. Wouldn't all people except these rather see the wheat raisers get it?

Then, wheat growers, unionize and take what is justly yours from these city profiteers in your product.

## Cost But Not Price of Wheat Advances.

Governor Capper summed up the case for the wheat raiser in *Capper's Weekly* of September 29, 1917, as follows:

"A year ago, before we were at war, the President and Congress raised the wages of the best paid labor in the country. Recently, in time of war, with the price of every necessity soaring, except one, we have reduced the wages of the lowest paid and most vitally needed working man—the man on the farm. We have fixed the price of his product at \$2.00, less dockage charges, and he has a short crop at that. I will also confess that I think we should quit making the farmer the goat in every emergency. With the prices of everything the farmer has to buy steadily advancing, with market manipulators and price-fixing organizations paying him for years as small a price as possible for his products, then doubling their value to the consumer; with ten years of uncertain crop seasons against him—he somehow was able to plug along until the war came and promised him a reward, the reward of a lifetime in a fair—mind you, I say fair—price for his wheat crop. Did he get that reward? He did not. Speculation, which for once was in his favor, was stopped and wheat prices immediately slumped 35 to 40 per cent. But even this was not enough. The very emergency which offered the western wheat grower his long-deferred reward, also threatened and still threatens our national existence, and the wheat grower submitted patriotically to having the price of his product fixed still lower, down to \$2 a bushel, less dockage, a price which on many farms this year in the winter wheat belt, does not really meet the cost of production."

And in the *Topeka Daily Capital* of September 1, 1917, he says: "It is fair to say, however, that but for government interference last May wheat would bring today nearer \$5 than \$2.

Now, over a year later, we find wheat at the same price and nailed down by Congress for another year with no increase, while the cost of producing wheat has greatly advanced in the last year. Living expenses, implements, building and repair material, wages, etc., have increased from 100 per cent to 500 per cent in some cases to the wheat raiser, while he is prohibited from adding any of it to the price of his product as all other classes do.

It will surely pay to unionize to stop this unfair discrimination.

### **Farmers Receive the Lowest Income.**

“WASHINGTON, June 14.—A larger proportion of brokers than of any other occupational class reported incomes of more than \$3,000 in 1916, and farmers made proportionately the smallest number of returns, it was shown today in analysis of income tax returns for 1916. One out of every five brokers made returns, but only one in 400 farmers. Nearly one-fifth of all lawyers and judges made returns.”

This is the direct result of farmers failing to unionize and go after higher wages as all other classes do.

### **Wheat the Only Product Requisitioned.**

“WASHINGTON, March 30.—The Food Administration’s appeal to loyal American farmers to market their wheat now, while the greatest difficulty is being met in feeding the Allies, had only slight effect last week, when mill receipts increased to 3,250,000 bushels as compared with the 3,000,000 bushels of the previous week. Normal receipts are 7,600,000 bushels. Many millions of bushels, the Administration said, still are in storage on the farms. Exports to the Allies meanwhile continue to decline and from March 15 to 22 amounted to only 199,749 tons of cereals as compared with the weekly program of 270,000 tons. Up to March 22 there was a deficit of 1,001,301 tons in shipments of breadstuffs, which must be made up with wheat. Decision to requisition all wheat held by German sympathizers seeking to profiteer or hamper the government has not been changed, administration officials said. They indicated, however, that another week or ten days would be given loyal Americans to sell their grain, and that drastic action then would be considered to bring out what was left.”

Owing to filled elevators and no cars to be had in many localities, and bad weather and roads in others, some loyal wheat growers were unable to market all their wheat. They were notified by the administration to market it within a few days or they would be liable to prosecution. At the same time the government needed scores of other things to equip and provision the army as badly as wheat, but nothing else was requisitioned. They were paid all they asked for their services or products, which in some cases were several hundred per cent above cost of production. Your Uncle Samuel did not give you wheat raisers a fair deal, and I

suppose you can tell him so, now that the war is over, without being accused of pro-Germanism, for there is not a more loyal bunch than you are. Tens of thousands of you answered the call to arms and thousands made the supreme sacrifice. To produce this wheat you were in desperate need of farm implements, twine, lumber, food, coal and clothing, that you were unable to buy owing to their high prices, yet your government refused to come to your aid by forcing the price down fifty per cent and ordering holders to sell at once under penalty of confiscation. Huge warehouses were filled with these goods by producers and profiteers holding them for still higher prices.

That's the kind of treatment you can expect from a labor and capital controlled government until you unionize and put a controlling majority in Congress from your own class.

### Congressional Fight for \$2.50 Wheat.

“WASHINGTON, April 9.—Senate and House conferees were still tightly deadlocked today over \$2.50 wheat. They expected, however, before evening to formally disagree and to make a report tomorrow. The conferees planned to lay their disagreement before the House for instructions. This will give the House an opportunity to vote on the measure and register its approval or disapproval of the new minimum. The proposal passed the Senate by a two-thirds vote, despite the administration's protest. Since that time the administration forces have been exerting every pressure to defeat it in the House. A vote will be taken later in the week, according to present plans. Both sides admitted the vote would be close.”

#### THE VOTE ON \$2.50 WHEAT IN HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, APRIL 18, 1918.

	<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>
Alabama.....	0	8
Arizona.....	2	5
Arkansas.....	2	5
California.....	2	5
Colorado.....	3	1
	—	—
Carried forward.....	9	24

Brought forward.....	9	24
Connecticut.....	1	4
Delaware.....	0	1
Florida.....	1	3
Georgia.....	1	10
Idaho.....	2	0
Illinois.....	9	12
Indiana.....	11	1
Iowa.....	6	2
Kansas.....	8	0
Kentucky.....	2	7
Louisiana.....	0	0
Maine.....	0	4
Maryland.....	2	4
Massachusetts.....	0	9
Michigan.....	9	5
Minnesota.....	8	1
Mississippi.....	0	8
Missouri.....	0	0
Montana.....	1	0
Nebraska.....	4	6
New Hampshire.....	9	2
New Jersey.....	1	4
New Mexico.....	1	0
New York.....	3	16
North Carolina.....	1	6
North Dakota.....	2	0
Ohio.....	7	12
Oklahoma.....	6	0
Oregon.....	3	0
Pennsylvania.....	9	12
Rhode Island.....	0	2
South Carolina.....	0	6
Tennessee.....	2	6
Texas.....	0	16
Utah.....	1	1
Vermont.....	0	2
Virginia.....	3	0
Washington.....	4	0
West Virginia.....	3	2
Wisconsin.....	6	0
Wyoming.....	1	0
Total.....	126	188



## REMARKS

by Mr. M. McAuliffe, President of the Kansas Branch of the Farmers' Educational and Co-operative Union, and editor of *The Farmers' Union*, May 16, 1918 :

"I am publishing in another place in this paper the result of the vote by States, both for and against \$2.50 wheat, as taken in the House of Representatives April 18.

"The result of the vote of some of the Northern States was an agreeable surprise to me. For instance, Indiana cast 11 votes for and 1 against; Illinois cast 9 for and 12 against; Pennsylvania 9 for and 12 against; Wisconsin 6 for and none against. I didn't really expect \$2.50 wheat would get as strong support in Indiana, Illinois and Pennsylvania as it did. These States are largely manufacturing and mining States. Ohio, which is one of the great agricultural States of the Middle West, didn't support \$2.50 wheat as I expected it would.

"I was, however, more disagreeably surprised in the vote against \$2.50 wheat cast by the Southern States than I was agreeably surprised by the vote cast for \$2.50 wheat in the Northern States. I expected a much larger vote for \$2.50 wheat in the Southern States than it got. The truth is, I expected \$2.50 wheat to carry in the House with the support the cotton States would give it, but most of the cotton States knifed it most beastly. Take for instance the Texas, Georgia and Kentucky vote. These three States cast 31 votes against and 3 for. The Missouri delegation didn't vote at all. If it did, I suppose it would have voted as the President said. Virginia and Oklahoma are the only two Southern States that gave their entire vote for \$2.50 wheat. The delegates from all of the wheat States proper voted unanimously for \$2.50 wheat except Nebraska. The latter State cast four votes for and 6 against \$2.50 wheat. For the life of me I can't understand why a majority of the Nebraska delegation voted against \$2.50 wheat. If I belonged to the Farmers' Union of Nebraska I would ask for an explanation from the Nebraska delegation—the reason they voted against \$2.50 wheat.

"Senator Norris of Nebraska voted against \$2.00 wheat in the Senate when the vote was taken on that price last fall. What's the matter with Nebraska, anyhow?

"The States that voted solidly for \$2.50 wheat are: Kansas, Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Montana, New Mexico, South Dakota, North Dakota, Wyoming and Indiana. Indiana casting one vote against and 11 for \$2.50 wheat, is entitled to a place in the roll of honor for \$2.50 wheat.

"There is no doubt but labor union leaders will bring all the pressure at their disposal on the President to veto \$2.50 wheat. But the President should remember that it was the farmers' vote and not the labor union vote that elected him."

### **Why the President Vetoed the \$2.40 Wheat Price.**

The President did veto the bill to kill the \$2.40 price of wheat. His reasons for doing so follows. The figures in parentheses are mine, to indicate where my answers apply in the number following :

WASHINGTON, July 12.—The President's message follows :

"I regret to return without my signature so important a measure as H. R. 9054, entitled 'An Act Making Appropriations for the Department of Agriculture for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 1919,' but I feel constrained to do so because of my earnest dissent from the point of view of principle as well as wise expediency from the provisions of that part of Section 14 which prescribes a uniform minimum price for No. 2 northern spring wheat of \$2.40 a bushel. (1) I dissent upon principle because I believe that such inelastic legislative price provisions are insusceptible of being administered in a way that will be advantageous either to the producer or to the consumer, (2) establishing as they do, arbitrary levels which are quite independent of the normal market conditions and because (3) I believe that the present method of regulation by conference with all concerned, has resulted in the most satisfactory manner, considering the complexity and variety of the subject matter dealt with. It is evident that the present method of determining the price to be paid for wheat has had the most stimulating effect upon production, the estimated crop of spring wheat for this year exceeding all high records in a very remarkable and gratifying way. (4) By an overwhelming majority of the farmers of the United States, the price administratively fixed has been regarded fair and liberal, and objections to it have come only from those sections of the country where, unfortunately, it has, in recent years, proved impossible to rely upon climatic conditions to produce a full crop of wheat, and where, therefore, many disappointments to the farmer have proven to be unavoidable. Personally, I do not believe the farmers of the country depend upon the stimulation of price (5) to do their utmost to serve the nation and the world at this time of crisis by exerting themselves to an extraordinary degree to produce the largest and best crops possible. (6) Their patriotic spirit in this matter has been worthy of all praise, and has shown them playing a most admirable and gratifying part in the full mobilization of the resources

of the country. (7) To a very greatly increased production of wheat they have added an increased production of almost every other important grain, so that our granaries are likely to overflow, and the anxiety of the nations arrayed against Germany with regard to their food supplies has been relieved. The administrative method of agreeing upon a fair price (8) has this very great advantage, which any element of rigidity would in large part destroy, namely, the advantage of flexibility, of rendering possible at every stage and in the view of every change of experience a readjustment which will be fair alike to producer and consumer. A fixed minimum price of \$2.40 per bushel would, it is estimated, add \$2 per barrel (9) to the price of flour; in other words, raise the price of flour from the present price of \$10.50 to \$12.50 at the mill, and, inasmuch as we are anticipating a crop of approximately 900,000,000 bushels of wheat, this increase would be equivalent to the immense sum of \$387,000,000. Such an increase of the price of wheat in the United States would force a corresponding increase in the price of Canadian wheat. The allied governments would, of course, be obliged to make all of their purchases at the increased figure and the whole scale of their financial operations in this country, in which the government of the United States is directly assisting, would be thereby correspondingly enlarged. (10) The increase would also add very materially to the cost of living, and there would inevitably ensue an increase in the wages paid in practically every industry in the country. These added financial and economic difficulties, affecting practically the whole world, cannot, I assume, have been in contemplation by the Congress in passing this legislation.

“(Signed) WOODROW WILSON.”

### **Comments on the President's Veto.**

I shall comment briefly on ten of the President's reasons for vetoing the \$2.40 wheat price, as my insert numbers in the message indicate. The reader can refer to them to save repetition:

(1) As the cost of producing wheat had greatly advanced since the price of \$2.20 was set, it most certainly would not have been disadvantageous to the producer to have had that advance added to his product as other classes of producers had.

(2) Do not scores of labor unions, producers and profiteers arbitrarily establish higher price levels for their products regardless of normal market conditions?

(3) The most concerned class—the wheat growers—were not represented in the conference that fixed the wheat price. Nothing could be more unfair than to call in representatives of those classes interested most in the low prices of flour and bread to fix the price on wheat.

(4) It is doubtless true that a large majority of the farmers of the United States believe the wheat price high enough, since they raise no wheat and must buy its products. But wheat growers alone should have been consulted. Is it customary for labor unions to call in employers to dictate their wages? When did the administration call in only the consumers of any other product to fix the price on it?

(5) I wish to inform the President that the size of the crop and amount of financial aid wheat raisers can give the government depends absolutely on the price of wheat. How can they finance a crop in advance and contribute to war work and buy Liberty Bonds unless they receive their previous year's wages and overhead expenses in the price of their wheat? In many localities wheat growers have been criticised unmercifully for not aiding more. They were called pro-Germans, slackers, tight-wads, ingrates, and everything mean and hateful, because they could not do their duty owing to being singled out for unfair discrimination.

(6) Flattery is very nice to receive, but it will not buy Liberty Bonds nor grub-stake the wheat raiser. So he is under the sordid necessity of unionizing to enforce fair wages and overhead expenses for his services. I do not doubt for a moment that our good and wise President will deny it to us when we are unionized and our officials make known to him our needs.

(7) It is very gratifying indeed to know that the needs of our Allies for wheat supplies have been relieved. It is now in order to relieve the needs of wheat growers for the scores of things they have been doing without by increasing their wages so they can buy them.

(8) The wheat growers are consumers of hundreds of articles, none of which were lowered by fifty per cent of their price and nailed down by an arbitrary committee of consumers. How does it come that sauce for the goose is not sauce for the gander?

(9) The argument that twenty cents a bushel added to the price of wheat would have necessitated an increase of \$2.00 a barrel for flour is self-evidently fallacious. At that rate the present price of wheat (\$2.20) would make flour cost \$22.00 a barrel instead of \$10.50. The increase would not have added relatively \$1.00 to the price of flour. However, not one cent more need to have been added to flour. It could have been deducted from the millers' profits on the by-products of wheat that were allowed them above the twenty-five cents a barrel profit over all expenses.

(10) But, Mr. President, could you not have vetoed these expected increases in wages in all industries just as you are now doing to the attempted increase of wages by the wheat raisers? How does it come you allow all other classes to increase their wages to meet the increased cost of living and prohibit only wheat growers doing so? As you will not answer this question, I shall attempt it on three theories: First, you are a college-bred man; not having ever been a farmer or the son of one, you naturally have no sympathy for them or interest in their welfare or problems. Second, you are a Southern man, where they are more interested in high-priced cotton and low-priced flour, and you would naturally favor the former at the expense of the latter. Third, you are a wise politician who deals only with the heads of organized classes who have the power to aid or injure your political aspirations. The wheat growers, not being organized, are unable to act in unison. Their votes are only so much waste paper to clutter up ballot-boxes, as they divide them about equally between the Democrats and Republicans, thus killing their own political power.

The only remedy for them is to unionize and allow their elected leaders to direct them how to vote as a unit for the good of their own class. Then they can elect men who are in sympathy with them, and will work for their interest as the officials elected by other unionized classes do for them.

### **How to Veto the President's Veto.**

Now that the wheat producers see how they get left by leaving others to price their product, they should unionize at once to take over that most important function to themselves. Had they been unionized their national officers could have gotten for them most any price they asked from Congress and the President. Failing in that, their national President could have put up a spiel about as follows:

“Now, see here! All other classes of laborers and producers are naming the price for their services, and you have permitted it. Now Congress and the administration may stop wrangling over the price of wheat, and we who produced it will attend to that little matter ourselves. All our last year's wages and expenses, amounting to several billion dollars, are tied up in this crop, and we alone are competent to set a price to cover it. Our expert practical wheat growers from different States have reported to our national executive committee that the cost of our wheat has been between \$2.50 and \$3.50 a bushel, owing to location and yield. The committee ordered a referendum vote of our members on the price wanted, limiting it to anywhere between \$2.50 and \$3.25 a bushel. They explained to them their patriotic duty to forego any profits, and even donate part of their labor to the cause of lower prices for food as a loyal duty to our government and our Allies. (Excuse me a minute to answer the phone.) Well, the chairman of the committee reports the result of the vote on the wheat price. It is \$3.00

a bushel at the farmers' home market for No. 1 wheat, and the usual discount for lower grades. That price will hold good on this crop. We will let you know later what next year's wheat price will be when we ascertain what its cost will be."

### **Only Fair Wages and Expenses Needed as Stimulant.**

"WASHINGTON, March 4.—Three-quarters of a million dollars to be distributed by the Department of Agriculture in prizes to stimulate staple food production is provided in an amendment to the agricultural appropriation bill adopted today by the Senate. During the debate Senator Gore, chairman of the Agricultural Committee; Senator Reed of Missouri, Democrat, and Senator Wadsworth, Republican, attacked the Food Administration, declaring it had not given proper consideration to the farmers."

Cut it out! All the stimulant to raising wheat needed and demanded is skilled labor wages and overhead expenses. All such crop prizes are snares to get the farmers to make fools of themselves as cheap producers.

By unionizing each grower is to get the prize of good wages and interest every year on his crop.

### **Methodist Church Tackles the Farm Problem.**

"NEW YORK, Oct. 24.—To help make farming profitable and rural life endurable for the farmer, his wife, his sons and daughters, the Methodist Episcopal Church has undertaken to spend \$5,500,000 in training rural ministers to teach scientific farming and develop social activity in country districts. The purpose as announced by the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension is to keep the farmers on the farms and thus help to win the war. Dissatisfaction with country life, it is declared, has caused a decrease of rural population in Ohio, Indiana, Missouri, Vermont, and New Hampshire. The boys and girls will not stay on the farm when high wages are to be earned nearer the moving picture theatres. To combat this, the Methodist Church is planning to send many of its best men to the country churches, of which it has upward of 12,000. Rural pastors are to have special training in agriculture so as to help farmers with advice. Demonstration farms are to be established where agricultural colleges do not meet the needs. Asso-

ciations of rural ministers to put these plans into effect already have been started in Ohio, West Virginia, Iowa, South Dakota, Pennsylvania and Nebraska. Chairs of Rural Sociology to teach how to be happy though living on a farm have been established in theological seminaries, and plans are making to start similar courses in colleges."

Now, Mr. Methodist, you are on the wrong track to accomplish your object, as many other schemes have been. Take a pointer from me, that to gain your laudable aims you must give up the idea of trying to increase crop production, as that results in making matters worse. Devote all your efforts to unionizing the producers of each product separately, and then to federating those unions as union labor is organized. Teach them how to increase their wages by the minimum price system as herein advocated and outlined. It is a greatly increased flow of money to the farms that is needed to gain your object, and that cannot be brought about in any other way.

### **Wages That Attract Farmers to Cities.**

"MOUNDSVILLE, W. VA., Sept. 14.—Charles Fogel, 55, a miner, has made a new record here for loading coal. In one day he loaded 30 tons and 17 hundredweight, earning \$18.20 for eight hours' work. Fogel's pay envelope for 11 days contained \$169.89."

"CHICAGO, Oct. 9.—Sixty-four dollars for eight hours' work was the record established by one riveter at the South Chicago ship-building yard Sunday, it was announced to day. The week-day scale for each rivet is 8 cents and on Sunday this is raised to 16 cents."

Farmers cannot be kept on the farm against such alluring wages for work they can do in other industries unless their wages are greatly increased. Unionize and increase it by the minimum price system.

### **Farmers Give Experience.**

Extracts from "The Race Between Time and Famine," by Frederick F. Ingram, Detroit, in his interviews with Michigan farmers show the deplorable condition they have to contend with. Their statements follow:



*Wm. H. Merrick, Hastings:*

"Retired farmer, owns well improved 160-acre farm, Hastings Township, within easy hauling distance of market. Says it has heretofore been impossible to get a fair interest on capital invested in his farm except at the expense of fertility and improvements, but for the past two years it has been even worse. There is no hired help and it is difficult to get or to keep tenants. He has three sons, but as they grew to manhood, they became dissatisfied and left him. After the oldest had gone, he turned the farm to the next oldest on shares, he (the father) moving into town, where he has remained ever since. After a few years' experience this son left, as did his youngest son who succeeded him on the place. Now all sons are away for good, and tenants come and go, the higher wages and shorter hours tempting them to leave for the cities. Nothing now, Mr. Merrick says, seems to work out well for the farmer, either the man that furnishes the labor or the man that furnishes the farm gets left; very often both do. Says no farm help to be had. Young men get more wages in town, and with \$100 they can buy furniture enough to get married. They go to work there at much better wages than on a farm, have a steady job, and only a trifling investment of money necessary. To own a farm or even run a farm under the same circumstances is hopeless. They can't get one horse with \$100, while to the boy ambitious to have a farm of his own, it means that without financial help he must do away with the idea of getting married, for the land and equipment for farming cost too much. In addition to the cost of land, he must expend a minimum of \$2,000 for stock and machinery to get a fair start. It is getting increasingly difficult, he says, for farmers to keep their own boys on the farm, and that the old men are growing scarce on farms; that farm auctions in his neighborhood average three a week, taking up much of the farmers' time, caused by farmers retiring, selling out or renting, or going out of the milk business or general farming and going into hay. Other reasons: in debt or in need of ready money, or short of feed in fall or seed in spring. He says that the auctions are an economic loss to the community, increasing the overhead cost of farming and compelling farmers in many instances to get along with less machinery than they should have, or pay more to replace what they want, which, together with the failing health of the farmer and their sons leaving for the city and no help available, is a great injury to general farm production."

*James Mathews, Doster:*

"Has lived in the neighborhood since childhood, when his parents settled there on a farm. Age 64. He has owned and occupied his farm of 80 acres since his marriage in his early manhood. Does general farm-

ing. Soil sand loam of fair quality, but shows evidence of lack of sufficient live stock or artificial fertilizers to keep up fertility. He said he had worked his farm all his working days, but at no time had he found getting a living out of the soil so difficult as in the last two years; crop yields have dwindled, chance for profitable returns from dairy (which he has abandoned) or stock raising is dubious, hired help is out of the question, for the wages that must be paid is beyond the possibility of coming out even on the expense, and his health does not permit him now to do a full day's work. He has two grown-up sons, both steady and sturdy boys, but the impossibility of getting enough returns from applying their labor to the farm caused them both to leave it; one is now the driver of rural mail route, while the other secured employment in a Detroit store. Mr. Matthews' failing health made it impossible for him to do the farm work this year, so his son sacrificed a \$100.00 a month job and good future prospects in Detroit and is now helping him on the farm. He says he has been trying to sell his farm for several years, and finally did sell it last fall. Then at an auction he sold off all his tools, machinery and live stock; but when the time came for the buyer to take possession of the farm this spring, he "backed out" and the tools, machinery and live stock which he had to replace, though inadequately, has caused a severe financial loss."

*R. M. Bates, ex-Justice of the Peace, Hastings Township:*

"Says he sold his rye at \$2.70, wheat \$2; says price regulation is a cheat. Wheat is lowest because at a set price is regulated and other cereals are not regulated; wheat production is very unsatisfactory, more so than rye, which winters better and is a surer crop, besides seed wheat costs \$4 a bushel. Says he has 40 acres of wheat from which he will not get his seed back, 30 acres more will yield 8 to 10 bushels to the acre. Last year he raised 150 hogs, this year he has but one brood sow. Claims he made nothing on his hogs last year because of the price of corn, and that there isn't any foodstuff now at a price that will permit the raising of hogs, and that the government has not made a move but what has hurt the farmer. Mr. Bates is a graduate of the Michigan Agricultural College, a well read and studious farmer. Has several hundred acres."

*James Ollette, Van Buren Township:*

"Farm of 50 acres, good land, well cultivated. He has coops and complete plant for chicken farm, and until last year carried 1,000 hens; now only 15 or 20 running around loose. Says he could not make chickens pay with chicken feed at \$4.80 per hundred pounds and grain equally high. Says also there is no money in milk, so he is keeping less

cows. Can't get hired help, and his son has gone to the city, so he and his wife are doing all the work and raise just enough to pay their taxes and to buy the necessities and manage to get along. Money can be made buying and selling farms, but not in working farms; besides, if you work a farm and keep it up, your taxes are two or three times as much as they will be if you let it run down. Repairs and tools have gone out of sight in price, plow points now cost \$1.25 each and mould boards \$9.00, all a whole plow cost three or four years ago. It is risky to try to put in crops with everything so high and expect to get your money back, so he is doing less cropping and claims most farmers are doing the same, mentioning his neighbors, amongst others, Albert Bird, who has a fine farm of 160 acres and formerly did extensive farming, now farms only 25 acres and leaves the balance idle; and David Owen, who has left his farm, well improved, 105 acres, untilled, and works in a Detroit factory, coming home Saturday nights."

*Frank Clark, Banker, Belleville:*

"He said that farming viewed from a business standpoint at present is not attractive. The farmer, however, is cautious and conservative, and is reducing his operations, dispensing with hired labor and producing less, and is in that way managing to get along, if he is satisfied with the small returns. When he is not, he quits farming for something else; usually goes to work in the city factories. Regulating the price of wheat has reduced the acreage of wheat and increased the acreage of rye, which now pays better. He says quite a business is being done in the sale of unworked or run-down farms by city real estate agents, but it is principally the trading of equities, trading a mortgaged house in the city for a mortgaged farm in the country, in both cases the owner being a city working man who knows nothing about farming. A short experience on the farm causes him to list it with the same real estate man from whom he bought, who sells it, or trades it to another man in the city who thinks there is big money in farming on account of the high price of food products. So often the same farm is sold two or three times in a year. Very seldom does a purchaser remain long on these farms, for the most experienced farmer would find it extremely difficult to make a living on such farms."

*Walter Bros., Drovers:*

"Says: Ten years ago they shipped from one to four carloads of live stock a week; now they scarcely average one a week. They are the only buyers in the neighborhood now, and to get one car a week must drive three or four times as many miles, adding new territory. There are no sheep left. Hogs have decreased more than half. Cattle at

least one-half, and mostly dairy cows being sold out; very little in beef breeds are being raised. Less poultry is going to market, the big producers have quit the business, as there is no money in it at the present prices of grain and chicken feed. But few farmers raise a surplus, for the chickens must depend upon foraging and taking care of themselves in flocks of 15 or 20 to a farm instead of 75 to 100 as was the case several years ago."

And so goes the hard luck stories in poultry, dairy and general farming through many more pages. I shall give some of Mr. Ingram's comments on the situation in the following number:

### **Manufacturer Investigates Farm Conditions.**

Extracts from Mr. Ingram's comments and theory, from his pamphlet:

"(Mr. Ingram is a manufacturer in Detroit, Michigan, but he was born and raised on a farm and has owned and operated several. His investigations and their publication he undertook merely to draw attention to a situation that should be heeded and to flash forth a warning which he believes imperative because our food supply is being seriously threatened.)—*Joseph J. Crowley, President Detroit Board of Commerce.*"

"The average wages of farm hands the country over last year were \$28.87 a month with board, and \$40.43 a month without board. The average wage of section hands on the railroads was \$58.25 a month. This means that farm workers who must have special training, receive \$10 a month less than the least skilled type of workers, most of whom also live in the country, under the same cost of living, where their presence is a constant reminder to the farm worker of his inferior wage condition, working as he does 12 and sometimes 14 hours a day, to the railroad man's 8 hours.

"This section of Wayne County, noted for its poultry farms, has but few left, and none that I could find that were running anywhere near at full capacity. For instance, Monroe Stokes did carry an average of one thousand hens, now averages 200; Herman Soop carried 500 to 600, now 100 to 300; Geo. T. Clark carried 400 to 500, coops now all empty; James Ollett carried full coops, now all empty; Mr. Hamilton carried full coops, now all empty.

"Even on general farms, actively operated, where chickens can almost pick up their living by ranging the orchards and fields and can be raised at the minimum cost, flocks are now reduced from 75 to 100 head to 15 or 20 head. . . .

Poor, neglected and worn-out farms are sold and resold to city non-farmers at such almost unbelievable figures that it has become a regular occupation for real estate speculators.

"Little or no crop raising is done on such farms, for skilled farmers cannot make a living working them. It is men from the city who know nothing about farming that buy them. As a consequence, such farms become mere trading propositions and go unworked, though continually changing hands at from \$100 to \$150 an acre and even higher figures. These farms change hands so fast, he says, that the postoffice and R. F. D. carrier can't keep track of the mail which accumulates at the post-office.

"He gave numerous instances, all of Sumpter Township. Amongst others he mentioned Eugene Spence, who sold his farm of 20 acres for \$160 cash. It then changed hands rapidly, once a month part of the time, for 12 months and the other day it was sold for \$3,200; poor land, sand hills mostly, old and worthless improvements.

"Adjoining it is the 40-acre farm of Ernest Near, equally worthless. He sold it to a Mr. Moon for \$1,300. It recently sold, he heard, for \$7,000 after changing hands four times. This all happened during the past 18 months.

"I visited Irving Township which is purely agricultural, containing no towns or even villages, talked with a number of farmers, and learned that in some of the school districts they are having no school. District No. 2, for instance, which at one time had 40 pupils in attendance, has now but one child of school age within its boundaries, so the school is closed and this one child is by an arrangement, getting its schooling in another district.

"This is typical of several districts in this township, and I was told in other of the purely rural townships. One school district in Rutland Township at one time having 30 pupils, has had but three the past two or three years. They don't even raise children here now. One farmer remarked that when his parents came to that district in the '60's, there were generally four or five or more children to a family—his own family had seven—and he proceeded to name his neighbors, picking out five or six that had but one child in the family and some that had none.

"The country church, a fair sized building that must have taxed the neighborhood to erect, has been closed for ten years. The Grange Hall in the vicinity is now the common meeting place for social affairs. The average attendance at Grange meetings is about thirty. . . .

"John B. Ketcham, Master of the Michigan State Grange, in the *Free Press* of March 19th says: 'The wholesale price paid at Greenville (Central Michigan) for potatoes is less than thirty-five cents a bushel.'

The figures of the Michigan Cost Commission show the average cost of producing potatoes in Michigan in 1917 was 90½ cents per bushel. However, while the farmer was getting only thirty-five cents per bushel for his 90-cent potatoes, people in Detroit were paying 50 cents per peck, or \$2.00 a bushel. . . .

"In discussing crop outlooks for Michigan June 1st, State Market Director J. N. McBide of Michigan says: 'An effort was made to secure from Michigan farmers this year a crop of 25,000,000 bushels of wheat. The prospects now are, "it will take remarkably good weather for Michigan to provide 10,000,000 bushels. Weather conditions reduced the yield and price-fixing reduced the acreage sown," as will be found in interviews with farmers farther on.' . . .

"W. A. Nehf, editor of the *Chicago Daily Drovers' Journal*, at the annual convention of the National Live Stock Exchange in New York, is quoted in the *Detroit Times* of May 18th as saying: 'Although prevailing prices of meat seem high to consumers, I know many farmers who have fed cattle and hogs at a loss during the past season. Prices of commodities the farmer must buy have risen out of all proportion to the prices he gets for his stock. The greatest work facing the government, I believe, is that of assuring the producer a fair margin of profit. We cannot expect the farmer's patriotism to exceed that of others to such an extent that he will increase his live stock production if he knows that in so doing he will incur additional economical loss.'

"With the farmers of Sumpter and Van Buren Townships, Wayne County. These townships are in the southwestern corner of the county, 24 to 30 miles from Detroit. They contain no cities, but have good marketing facilities, and are mostly good farming land.

"The exception is about half of Sumpter Township, which is oak openings, of low fertility value under the best of circumstances.

"Under present circumstances, these farms are not producing enough food to even supply the food requirements of the farm itself. Usually what improvements exist are old, neglected, out of repair and of little value and of less usefulness.

"The ownership of these farms has passed into the hands of speculators or their victims, and the land shows little or no evidence of intelligent farming. Such farms are frequently changing ownership, in some cases three or four times a year. The city real estate dealer finds no difficulty in getting buyers at prices far beyond actual value of even good farms, for the city worker who knows nothing about farming is easily persuaded because of the high price for all farm products that farming must be a money-making business.

"Soon after he has invested his all in one of these farms, his discouraging experience in attempting to live on it, prompts him to list it for sale with the same real estate man from whom he bought and after paying his agent a liberal commission, he unloads it on another victim to the financial loss of all parties concerned except the real estate man, who always gets his commission."

### **Government Receivership of Farms Suggested.**

As a remedy for the foregoing predicament of farmers, Mr. Ingram suggests a government receivership for farms as bankrupt railroads are taken over temporarily and rehabilitated. Some of his reasons for this course are :

"There is something serious the matter with farming as an industry. It is a vital industry. The farmer does the best he can, but he has gotten into a situation which, when reached in other industries of such vital importance, becomes a matter of governmental concern; a receiver is appointed and the industry under governmental operation is reorganized and revitalized for the common good. . . .

"Farming should be put in the hands of a receiver and the receiver should be the President. Not all farms or all farming, but enough and in different sections so that the authorities may determine and remove the causes that so seriously interfere with food production.

"Why, the price of some foods is so high in the cities that only a few can buy them, while at the same time the price the farmer gets is so low he can't afford to raise them.

"The government as receiver for the farms it takes over should allow the owner a fair return on his investment in improvements, machinery and live stock, and allow for depreciation. If the owner is a practical and industrious farmer, pay him a salary for superintendence. Furnish him with or finance him for, the necessary fertilizer, seed and other necessities of the business. Permit him to pay the wages that will attract the necessary labor. Oblige him to account for everything. Take the farm products at the cost shown, to supply the government's and our Allies' needs and have the balance, not needed locally, transported by the government-operated railroads to government warehouses in the cities where all, dealers or consumers, can go and get it by paying its actual cost delivered at that warehouse."

Comments : Mr. Ingram's plan leaves out interest to the owner on the cost, or value, of his land which could not be permitted in justice to other farmers. With that added I

believe most farmers would be glad to turn over their farms to the government on the above terms and move their families to town. But why couldn't the government be as liberal with the farmers in taking over their farms as with the railroads which were guaranteed a profit equaling their three most prosperous years?

The government could not be permitted to engage in farming for the purpose of cheapening farm products for city consumption, if it resulted in lowering their price at the farms, without requiring the government to also take over and operate the factories that produce what farmers need at a correspondingly lower price. However, his plan would further reduce the rural population and increase that of the cities. Then, again, if the government did not do a more economical business at farming than it did in most of its war work it would more than quadruple the cost of its products instead of cheapening them.

Everything considered, the unionizing of the farmers to inaugurate the minimum price system is by far the best.

### **Enormous Profits Allowed Food Dealers.**

*The Merchants Journal* of November 16, 1918, contains the following "Weekly Bulletin of Government Food Regulations" for the guidance of merchants:

#### MAXIMUM MARGINS ON SALES BY RETAILERS TO CONSUMERS.

(Issued by the U. S. Food Administration November 7, 1918.)

The Food Administration has determined that any sales of food commodities at a gross margin above delivered cost in excess of those indicated below are unreasonable, and will be regarded as *prima facie* evidence of a violation of the statute and of the above regulation. Percentage may be calculated on the selling price. Delivered cost shall mean the cost at the railroad, steamboat or other terminal in the retailer's town. Where the retailer is not located in a railroad or steamboat town he may include any hauling charge in the delivered cost.

The lesser margin indicated is not a minimum margin, but is a maximum margin for those whose cost of doing business is less, such as stores which do not perform the services of credit and delivery. Any



change from the pre-war practice in cash discount terms or other change which tend to or result in increasing the margin of profit allowed will be dealt with as an unfair practice.

The retailer may have the benefit of fractional costs on each transaction; that is, he may calculate the total charge to a customer on any transaction as if fractional costs were not allowed, and if the result is a fraction, he may add thereto such fraction of a cent as may be necessary to make a price in even cents. The following table gives an example in the case of eggs, using the cash and carry margin of seven cents per dozen:

<i>Amount of Sale</i>	<i>Cost</i>	<i>Margin</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Fraction Added</i>	<i>Maximum Selling Price</i>
1 doz . . . . .	\$0.46 $\frac{1}{4}$	7 cents	\$0.53 $\frac{1}{4}$	$\frac{3}{4}$	\$0.54
2 doz . . . . .	.92 $\frac{1}{2}$	14 cents	1.06 $\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{1}{2}$	1.07
3 doz . . . . .	1.38 $\frac{3}{4}$	21 cents	1.59 $\frac{3}{4}$	$\frac{1}{4}$	1.60

## MAXIMUM MARGINS.

*Flour List.*

Victory, original packages,  $\frac{1}{2}$ -barrel quantities or more, \$1 to \$1.20 per barrel.

Victory, original packages,  $\frac{1}{4}$ -barrel quantities or less, \$1.35 to \$1.60 per barrel.

Victory, broken packages, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. per pound.

Wheat, original packages,  $\frac{1}{2}$ -barrel quantities or more, \$1 to \$1.20 per barrel.

Wheat, original packages,  $\frac{1}{4}$ -barrel quantities or less, \$1.35 to \$1.60 per barrel.

Wheat, broken packages, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. per pound.

Barley, original packages, 18 to 22 per cent.

Barley, broken packages, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. per pound.

Rye, original packages, 18 to 22 per cent.

Rye, broken packages, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. per pound.

Corn, original packages, 18 to 22 per cent.

Corn, broken packages, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. per pound.

Rice, 18 to 22 per cent.

Corn meal, bulk, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. per pound.

Corn meal, original packages, 18 to 22 per cent.

Hominy, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. per pound.

Sugar, all kinds in bulk, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c. per pound.

Sugar, all kinds in refiners' original packages, 1c. per pound.

Evaporated milk, unsweetened, 18 to 22 per cent.

Oatmeal and rolled oats, bulk, 1½c. per pound.

Oatmeal and rolled oats, original packages, 20 to 25 per cent.

Rice, 20 to 25 per cent.

Beans, white or colored, 20 to 25 per cent.

Starch, edible, 20 to 25 per cent.

Corn syrup, tins, 20 to 25 per cent.

Canned corn, peas and tomatoes, standard grades, 25 to 30 per cent.

Canned salmon chums, pink, and red, 25 to 30 per cent.

Canned sardines, domestic, 25 to 30 per cent.

Dried fruit, raisins, prunes, and peaches, 25 to 30 per cent.

Lard, pure leaf, bulk, 5c. to 6c. per pound.

Lard, pure leaf, tins, 18 to 22 per cent.

Lard substitutes, bulk, 5c. to 6c. per pound.

Lard substitutes, tins, 18 to 22 per cent.

Breakfast bacon, whole pieces, 6c. to 7c. per pound.

Heavy bacon, whole pieces, 5c. to 6c. per pound.

Hams, smoked whole, 6c. to 7c. per pound.

In quoting sliced ham and bacon add usual differential to cover actual shrinkage.

“Original packages” as used above means where retailer sells product in the same mill container as received by him.

“Broken packages” means when retailer removes contents from original mill packages and sells in smaller quantities.

By other special regulations the retailers' maximum margins have also been fixed in accordance with the following list:

Potatoes, white or Irish, 25 to 30 per cent.

Onions, 25 to 30 per cent.

Eggs (whether sold in carton or not), 7c. to 8c. per dozen.

Butter, 6c. to 7c. per pound.

Butter substitutes, oleomargarine, nutmargarine, etc., 5c. to 6c. per pound.

Cheese, American, cheddars, twins, flats, daisies, long horns, and Y. A.'s, 7c. to 8c. per pound.

The maximum selling price for the extra service or credit and delivery stores would be one cent per dozen higher. In determining margins at 7 cents and 8 cents per dozen on eggs with fractional cost in the dealer's favor, the United States Food Administration has given due consideration to the rising costs of operation which must be met by the dealer.

The farmers may well envy the retailer of these goods his allowed profits, for did they receive a proportional reward for producing these products according to their work, exposure and expense they would receive ten times as much as they do.

Study these allowed profits and compare the ease with which they are made to that of the farmer in producing these products, and you will see at once the disadvantage of the farmer if you have had any experience in farming. And remember the grocer can turn his money daily, weekly or monthly while the farmer can only annually.

Only through unionizing to inaugurate the minimum price system can they ever expect to get fair wages out of production.

### **How Business Men Figure Overhead Expenses.**

#### **RULES ON COSTS AND PROFITS.**

"As the latest dope is that the U. S. Food Administration may not only issue an order eliminating free delivery but may require all merchants to keep an accurate record of costs, here are the rules of the National Association of credit men for figuring costs and profits:

"1. Charge interest on the net amount of your total investment at the beginning of your business year, exclusive of real estate.

"2. Charge rental on real estate or buildings owned by you and used in your business at a rate equal to what you would receive if renting or leasing to another.

"3. Charge in addition to what you pay for hired help an amount to what your services would be worth to others; also treat in a like manner the services of any other of your family regularly employed.

"4. Charge depreciation on all goods carried over on which you may have to make a less price because of change of style, damage, etc.

"5. Charge depreciation on buildings, tools, fixtures and everything else suffering from age or wear and tear.

"6. Charge amounts donated and subscriptions paid.

"7. Charge all fixed expenses, such as taxes, insurance, water, lights, fuel, etc.

"8. Charge losses of every character, including goods stolen, or sent out and not charged, allowances made customers, all bad debts.

"9. Charge collection expenses and other expenses not above enumerated.

"10. When you have ascertained what the sum of all the foregoing items amount to, prove it by your books, and you will have your total expenses for the year; divide this by your total sales and the result will show you the per cent it has cost you to do business.

"11. Take this per cent and deduct it from the price of any article you have sold, then subtract from the remainder and what it cost you (invoice price and freight) and the result will show your net profit or loss on the article.

"Definite records will be necessary for some time to come. The only way to have these records is to do your figuring as you go along. The local assessor reports direct to the government; the income tax reports should agree as near as possible. It behooves every merchant no matter how small, to be prepared to make a report to himself or the government at any time."

These would be good rules for the wheat growers' union to adopt in figuring out the overhead expenses of raising wheat when fixing its minimum price.

### **Warning to Soldiers to Pass Up Farming.**

Unionized labor will do all in its power to steer returning soldiers to homesteads on worthless government lands where they will while away their time in poverty to keep them from competing for the big wages in cities, and where it is hoped they will produce great quantities of food for the cities at the low prices of pre-war times. Government officials, also desiring cheap food, will readily unite with labor to settle the soldiers on land. In President Wilson's message to Congress before leaving for Europe he says on this subject:

"I particularly direct your attention to the very practical plans which the Secretary of the Interior has developed in his annual report and before your committees for the reclamation of arid, swamp and cut-over lands which might, if the States were willing and able to cooperate, redeem some 300,000,000 acres of land for cultivation. There are said to be 15,000,000 or 20,000,000 acres of land in the West, at present arid, for whose reclamation water is available if properly conserved. There are about 230,000,000 acres from which the forests have been cut but which have never yet been cleared for the plow, and which

lie waste and desolate. These lie scattered all over the Union. And there are nearly 80,000,000 acres of land that lie under swamps or are subject to periodical overflow or are too wet for anything but grazing, which it is perfectly feasible to drain and protect and redeem. Congress can at once direct thousands of the returning soldiers to the reclamation of the arid lands which it has already undertaken, if it will but enlarge the plans and the appropriations which it has entrusted to the Department of the Interior. It is possible in dealing with our unused land to effect a great rural and agricultural department which will afford the best sort of opportunity to men who want to help themselves; and the Secretary of the Interior has thought the possible methods out in a way which is worthy of your most friendly attention."

"CHICAGO, April 11.—Plans of the administration to reclaim millions of acres in the Western and Middle Western country and give these to the soldiers who come from 'over there' were disclosed by Secretary of the Interior Lane, speaking at the sixth annual convention of the Chamber of Commerce of the United States. 'I propose to take enough men from the returned army to work to irrigate 1,000,000 or more acres along the Colorado River, and give each man 40 acres and a house and stock in payment. I can give you 4,000,000 acres of irrigable land if you will give me the hands. There are also 15,000,000 acres of overflowed lands in the Mississippi Valley. Build dykes, save that land and divide it among the men,' he said."

"SAN FRANCISCO, CAL., Oct. 22.—Eleven million acres of 'logged-off timber land on the Pacific coast might be reclaimed and used for agricultural purposes, according to the statement of Walter H. Graves, whose appointment by Secretary Lane as an engineer of the reclamation service, was recently announced. Mr. Graves has been instructed to make a study of the large districts of cut-over timber land in the West for the purpose of determining its availability, when cleared, for farms for soldiers after the war. The land denuded of timber would have to be cleared of the encumbering logs, stumps and brush. The redemption of this vast wilderness, it is estimated, would add \$2,000,000,000 to the farm wealth of the Pacific States. The cost of clearing the land would be less than the value of the land if improved mechanical devices were used, Mr. Graves said."

"OTTAWA, ONT., Nov. 21.—A scheme for the distribution of land in the western provinces of Canada to returned soldiers and selected immigrants from Great Britain and the United States has been worked out by the Canadian government, it was learned today. The idle land will be settled and loans as high as \$4,500 will be made to the settlers.'

“LOUISVILLE, KY., Nov. 6.—There is at least 225,000 acres of good land now going to waste in Kentucky, or sufficient to furnish an eighty-acre homestead to each of 2,800 returning soldiers at the end of the war, according to a report submitted to H. P. Griffith, special agent of the Department of the Interior by the Louisville Board of Trade. The land with which the report deals comprises only large tracts easily susceptible to reclamation. There are six tracts described in the report, the smallest 10,000 acres and the largest 75,000 acres. The report is made in connection with preliminary plans of the Department of the Interior to place returning soldiers on the land on such terms that they can pay for their farms in small payments, extending over a long period. Negotiations for making the Kentucky tracts available for government purchase when Congress shall later have provided funds have gone far enough in only one case that the details can be divulged. It is in what is known as the Panther Creek section of Kentucky. Here 50,000 acres in one tract can be purchased at \$5 an acre, and by putting in drain tile it can be made ready for use. According to Mr. Griffith, the tentative plans laid by the Department of the Interior contemplates placing returned soldiers on the soil in every State of the Union and also using them when armies are disbanded in making the land upon which they will go ready for occupancy. To make any of these plans effective Congress will have to enact the necessary legislation.”

Were the federation of farmers' unions now organized, it could perform a great service to the soldiers by appointing committees to warn them to pass up the homestead proposition where nothing but privation and disappointment awaits them, and aid in finding jobs for them in cities where they could get big wages and aid in bringing down the high cost of all supplies needed by the farmers.

### **Ever Advancing Union Labor Wages.**

“WASHINGTON, May 26.—General pay increases for nearly 2,000,000 railway employes were announced today by Director General McAdoo, effective next Saturday, and retroactive to last January, carrying out substantially the recommendations of the Railroad Wage Commission. The aggregate of the increases probably will be more than \$300,000,000 a year, half of which will be distributed within a few weeks as back pay in lump sums ranging from about \$100 to nearly \$200 each. In addition to the ordinary scale of increase, day laborers, employed mainly on track work, are to get at least 2½ cents an hour more than they re-

ceived last December 31. A minimum of 55 cents an hour is established for the shop trades, including machinists, boilermakers and blacksmiths, and women are to receive the same pay as men for the same work, and negroes are to get the same as white men for similar employment. Men working on the monthly, daily, hourly, piece work and train mile basis will benefit by the new allowances, and members of the four leading railroad brotherhoods whose pay was raised through operation of the Adamson act are to receive from 10 to 40 per cent additional, a smaller increase than they had asked of the railroads shortly before the government took control. The percentages of wage increases range from 43 per cent for men who received \$46 a month in December, 1915, down to small rates for those receiving just under \$250, and no more pay is allowed men who made \$250 a month or more in 1915. The additions run up to \$34. With exception of office and messenger boys under 18, who are given smaller increases, all employes who received less than \$46 a month are given a flat increase of \$20, with the provision that laborers paid by the day shall get a minimum of 2¼ cents an hour above the rate of six months ago."

"WASHINGTON, Sept. 5.—Nearly 1,000,000 railroad employes, including clerks, track laborers and maintenance of way men, are to receive wage increases of \$25 a month, the equivalent of \$1 a day or 12 cents an hour, over the pay they received last January 1, under a wage order issued by Director General McAdoo. Advances are effective as of September 1. This order, affecting half the railroad men in the United States and adding approximately \$150,000,000 to the annual pay roll in calculations of labor representatives, represents the second largest aggregate wage increase ever granted in American industrial history. It is supplementary to the general railroad wage order issued nearly four months ago, providing for about \$300,000,000 increases and for the classes of employes affected, it supplants provisions of that order."

"WASHINGTON, Nov. 23.—Railroad station agents today were granted by Director General McAdoo a general wage increase of \$25 a month above the rate prevailing last January 1, with a minimum of \$95 a month. Eight hours is to be considered a day's work with pro rata pay for two hours overtime and time and a half for service above ten hours. The order affects about 2,500 station agents, who are not telegraphers, and who consequently were not covered by the recent wage increase for telegraphers."

"CHICAGO, March 30.—'Men back of the yards' or the 'food providers of the nation,' as they have been called, won a momentous decision against the big packers today when Judge Samuel Alschuler, arbitrator, handed down a decision upholding virtually all of the demands of the workers. More than 100,000 workers are affected by the decision. Here are the six big issues granted:

"1. Eight hours shall constitute the basic day beginning May 5, 1918.

"2. *Overtime*.—Double time shall be paid for work on Sundays and legal holidays. Week day overtime shall be time and one-fourth for the first two hours over; time and one-half thereafter. Time and one-half shall be paid for all work over 10 hours a day from January 14 to May 5.

"3. Allowance of 20 minutes for lunch where operation is by three eight-hour shifts.

"4. Employes who received 30 cents an hour or less on December 31, 1917, shall be given  $4\frac{1}{2}$  cents increase. Others to receive increases in proportion.

"5. Wage rates shall be the same for men and women doing the same work.

"6. There shall be no change made in the guaranteed time in effect now, except that Swift & Co. shall make its guarantee time 40 hours to conform with the other packers. In weeks where there is a holiday, there shall be  $33\frac{1}{2}$  hours guaranteed.

"Both capital and labor are satisfied with Judge Alschuler's decision. The packers, through their attorney, James G. Condon, promised to abide by the decision, and John Fitzpatrick of the Chicago Federation of Labor, declared he was 'highly satisfied.' Judge Alschuler seemed astounded at the praise he received both from the packers and the workers. He all but wept. The increase to the workers will cost the employers about \$75,000,000 this year."

"WASHINGTON, March 22.—Overriding requests of the postoffice department, the House, in a tumultuous session this afternoon voted large increases in pay to all postal employees and ordered they should be made permanent. Postmaster General Burleson's champions made unsuccessful pleas of 'economy.' Several of them were all but cried down in shouts of derision. Bitter attacks on the Postmaster General, declaring he underpaid his help and 'persecuted' them for trying to better working conditions, was applauded. On the largest test vote—that of making the pay increases permanent instead of only for the period of the war as the Burleson forces had asked—the department's wishes



were denied by 188 to 42. New raises in pay, which run from five to 25 per cent, will reach almost every employee in the postal service receiving less than \$1,200 a year. Additional amendments proposing increases for the few remaining positions will be brought up tomorrow."

"Conrad Seipp, an organizer for the United Association of Steam Fitters and Helpers, said the association throughout the country in May, 1920, would demand \$1.50 an hour, regardless of the cost of living. He said steam fitters at the yards receive a maximum of 65 cents an hour now, and are asking for 87½ cents for 1919."

You see in these accounts how organized labor appeals to wage commissions, courts and Congress for increased wages and never appeals in vain. But when the wheat growers asked for an increase of only ten per cent of their meager wages to partly cover their greatly increased expenses, the Food Administration refused it, Congress refused it, the President refused it, and the courts would have refused it had they been appealed to. Why is this? Why are they everywhere denied fair wages? Why have they no influence for justice, though admittedly producing the most vital food product? There is only one answer: They are not unionized, and consequently have no authorized representatives to look after their interests and plead their case, and therefore have no political power. There is only one remedy—one course to secure justice. That is to unionize and enforce it through the power of their numbers. They can then hold the balance of political power, and by voting it as a unit control the election of judges, State Legislatures and Congress, who will then be under obligations to do the farmers justice as they are now to favor organized capital and labor classes, who put them in office, at the expense of the farmers.

### **Union Labor to Enforce War Wages.**

Now that the war is over, all farm products will in a few months begin to decline in prices until within a year or two they will be as cheap or cheaper than before the war, while organized labor will continue to enforce wartime wages, as the following news items indicate:

“NEW YORK.—A meeting which may be destined to fuse into one body the workingmen’s organizations of the United States and Central and South America is to be held on the Rio Grande on November 13. It is the Pan-American Federation of Labor conference, to be held in Laredo, Tex. Delegates from Mexico and a large number of the South American countries will meet to discuss problems of mutual interest to workers in the two Americas, especially those growing out of the war and to come up in the reconstruction period. A number of delegates accredited by the labor movements of South America have arrived in New York, in preparation for the conference. Represented among them are delegates from Chile, Costa Rica, Cuba and Argentina. The Mexican Federation of Labor will be represented by a delegation of 20 unionists. An international eight-hour work day and an international child labor law are two of the results organized labor wishes to see come out of the war, the latter to be effected by denial of shipping facilities to goods manufactured by children under 16 years. . . . One result looked for by labor men is the formation of a Pan-American federation of labor that will draw into close relationship organized labor in the American republics, in preparation for meeting after-the-war problems. . . . Samuel Gompers spoke for labor in saying at Laredo that it will fight to hold what it has obtained in war-time.”

“BLOOMINGTON, ILL., Dec. 5.—Ranking in importance as a convention issue with the formation of an independent labor party, is the action to be taken by the Illinois State Federation of Labor today on the question of reconstruction and the wage problems arising therefrom. In a supplement to his annual report, President John H. Walker undertakes a presentation of the situation that faces organized labor not only in Illinois but the country at large. This report in part is as follows :

“The labor movement must deal with this problem in such a way as to avoid terrible injury being perpetrated upon our people, and, too, that the cessation of war and the reintroduction of these men and women into the productive work of our nation may instead be a blessing and help to every human being in our land. To do this, the vitally important necessity, the thing of more value than all other things combined, is to organize all the workers into the *bona fide* American labor movement and to educate them so they can understand these problems, and act upon them intelligently and unitedly. And as our oversupply of labor will be our greatest problem, surely we can at this time make the eight-hour day the maximum which any man or woman should work in our country, and enact laws which will keep

the children in school until the age when they will have an education and be fully developed mentally and physically. Labor should declare itself in the most positive and emphatic terms and fight to the last ditch against any reduction of wages, lengthening of hours or deterioration in the conditions for health and safety of the workers.' ”

Thousands of wheat growers will say, “It is none of our business what union labor does, or how much wages it gets.” But they should know that these wages are added to the price of everything they buy and every public service they use and thereby pay proportionately all these wages themselves.

But if they unionize and adopt the minimum price system they can then add this additional cost to the price of wheat and collect it back again. That is the only way to meet the high cost of living without being hurt by it. All other classes do that way and thus side-step the high cost of living by adding it to their labor or service.

### **Organizing International Labor Unions.**

Organized laborers do not want this country flooded with laborers from other countries seeking the higher wages here through fear of having their wages forced down. Therefore, they are interested in unionizing competing laborers in all countries to enforce higher wages there and keep them from coming to America.

“WASHINGTON, Nov. 18.—Chairman Hurley, of the Shipping Board, who sailed for Europe last Saturday to prepare for the returning of American troops to this country, and for moving needed food supplies to the war-famished nations overseas, also plans to seek an international agreement between the governments, shipping interests and labor organizations of the principal maritime powers for standardization of seamen’s wages and working conditions. It was said today that Mr. Hurley expects to propose that the American laws and the agreements between the government and the seamen’s unions on these subjects be accepted as the standards, and it is understood that the American Federation of Labor and the British Seamen’s Union are prepared to support the proposal. Such an agreement as that contemplated by

Mr. Hurley, it was said, would eliminate the chief difficulty that has confronted American shipping interests in past years in their attempts to operate ships in competition with other nations. The standards for American seamen are said to be the highest in the world, and now that this country is putting a great fleet of ships on the seas, officials believe that unless some international agreement is reached, a great proportion of trained seamen will be attracted to the American merchant marine."

"SAN ANTONIO, TEX., Nov. 21.—An international labor conference, to be participated in by representatives from all allied countries and to meet at the place and on the dates of the great peace conference, is to be urged by the American Federation of Labor, Samuel Gompers, President of the Federation, announced today at the session of the executive committee of the American Federation of Labor."

"LONDON, Jan. 18.—An International Labor Congress, to work with the League of Nations toward feasible means for settling labor disputes, abolition of sweatshops and betterment of working classes the world over is the plan of Samuel Gompers, American Federation of Labor President, backed by British, French and Italian labor leaders. An attempt will be made to put this plan through at the peace conference. Mr. Gompers arrived yesterday from the United States en route to Paris."

Farmers are not recognized as laborers by union labor, and labor representatives may advocate international policies prejudicial to farmers' interests.

They should unionize to look after and protect their own interests, both national and international.

### **Unionized Capital Guards its Interests.**

"ATLANTIC CITY, N. J., Dec. 6.—Appointment of a European commission representative of American business to go to France and be available for any aid it might be able to give to the peace delegates from the United States in considering economic problems that might enter into the peace negotiations, was decided upon today at the final session of the reconstruction congress of the Industrial War Service Committees. Other resolutions adopted urged the speedy return under federal charter to their owners of all railroads now operated by the government, opposed government ownership and operation of telegraphs, telephones and cables, appealed for modifications of the Sherman anti-

trust laws, indorsed the industrial creed respecting labor enunciated by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., yesterday, and the creation of a central board of war service committees."

While capital and labor are protecting their interests both at home and abroad, none are protecting the interest of the wheat growers, not even themselves, as the following number shows :

### **Necessity for International Wheat Growers' Union.**

The weekly review of the grain trade, December 1, 1918, says :

"The most important feature of the grain market last week did not come out until yesterday. Reference is here made to the press reports stating that Great Britain will hereafter buy her bread and feed requirements elsewhere than in America. The reason given for this action is the fact that she can buy so much cheaper in Argentine and Australia than she can in this country.

"The dispatches say that the food program of America and the Allies has been broken, and that it is not known what arrangement, if any, can be made by Herbert Hoover in the conference of food administrators in Europe. The situation is this :

"America had encouraged a great wheat crop by a guaranteed price and had agreed to see the Allies through on wheat. With the armistice England rushed her ships to Argentine, where she gets wheat at \$1.35, and to Australia, where she is paying \$1.18. The American guaranteed price at New York for export is \$2.39½. Great Britain's ships are also going to Argentine for meat, where she pays 13 cents, and to Australia, where she pays 11 cents, while in America, whose food program for the past year has centered about meat production for the Allies, she must pay 26 cents.

"In this way the corn market is affected. Besides, it is well known that the United States government has bought 1,500,000 bushels of corn in Argentine to be laid down at New York at a price that is 20 cents a bushel cheaper than our corn would cost there. In addition to that, it is certain that wheat cannot go down materially in the world's market without a corresponding decline in prices of other grains. All grains bear a certain relative value to each other which, unless prices are arbitrarily fixed, are reflected in market quotations.

"The lesson of the war in pool buying is being continued by England and the Allies. They buy at various prices, then average them and sell to the people at prices lower than would prevail were there no pool buying.

"This plan is a natural one and protects the English or French consumer, but it threatens the American food market. America has stimulated production to care for her Allies.

"Now if they go into other and cheaper markets of the world first and refuse to enter the American market until the rest of the world has been swept clean or until they can break American prices to suit their pocketbooks, American producers, if unprotected in their market, face a serious situation.

"Food buying by the Allies with no food control here would give them the power to dictate to the American market. They might buy at prices lower than the cost of production or so manipulate prices as to drain our supplies.

"In the long run, however, the nation with the food supply can control the situation, but only if the nation is organized to do so. The government, it is said, must extend food control during the reconstruction period in order to prevent prices going too high for the consumer and too low for the producer, and at the same time to regulate the flow of food out of the country, so that there shall be no serious shortage at any time."

Had the wheat growers been unionized they could have rushed organizers to Australia, Argentine and other wheat exporting countries to unionize the wheat raisers, so they could command union prices for their wheat and not undersell us in the world's market. It would be no more to our interest to have the wheat price lowered by scab wheat raisers than for union labor to have wages lowered by scab labor.

### **Monopoly Selling Should Meet Monopoly Buying.**

A plan is brewing to place the buying of all the export wheat in the world in the hands of Mr. Hoover, for the importing nations to stop competition among them for the wheat, and thus reduce the price of wheat to the lowest possible level through world-wide monopoly buying, as the following news item indicates:

“WASHINGTON, Dec. 2.—In support of the extension of allied cooperation into a league of nations it has been pointed out often enough that the project is evolutionary rather than the revolutionary plan that it is sometimes described by its opponents. Yesterday this was illustrated by the report from Paris that Herbert Hoover has been offered, and is considering the acceptance of the office of world food administrator, responsible not to his own government but to the allied nations. The scope of his authority, if this project is carried through, is reported as ‘the entire food and relief administration for the European Allies and the United States.’ The description of the proposed office further goes on:

“The general idea of the plan is to centralize the organization under one head so that both the food and the tonnage made available by the various Allies would be used under one plan to the best advantage. . . . The director general would be the supreme executive head and would work in conjunction with the existing inter-allied maritime, food and financial commissions which have headquarters in London.”

By this time wheat growers know what Mr. Hoover thinks of them, and can easily guess what he will do to them when he becomes the only surplus wheat buyer in all the world. To save themselves from becoming further pauperized they should unionize at once in the United States and put the selling of their wheat into the hands of one sales committee to deal with this one buyer. In no other way can he be made to pay the cost of producing it. Of course, he would then go to the unorganized wheat growers of other nations for wheat until he starved our union into submission. To head him off in that course, our union would send delegates to unionize the wheat growers of all wheat exporting countries, and then consolidate all into an international wheat growers’ union. They would then pool the entire world crop and place it in the hands of their international union to sell. This sales agency would name the price of wheat, and Mr. Hoover or any other buyer would pay it. It would be worth billions of dollars annually to the world’s wheat producers to be able to meet monopoly buyers with monopoly sellers.

Therefore, unionize and monopolize as labor and capital does.

## Farmers Not Proportionally Represented in Congress.

In the United States Census for 1910 the total population is given at 91,972,266—42,623,383 classed as urban, and 49,348,883 as rural. The latter includes 8,118,825 living in villages of less than 2,500, leaving 41,230,058 as strictly the population engaged in some class of farming, or food production. Most cities from 2,500 to 25,000 draw most of their prosperity from the income to surrounding farmers, thus having financial and political interests identical with them, and adding 16,079,567 more to their number. This would give them over seventy per cent of the population with identical community interests, and would entitle them to 67 of the 96 Senators, and 304 of the 435 Representatives in the Sixty-third Congress. But instead of that, they had only six in the Senate—two farmers, two planters, one stockraiser and one cotton planter; and only twenty-two in the House of Representatives—eighteen farmers and one stockraiser, planter, cattleman, horticulturist and agriculturist. No wonder farmers get no aid from Congress to increase their wages as other classes do.

To remedy this inequality, the producers of each farm product should unionize and then federate, to enable them to nominate and elect members of Congress from their own unions.

Here follows part of an address of an Iowa Congressman to farmers, delivered before the convention of National Board of Farm Organizations, held at Washington, D. C., Tuesday, February 11, 1919:

ADDRESS OF HON. GILBERT N. HAUGEN, M. C., MEMBER OF COMMITTEE  
ON AGRICULTURE, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

“When asked by your secretary what subject I might prefer to discuss, I said: ‘Though no comment on the organization seems necessary, having come in contact with a number of the officers and members of the association and knowing of their high type of character and rectitude of purpose and ability to do things, I was naturally interested in your organization and its success, and, if agreeable, I would prefer to offer a word of encouragement.’”



"I have never understood why one-half of the American people should find it necessary to organize and co-operate for their benefit and not the other half. It has occurred to me that if it was proper and necessary for labor and industrial interests to organize, it was also proper and necessary for the other half—the agricultural people—to organize and co-operate as well. Certainly, when we consider all that is involved it seems that every fair-minded man will concede the justice, right, and necessity for co-operation.

"When we turn to the census reports we find that more than half of the American people live in rural districts. We find that more than 6,000,000 farmers and 6,000,000 farm laborers, tilling more than 6,000,000 farms, produced last year 5,600,000,000 bushels of cereals, which is about one-third of the production of cereals in the world; 917,000,000 bushels of wheat, about one-third of the wheat produced in all the world.

"The gentleman preceding me has spoken about the dairy interests. We have 43,000,000 head of cattle, 23,300,000 milch cows, giving more than 8,500,000,000 gallons of milk. We have 71,000,000 swine; 49,000,000 sheep; 19,500,000,000 pounds of meat, pork and mutton. The live stock on the farms on the 1st of January and the 1918 crop was valued at \$24,700,000,000, which is three times the stock of money in the United States, after our printing presses have been running to full capacity the last year and turning out all sorts of money.

"My friends, here we are with organization on one hand, the labor and other activities co-operating. On the other hand we have this vast number of people without co-operation.

"It would seem that it is proper and fair and just that they co-operate; that is, to perfect an organization such as suggested by your chairman here a moment ago, men with heart and soul in the work, and who have a sincere interest in the agricultural people—an organization equipped here with proper office building, with money to support it, and with money to employ the proper talent to appear before legislative bodies to impress their viewpoints; men who stand for a square deal all along the line, for just laws, and an honest administration of just laws. Legislation not to meet the views of those who have no respect for law, order, or property rights, but legislation dealing with all questions in a broad and comprehensive manner, with a spirit of fairness and justice to all concerned; legislation not to deprive an individual, corporation, or interest of a single dollar honestly acquired, but legislation to promote and perpetuate the prosperity and happiness of the people in all communities.

"Now then, as to the necessity of organization. Have we any grievances? Is there any just cause for complaint? My friends, if anybody is in doubt, if he will turn to the Federal Trade Commission's reports, I believe he will find food for thought. If he will look over the reports, he will find, for instance, that the Steel Trust was permitted to increase its profits from \$47,000,000 in 1914 to \$478,000,000 in 1918, or about 1,000 per cent, much of it at the expense of the government. They were given the benefit of the natural law of supply and demand largely stimulated by the government.

"The millers increased their operating profits 175 per cent, and on the capital invested 100 per cent; he would find that four packers increased their profits \$121,000,000 above their prewar profits. He will also find in those reports that the meat producers—the live-stock men—are at the mercy of, say, five packers, killing 70 per cent of the live stock, by reason of their control of the market facilities and pooling and splitting shipments and dividing purchases, the little black book and various other combinations and conspiracies.

"As you know the railroads were on the verge of bankruptcy. They were about to go into the hands of receivers. Their stock had been watered and mortgaged to the limit. They were unable to renew their obligations or to borrow money. They were taken over. Nobody objected to that. They were guaranteed \$175,000,000 to \$200,000,000 compensation above the amount estimated by the Interstate Commerce Commission. They were guaranteed an annual compensation running as high as 647.22 per cent. We are paying compensation to one road—the Bessemer & Lake Erie Railroad—several times over every year.

"So, my friends, we might go along, but I believe this is sufficient. Now, on the other hand, the farmers. As you know, Hoover told us that wheat would go to \$7 a bushel and that that should not be done. The price then was \$3.45 per bushel. Neutral nations offered \$1 premium, or \$4.45 per bushel. He stated his task would be to furnish flour at \$6.60 per barrel. That would have netted the farmer about \$1 per bushel. Later he said he might concede \$1.50 per bushel. Congress fixed the price at \$2, and provided for a commission which fixed it at \$2.20 and later at \$2.26. Italy fixed the price at \$3.60; France, \$3.96; Canada, \$2.24½; Switzerland, \$3.36; Norway, \$4.38. The price of wheat was fixed not at the price it would have been under the natural law of supply and demand, but was arbitrarily fixed by the government. As a result the wheat grower suffered a loss of approximately a billion dollars. The farmers did not object. Their representative told the committee to carry out the plan; that what they were interested in was winning the war. They accepted the price.

"Now, the representatives of the farmer, about 200 of them, all from the various exchanges, the millers and bakers, appeared before the Committee on Agriculture and stated that they proposed that the wheat grower shall have the price fixed. Coupled with that they asked that the poor millers who increase their operating profits 175 or 100 per cent on their capital stock; they say that they should be protected against loss; and we have prepared a bill which is being introduced and will come up in a few days, and it provides for a guarantee to the miller against loss. It goes further than that—it guarantees the baker against loss.

"I have served on the Committee on Agriculture a number of years. I have observed that the representatives claiming to represent the farmers are nine times out of ten members of or representatives of other organizations such as the boards of trade or exchanges, the millers and packers. They profess great friendship for the farmer, but, after all, they are human and selfish and not infallible. Although appearing as spokesmen for the farmer, we find them pleading with tears in their eyes for legislation to further their own interests, even at the expense of the farmer.

"It has often occurred to me that the best interests of the farmer might be better subserved if he appointed his own spokesman, rather than to depend upon these self-appointed representatives. I call attention to the cotton futures act, the standardization act, the meat inspection act, the legislation giving authority to fix the price of wheat, the oleomargarine act, and a number of others might be cited. It has also occurred to me that with farmers' organizations and co-operation, such as the National Dairy Union, of which your chairman, Mr. Creasy, is secretary—and I speak of it because I have come in more frequent contact with its representative than any other—if, with the proper, active, efficient organization, equipped with headquarters in Washington, such as is suggested by your organization, the Temple of Agriculture, and provided with the necessary funds to maintain it and the employment of the necessary number of industrious and capable representatives, with a view of effectively impressing its viewpoints upon our lawmakers and to look after its interests. If represented by them instead of being represented by boards of trade, packers, millers, and various other boards appearing before the committee suggesting and framing legislation, might it not result in legislation different and more conducive to the best interests, not only of the farmer but of the consumer and of the people as a whole? It has often occurred to me that with a complete system of checking up the legislation, with proper representation in shaping legislation, it would bring beneficial results.

am not putting it too strong when I say that one man with the backing of 7,000,000 farmers employed to aid in shaping legislation and one man in the gallery checking up and making records would bring better results, so far as the farmer is concerned, than any 2,000 men employed in the Department of Agriculture."

### **How Farmers Can Control Congress and Legislatures.**

Having seen how unionized capital and labor have been favored by Congress at the expense of the unionized farmers, the great importance of gaining control of Congress is vividly brought out. That can easily be done through the ballot as already in use, by the farmers unionizing and voting unitedly at the primaries for candidates of their own choosing and giving them their entire vote at the general elections.

When all products are unionized and federated into one community of class-conscious interests, each State Federation will have a political advisory board to advise their members how to proceed in political matters so they will not vote against their own interests. This board will make a survey of each Congressional district in the State to ascertain how many members each separate union has in each. The union having the most members will be entitled to the Congressman, and members of all the other unions will be instructed to vote for him. The same process will be adopted for each State in selecting the Senators. Thus all unionized farm products will be proportionately represented in Congress. It will be immaterial whether they be Democrats or Republicans, as their primary duty will be to look after the interests of their constituents. The same process will be adopted in electing State Legislatures. Thus the legislative power of unionized capital and labor both will pass into the hands of unionized farmers.

It is worth billions of dollars annually to the farmers to take over the law-making business of the States and Nation to themselves, which they can easily do by unionizing, and which they are entitled to by their numbers. The agricul-

tural class is the great helpless mammoth on whose vitals a thousand parasitical trusts, syndicates, unions and profiteers feed with impunity, grow wealthy, arrogant, and then kick him for their own amusement and entertainment.

Arouse, you agricultural class! Mobilize your giant power by unionizing. Take for yourselves and families skilled labor wages and overhead expenses for your services in providing food for the world through the minimum price system. Follow the advice of your own elected members of the political advisory board of the national farmers' federation and vote as a unit for your union candidates for all offices, and through your majority voting power turn the rascals who have betrayed you into the power of your enemies out of all legislative, judicial and executive State and National offices.

They are yours for simply unionizing and following the advice of your own elected leaders of your unions.

### **High Cost of Living Caused by Profiteering.**

While Congress and the President would not stand for the wheat growers making wages and overhead expenses, they did stand for the following profiteering, which show the need of farmers unionizing to enforce justice :

“WASHINGTON, July 5.—Excess profits as high as 2,183 per cent were made by some businesses in 1917, a Treasury Department report submitted to the Senate today showed. The report is a partial answer to the Borah resolution asking data on profiteering. The 2,183 per cent example was that of a food dealer.

“The report listed the percentage of excess in 1917 profits over those of 1916, together with changes in capital and other statistics relating to the business, but gave no names.

“Next to the food dealer who made 2,183 per cent, came a liquor man with a capital stock of \$5,000, who had an excess profit of 1,220 per cent. Another liquor man with \$100,000 capital made 152 per cent.

“A cold storage concern, capitalized at \$10,000, exceeded its profits by 472 per cent over 1916. Another, capitalized at \$429,000, made 31 per cent.

"In the dairying business excess profits ranged from nothing to 182 per cent; banking nothing to 82 per cent; contracting, nothing to 596 per cent; clothing manufacturers, up to 191 per cent; chemicals as high as 377 per cent.

"A flour miller with \$90,000 capital showed an excess profit of 236 per cent. In 1916 he made \$48,000 profits and in 1917 he made \$260,000. Another, capitalized at \$25,000, made \$27,000 in 1916, and in 1917 raised it to \$81,000, an excess of 437.67 per cent on his capital.

"A \$500,000 meat packer made 14.30 per cent, while a \$72,000 concern made 204 per cent.

"On \$10,000 capital, a soft coal miner made 504 per cent excess. A retail coal concern showed 80 per cent on a \$1,250,000 capital, making \$185,000 in 1916, and \$285,000 in 1917.

"Department stores ranged from nothing to 331.69 for one with small capital. Several with capital as high as \$300,000 showed no excess profits. Paper manufacturers ran from none to 176 per cent.

"On \$50,000 capital, a concern in the retail clothing trade, made 1,181 per cent, jumping profits from \$68,000 in 1916 to \$127,000 in 1917.

"Electrical machine makers ran from no excess to 91 per cent; machine tool manufacturers from none to 788 per cent; dry goods concerns up to 117 per cent.

"These figures are to be supplemented by further data as soon as prepared. A list of names of all firms making more than 15 per cent in 1917 is to be submitted. No attempt will be made to take typical examples from these returns.

"The report is the second section of a roundup of profiteering evidence for the use of Congress in framing the war tax bill."

Remember these profits were made above their 1916 profits, and "from nothing" means not any profits above those of 1916.

### **What to do With the Returning Soldiers.**

Instead of the government planning to place returning soldiers on land and financing them free to produce products in competition with those who have to do their own financing, and thus aid in bankrupting more of them by forcing prices below cost of production, the government should seek out all profiteers such as those mentioned in the foregoing number and establish soldiers in such business. Why put

them in a business that is now overcrowded, and in which neither fair wages nor overhead expenses are being made, when there are so many occupations making such great profits as enumerated above? It is not fair to the soldiers, nor to the farmers, nor to the consumers.

All officials of all farmers' organizations should concentrate their united influence on Congress at once to induce it to build or commandeer factories and put the soldiers to making all those articles needed by the farmers in order to squeeze the excess profits out of them and force their price down. Have them financed free by the government, paid skilled union wages and sell their products at cost to the farmers and general public. That would suit the soldiers much better than to place them on land where nothing but privation and destitution and pauperism will be their final experience.

### **Industrial and Financial Panic Coming.**

As sure as like causes produce like effects there is coming a financial and industrial panic within a decade in the United States unless averted by the farmers unionizing to ward it off. This will be caused, as were previous ones, by overproduction of farm products through opening up vast areas of cheap land for homesteads.

From 1870 to 1900 railroads were built through the five great agricultural States of the two Dakotas, Nebraska, Kansas and Oklahoma and many millions of acres of free government land and cheap railroad land were brought under cultivation at little cost. These States flooded the markets with farm products until prices went below transportation to market at times. The result was that nearly all values were taken out of farms and farm products all over the United States. This resulted in farmers everywhere ceasing to buy any manufactured products because they were out of money and could get none for their products above

taxes and interest, and often not that. Consequently factories shut down everywhere for want of customers, and labor was thrown out of employment, and free soup houses became the only thing doing an increasing business.

Not to this day do millions who suffered then know what hit them. The party in power was blamed for it and the people put it out. The panic got worse and it was put back again with no better results. Free silver was blamed and was demonetized. No relief. Protective tariff and tariff for revenue only were both tried with no remedial result. Everything but the real cause were thought of and tried out except the free coinage of silver at 16 to 1. Finally all concluded it was caused by overproduction of factory goods. Couldn't anyone see the warehouses were full of them and none coming to buy? But that was only an effect, not the cause. Couldn't all see that the farmers needed and could use all those goods and many times more had they money to buy them?

Overproduction of farm products came first, as it will again, through the present plans of opening up at government expense vast areas of virgin land for free homesteads for the millions of returning soldiers in this and other countries.

Take for instance, Saskatchewan, one of the great undeveloped agricultural Provinces of Canada, and consider its possibilities alone when brought under full cultivation by the returning soldiers as is being planned. It is larger than Austria-Hungary by 11,244 square miles; than Germany by 42,920 square miles; France by 44,624 square miles; and Denmark, Holland and Belgium together by 212,524 square miles. It contains 251,700 square miles, 161,088,000 acres, and has yet available for homesteads for soldiers 4,900,000 acres. A total of 20,643,863 acres have been granted to railway companies, the Hudson's Bay Company and school endowments. Here follows a news item telling how a railroad is going to dispose of its grant after a discussion on what to do with the returning Canadian soldiers:



"Canada has had four long years for the study of this problem. Her wounded and discharged have been coming back in a steady stream during this time, and plans for education and assimilation have had time to be tested. Perhaps the most successful plan is that of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, which seeks to induce the soldier to take up farming. The benefits of this plan are two-fold: it takes care of the soldier and it ensures an increase in food production.

"This scheme is an amplification of the company's successful Ready Made Farm project. It aims to place the returned soldier on a farm provided with living and working equipments. The farms are grouped into communities known as 'Soldier Colonies.' Only soldiers may settle in these colonies. By this ruling the new farmers will be surrounded by their comrades-in-arms and a close community spirit is fostered. The colonies contain from twenty-five to fifty farms, and are located in southern Alberta. Some are irrigated, others can easily be made so. Each colony has a central or demonstration farm under the care of an agricultural expert whose advice and help are at the settler's call, while this farm serves as a social center.

"Each farm is equipped with a house, barn and well, is partly fenced and broken, in some cases seeded. Each soldier is provided with live stock and machinery sufficient to operate his 80 or 160 acres. If he lacks the money to see him through the first year, the company will advance the necessary funds. No payments are required for three years. The terms are very easy, being so planned that the soldier farmers will have a good start on the road to prosperity before being called upon for a substantial payment."

There is the menace to farmers, the seeds of sure panic through overproduction. Canada is only one of the great undeveloped American countries that will now be opened up for soldier homesteads.

The question now is: Are the farmers who have invested a lifetime of labor in building up a valuable home and those who have paid thousands of dollars for one, going to allow its value reduced to nothing by these government and railroad-financed and free-land farmers as did the farmers in similar cases years ago? Are they willing to see the value taken out of all their crops and products and labor and reduced to the privations of a panic for years without an effort to avert it? If they are not, they have no time to spare in beginning to save themselves. The menace is here.

The only course to take is to unionize, rush agents and literature to the soldiers to divert them into city industries. See that those who cannot be so diverted are unionized to the last man in all products they produce, and that they adhere to the minimum prices fixed by their international union. You must not only protect yourselves from panic conditions but you must aid in saving them from it. Had the farmers of the old settled States taken this course when these new States were settled they could have saved themselves and us, too, from years of privation.

### **Political and Industrial Power of Union Labor.**

Some have the erroneous idea that union labor is a temporary and unnecessary movement that should be and can be eliminated. They are mistaken. It is an economic necessity to protect laborers from ruinous competition for jobs among themselves. The man with no family or home to provide for is not allowed to work cheaper than those who have, else such men would make it impossible for those who have to maintain them. This same principle must be applied to farm products when unionized.

The magnitude of unionized labor shows that it would be as impossible to dissolve it as to reverse gravitation. It is a power to be reckoned with as being here to stay, to be limited in its demands only by opposing unionized interests equally powerful. It has grappled with organized capital on the industrial and political fields and forced it to come down from its supposed impregnable position and make an equitable division to labor of profits it had been monopolizing.

The "World Almanac and Encyclopedia," 1914, says of the American Federation of Labor:

"The Federation is composed of 113 national and international unions, representing approximately 27,000 local unions, 5 departments, 42 State branches, 615 city central unions, and 673 local unions. The approximate paid membership is 2,000,000. The affiliated unions pub-

lish about 540 weekly or monthly papers, devoted to the cause of labor. The official organ is the *American Federationist*, edited by Samuel Gompers. There are 1,760 organizers of local unions acting under the orders of the American Federation of Labor. The objects and aims of the American Federation of Labor are officially stated to render employment and means of subsistence less precarious by securing to the workers an equitable share of the fruits of their labor."

With the changing of very few words the object and aims of the American Federation of Farmers would be identical with that of the American Federation of Labor. While labor has won big wages, recognition, power and influence through unionizing, it still remains for farmers to do so.

In addressing labor at Squantum, Mass., in April, 1918, Secretary Daniels said that the men turning out destroyers and munitions are just as brave as the men who are at the front. He called attention to the fact that there is not a single body with any executive power that does not have upon it a representative of labor, sitting side by side with the representatives of the employers and having an equal voice.

Now the question is, Why were the farmers not equally represented with labor and employers in matters that equally concerned them? The answer is they were not unionized, had no official representatives to call in consultation. They are the great unorganized nobodies, without power or influence in government or elsewhere, while that of unionized labor is increasing, according to the following :

"NEW YORK, Jan. 24.—Charles M. Schwab, President of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation, declared in an address at a dinner here tonight that the time is near at hand 'when the man of the working class—the men without property—will control the destinies of the world. The Bolsheviki sentiment must be taken into consideration,' Mr. Schwab declared, 'and in the very near future we must look to the worker for a solution of the great economic questions now being considered. I am not one to carelessly turn over my belongings for the uplift of the nation, but I am one who has come to a belief that the worker will rule, and the sooner we realize this the better it will be for our country and the world at large.'"

The farmers also are laborers. They should unionize to share in this world-power equally with unionized labor. The two classes should and could rule the world. We have seen in the world-war the utter failure of other classes to rule the world satisfactorily. Now these two great classes should be given a try-out.

### **How Farmers Can Escape the High Cost of Living.**

Instead of employers of labor fighting every demand for higher wages, as they did formerly, they have devised a better plan to escape paying it. They pay the price demanded, unionize themselves and add the increased wages to the price of their products or service, thus passing it on to the consumers. The consumers, excepting the farmers, have unionized their various professions, and in turn add this increased cost of living to their services or salaries. In this way all classes that are organized become passive to the increased cost of living. They are not relatively affected by it, except in most cases they add more than enough to balance accounts and are that much better off. The farmers, being the largest consuming class, are the ultimate paymasters of the many wage increases added to all articles they buy as they come down the line through many hands. Take, for example, a hide the farmer sells for seven cents a pound. It then goes through the hands of several dealers, trusts, profiteers, factories, jobbers, transportations and retailer, with all union wages, costs and profits added to its price, until it gets back to the same farmer in the form of shoes, harness or leather at \$1.50 a pound and up—mostly up. Now, the farmers, being unorganized, have no possible chance of evading paying this high cost of union labor and profiteering; but as soon as they unionize they can. The cost of leather, shoes, harness, etc., will be estimated in the overhead expenses and added to the cost of producing their own products, including hides, and collected through the minimum price system.

Some might see in this ring system that the farmers themselves as consumers would pay the additional price of the hide. They would pay their share of it proportionately as it returned to them in its various manufactured articles they use, but that price might not be any higher on account of the increased price for farm hides. A tracer from the price equalization board of the hide producers' union would trace a hide through all its course and the union would eliminate all excess profits by a more direct and less expensive routing. This would result in higher prices for farm hides and lower prices for leather goods.

The same process would apply to most all unionized farm products, such as wheat, cotton, corn, cattle, hogs, wool, poultry, eggs, butter, etc. Eggs are now (Dec. 15, 1918), 60 cents a dozen, for which the farmers got 15 cents last spring when the hens were laying. An egg-producers' union could raise the price to 35 cents to the farmers and lower it to 40 cents to the consumers.

### **Farmers Not Represented in the President's Official Family.**

The President's official family is the Cabinet, composed of the Secretaries of Agriculture, Commerce, Labor, State, War, Navy, Interior, and Treasury. They constitute the President's advisory council. There is not a farmer among them according to their biographies in the Congressional Directory. The Secretary of Agriculture is supposed to represent the farmers, but he is not of that class of citizens, and can no more represent the interests of farmers than a farmer could the interests of college professors. Here is his biography from the Congressional Directory of the Sixty-fifth Congress :

“David Franklin Houston, of St. Louis, Mo., Secretary of Agriculture (1808 New Hampshire Avenue), was born in Monroe, Union County, N. C., February 17, 1866; A. B. South Carolina College 1887; A. M. Harvard 1892; LL. D. Tulane 1903, University of Wisconsin

1906, Yale 1913, University of Missouri 1914, Harvard 1914; married Helen Beall, of Austin, Tex., December 11, 1895; graduate student political science, Harvard 1891-1894; adjunct professor 1894-1897, associate professor 1897-1900, professor political science 1900-1902, and dean of faculty 1899-1902, University of Texas; president Agricultural and Mechanical College of Texas 1902-1905; president University of Texas 1905-1908; chancellor Washington University, St. Louis, 1908-1917. Took the oath of office as Secretary of Agriculture on March 6, 1913."

Contrast this non-farming representative of farmers with the laboring representative of labor and you can easily comprehend why union labor gets wages increased while farmers get their wages decreased when both appeal to the President and his advisers for increases. Here is his biography from the same source :

"William Bauchop Wilson, of Blossburg, Pa., Secretary of Labor (1844 Mintwood Place), was born at Blantyre, Scotland, April 2, 1862; came to this country with his parents in 1870 and settled at Arnot, Tioga County, Pa. In March, 1871, he began working in the coal mines; in November, 1873, became half member of the Mine Workers' Union; has taken an active part in trade-union affairs from early manhood; was international secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers of America from 1900 to 1908, having been elected each year without opposition; is engaged in farming at Blossburg; is married and has nine children; was elected to the Sixtieth, Sixty-first, and Sixty-second Congresses from the Fifteenth Congressional District of Pennsylvania; chairman Committee on Labor, House of Representatives, Sixty-second Congress. Took the oath of office as Secretary of Labor March 5, 1913."

Now here is one result of farmers not being unionized so they can see that they have true representation in the Cabinet, Congress and everywhere their interests are at stake in government policies and actions :

"WASHINGTON, Dec. 12.—Legislation providing for the colonization and farming of the public lands of America by the millions of soldiers released from the army is strongly urged by Secretary of Labor William B. Wilson, in his annual report to President Wilson, made public today. Secretary Wilson recommended the organization of a board consisting

of the secretaries of the Departments of Agriculture, Interior and Labor to supervise the general plan of colonization and to effect its operation should the necessary legislation be forthcoming. The report emphasized that legislation authorizing such a plan should include the following provisions :

"1. The possibility of commercialized speculation should be eliminated.

"2. Colonists must be given access not only to land but to farms, not only the bare soil, but fully equipped agricultural plants ready to operate.

"3. The farms themselves must be welded together into genuine communities by provisions for roads, schools and markets, under the general supervision of the Federal government.

"Secretary Wilson points out in the report that the necessity of augmenting the world's food supply for many years to come necessitates a more extensive and more intensive cultivation of American lands. The soil must be the chief working opportunity for great numbers of the nation's wage earners, he said.

"The grants of land in former years to soldiers were of almost no value to them, Secretary Wilson said, because of the extensive evils of land speculation. The land granted to the soldiers was speedily transferred to persons who resold it at higher prices. For this reason the Secretary recommended that legislation that may be enacted on this subject will lay less stress on titles and more upon the actual use of the land by the soldiers and other colonists.

"Previous grants of land to soldiers were found unsuccessful for another reason, the Secretary said. Frequently the efforts of the former settlers, many of them not used to frontier hardships or familiar with agriculture, and disliking the monotony, resulted in failure, and an exodus back to the cities. Secretary Wilson, therefore, recommends that the Federal government make provision for farming communities and agricultural equipment.

"I recommend the early enactment of such legislation as may be necessary to permit the preparation of the public domain for this purpose. Such legislation should provide for the purchase of such privately owned areas as it may be found desirable to add to the public areas,' he said."

There you see how the representative of labor is advising the government to provide and equip farms for millions of soldiers at public expense for the double purpose of prevent-

ing them from lowering union wages in cities by an oversupply of laborers and of lowering all farm products through overproduction of them.

Why do not the representatives of the farmers advise the government to build and equip railroads, packing plants, clothing factories, farm implement factories, mining plants, saw mills, etc., and man them with released soldiers to produce those things the farmers need? It is because the farmers have no representatives in office to do the advising and see that it is obeyed. They never will have until they unionize by products and elect members of their unions to all offices they can.

With the idea of interesting the officials of such farmers' organizations as we have in this matter, I had the following letter published in our local daily and mailed copies to members of the National Board of Farm Organizations :

SUGGESTS A DISPOSITION OF DEMOBILIZED SOLDIERS.

*"To Mr. Chas. A. Layman, Secretary National Board of Farm Organizations:*

"DEAR SIR: I write to call your attention, and through you that of the executive committee of your board, to the government policy developing to colonize soldiers on land, and to suggest that they use their influence against it, for the following reasons :

"*First.* To reclaim land by clearing, grubbing and fencing cutover forests, irrigation of the dry, and drainage of swampy lands and making improved farms of them at government expense for free distribution to soldiers, as proposed, would be a great injustice to the farmers who have devoted a lifetime to that work for theirs, or have paid for them in the savings of a lifetime of hard work.

"*Second.* Products raised on these free farms would be dumped onto the market in competition with that of farmers who must pay for theirs, and so reduce prices as would make it impossible to do so.

"*Third.* Farm products would be reduced in prices to those of 1875 to 1900, resulting in a chronic state of panic for the farmers and intermittent panic for almost everyone else, from the same cause—free land and an overproduction of farm products.



*Fourth.* As the prices farmers receive for some products are not yet high enough to cover fair wages and overhead expenses, and thus enable them to modernize their homes, their children are leaving them for the higher wages and better living conditions in the cities. The further lowering of prices through the farm colonizing scheme would result in driving still larger numbers of present farmers to cities.

*Fifth.* Since unionized labor and unionized capital are using their influence to drive the government to this course to bankrupt the farmer through low prices, it is the duty of organized farmers to defend themselves by a counter influence on our common government. They should induce it to finance and place the soldiers in city labor, business and professions where wages and profits are far in excess of those of the farmers and where living conditions will be more satisfactory to them.

"With this object in view, I hope the officials of farm organizations will take up this matter with the proper government officials and Congress.

W. H. KERR.

Great Bend, Kansas, Dec. 20, 1918."

WASHINGTON, Jan. 17.—Louis F. Post, Assistant Secretary of Labor, and William Kent, member of the Tariff Commission, urged the House Committee on Labor today to act promptly on a bill by Representative Kelley, of Pennsylvania, appropriating \$500,000,000 for the reclamation and occupation by returned soldiers of 215,000,000 acres of land now idle. The bill embodies the general recommendations of Secretary Lane, except as to the amount and the method of expenditure. Mr. Post said the labor situation in this country was becoming extremely critical, and that unless something is done quickly discharged soldiers would be forced to stand in bread lines."

Organizations of farmers should counter this half billion-dollar proposition with a demand on Congress to appropriate ten billion dollars to build and equip and man with soldiers and idle laborers factories to produce clothing, lumber, implements, coal, etc., at cost, for the farmers and consumers generally. The wheat growers' union would have representatives in Congress to do such things.

### **Union Labor Plans Political Control.**

Union labor is fast learning the advantages of owning public officials, Legislatures, Congress and the courts through

electing their own candidates to office. They have learned that from organized capital, that for half a century has considered it a good investment to finance the election of members of their own class to all offices from which they could get legislative and judicial favors worth billions of dollars to them.

Now union labor is going to wrest this great power from capital wherever it has the voting numbers to do it by nominating, financing and voting collectively for candidates of their own.

The following is their plans for control of Topeka elections according to the *Topeka Capital* of December 30 :

"That organized labor will take a hand in the coming city political campaign was decided yesterday at one of the most enthusiastic mass meetings ever held under the auspices of the Topeka Industrial Council. Two hundred union men and women informally discussed the fundamental principles for which organized labor has always fought and which they declared should be incorporated into the Topeka city government. Candidates who are seeking offices merely for the honor and prestige that accompanies the position were bitterly scored, and a pledge was taken to oppose every such candidate who appears during the pending campaign.

"The meeting was entirely democratic, practically every person present participating in the discussion. Some lively debates developed between the speakers, but finally a complete agreement was reached and a temporary organization formed which later will be turned into one of the most gigantic political machines ever formed in Topeka for campaign purposes. This machine, if organized on the plans outlined yesterday, will include nearly 8,000 members, each of whom will be pledged to support candidates chosen to represent the union interests in Topeka. It is declared by organized labor leaders that these 8,000 members, together with their wives and other voters whom they can influence, can carry every candidate put on the ticket for mayor and places on the city commission.

"A committee of twenty-one men was appointed to appear before each of the forty-eight local unions during the next two weeks and ask for a ratification of the plans to put a labor ticket in the field. With the enthusiasm of all representatives attending yesterday's meeting as a

criterion, every union will vote to support the movement both morally and financially. While the platform is yet in the stage of formation, it will be completed within two weeks, and submitted to the locals for their approval.

"But few of the planks that will be nailed to the platform were discussed yesterday, the time being given over to the expression of views held by those attending the meeting. Every person taking the floor declared that the time is ripe for organized labor to have a voice in the administration of city affairs. Various abuses of power by past and present city officials were mentioned as valid reasons why the laboring men and women should have something to say about how the city in which they live and pay taxes is run.

"It was pointed out that the Topeka business interests are given first consideration in every matter coming before the city commission for action, while the laboring man's interests are completely ignored. Speakers declared that it is impossible for a committee of laboring men to secure a hearing before the mayor or city commission. It was asserted that the police force is compelled to work from eleven to thirteen hours daily, seven days a week and for wages that are scarcely sufficient for the members to support their families. Many other complaints were registered against the city administration as it has been manipulated for many years.

"While the meeting was held under the auspices of the Industrial Council, that body will have nothing to do with the real campaign that is being planned, it was declared by James O. Stevic, president of the Council, who was selected temporary chairman of the organization formed for the purpose of completing the details concerning the outline of plans for future action. The committee appointed to call upon each local union will work in relays, three men spending one night appearing before the various unions that meet in Labor Hall, outlining the plan of campaign and asking for a definite answer from that particular local. Each local ratifying the plans will choose a committee, which in turn, will meet with the committees from all the other locals and form the working organization, which will ultimately become the link between the political machine and the members of the locals.

"When the permanent organization is formed, a campaign manager will be chosen, the locals will finance the candidates chosen for the various city offices, thus eliminating what was termed the only reason a poor man has been unable to enter the city campaigns.

"If the union candidates are successful in the city election it is probable that one of the first steps taken will be the inauguration of a movement to secure a municipal cold storage plant, and the installa-

tion of a city market where the farmers of Shawnee County can bring their produce and receive a better price than can be obtained from the commission men. In turn the consumers will be able to get food products at prices far below those charged at present by retail firms.

"Another meeting will be held next Sunday afternoon at Labor Hall, and at that time it is planned to discuss more fully the platform on which the union candidates will make their races. With yesterday's showing as a criterion it is believed that before many weeks have passed these Sunday meetings will have gained such magnitude that the city Auditorium will be impressed into service as a meeting place. Labor Hall was comfortably filled yesterday, and every man present either promised to bring his wife or another union member next Sunday.

"During the week the locals will hear the committees who will appear before them, explaining the new movement to gain control of the city government."

I have given this space to the plan in full, as it indicates the trend of union labor everywhere and forecasts the time when it will spread to the control of State and National elections as well as that of all large cities. Also, most of their reasons and plans for political control can be adopted by unionized farmers, who should immediately follow closely their methods both in unionizing and political action.

Bolshevism in Russia is an effort by the propertyless class to gain control of government by armed force. The democratic way is to gain control through the ballot in a peaceful way. That is the union labor program in most all countries, and is contemplating world-wide control according to the following :

"LONDON, Dec. 28.—Diplomatic circles here are also taking cognizance of a report that the labor conference in France will take no action pending the arrival of the American delegates to be headed by Samuel Gompers. Consideration is being given in government circles to the proposal that the labor conference should make its information and views available for the peace delegates of the Allies who, if they think it advisable, could consult unofficially with the labor conference on certain points. The belief is gaining ground that from the meeting of labor delegates in France will arise a scheme for an international fed-

eration of labor to unite the workers of the world. Many difficulties are in the path of such an achievement, it is recognized, but if it is accomplished such a league would possess power for development of vast possibilities."

A world ruled by union labor entirely would be as undesirable as a capitalist-ruled world. It is therefore most desirable that the farmers unionize and go into politics to act as a check on the power and demands of union labor, since they are both laborers and capitalists where they own and work their farms.

### **Bolshevism to Spread Over All the World.**

The world-war has taught the common men their invincible power when organized into a military machine, and they will never submit peacefully again to bear the prewar burdens without ample compensation. Millions of soldiers were demobilized in Russia and expected to "root hog or die" as before. But so long as there is food to be found anywhere, they know another way of getting it than through starvation wages. They have taken forcible possession of wealth-producing property, and all the world is watching to see what use they will make of it. If they demonstrate they can administer it to greater advantage and satisfaction to their populations than the capitalist system did, then the same classes of people in all capital-ruled countries will organize to adopt it.

That all capitalist governments are alarmed at the growing power of the Bolsheviki is evident from the following London news item :

"LONDON, Jan. 2.—The Bolshevik menace is almost certain to be one of the first subjects discussed by the peace delegates, the *Evening News* stated today. Berlin, which incited Russia's present criminal régime to embarrass the Allies, is now alarmed for its own safety. It is reported from Esthonia, Lithuania, Livonia, East Prussia and Prussian Poland, as well as from Austrian Poland and the Ukraine, that the red army is sweeping on, leaving in its wake a trail of bloodshed and desolation."

Back of the long retention of unneeded soldiers on the pay rolls and continual increased wages to union labor is the fear of them becoming Bolsheviki if not well provided for. Governments must remember that this menacing red army is partly composed of farmers who have been forced below the danger line of poverty by manipulators of their products, and if other classes are to be subsidized by higher wages to turn a deaf ear to agents of the Bolsheviki, farmers must be also through better wages and improved living conditions by a higher range of prices for their products.

It would appear that our government should encourage the farmers to unionize to enforce a living wage through the minimum price system, that they may act as a stabilizing power to the government against the ever increasing demands of unionized labor which aims at the absolute control of all industry through the Russian Soviet form of government, according to Mr. Upton Sinclair, who says of it in the following excerpts:

“ . . . No, said the syndicalist, the Parliament which is to control industry must be chosen, not geographically, but industrially. It must be a Parliament of the workers, organized according to the work they do. . . .

“And that is what a Soviet is. Soviet is simply the Russian word for union. The Soviet government of Russia is simply a government by the trade unions of that country. . . .

“All over England the beginnings of industrial democracy have been made, and it needs only the pressure of a few big strikes to force a complete system of labor union control. These strikes may come in England any day, and when they do come there will be Soviet government in England. . . .

“If those things are ever tried again in America, we shall wake up some fine day, just as the Russians did, to find a Syndicalist government in full control; the mines for the miners, the railways for the railwaymen, and so on.”

Union labor does not recognize farmers as laborers, but class them as bourgeoisie, or middle class, as distinguished from the proletariat, their class. This latter class is now in

power in parts of Russia and are robbing and murdering the farmers who own their homes, and take forcible possession of them. The farmers are the only class who could cope with the red terror of Bolshevism should it spring up in full force in this country, and they would be powerless to defend themselves and their homes unless they are fully unionized so they could be quickly mobilized.

Are your homes worth defending against Bolshevism? It is for the farmers to say and unionize if they are.

### **Political Power of Unionized Farmers.**

Farmers have not yet tapped their greatest source of wealth—political power. By unionizing and becoming class conscious, and going into politics as a voting unit, as union labor will do, the farmers can capture the law-making and enforcing offices, and consequently the advantages and powers pertaining thereto.

It has been intimated to me that the minimum price system herein advocated would run afoul of the anti-trust laws and be prohibited. But I understand that organizations of farmers and laborers are exempted. However, it should be tried out to see if the farmers are helplessly tied down while a hundred trusts and profiteers are allowed to skin them financially.

Since unionized capital, unionized labor and unionized professions do agree collectively on prices for their labor and services, farmers must be allowed to do the same to be on equal terms and advantages. It might be timely to take a survey of the farmers' potential political power and their relative power to other classes, especially organized labor.

The 1910 United States Census enumerates those in all occupations as 38,167,336, of whom 8,075,772 are females. Engaged in agriculture, forestry, and animal husbandry, 12,659,203, or 33.2 per cent; manufacturing and mechanical industries, 10,658,881, or 27.9 per cent; domestic and personal

service, 3,772,174, or 9.9 per cent ; trade, 3,614,670, or 9.5 per cent ; transportation, 2,637,671, or 6.9 per cent ; clerical occupations, 1,737,053, or 4.6 per cent ; professional services, 1,663,569, or 4.4 per cent ; extraction of minerals, 964,824, or 2.5 per cent ; not classified, 459,291, or 1.2 per cent.

The same census gives the rural population as 49,348,883, or 53.7 per cent of entire population to that of the urban of 42,623,383, or 46.3 per cent. The rural includes towns of less than 2,500 population.

This showing indicates that political power if thoroughly organized in classes lays between the farmers and affiliated industries, and manufacturing and mechanical industries, with the advantage still in favor of the rural population. A coalition between unionized farmers and unionized labor for control of political power would be possible and their combined voting power would be irresistible. They have so much interest in common that they should make a political pact to gain control of Congress by electing members of their own unions to all State and National legislative, executive and judicial offices. In the large cities and industrial centers where union labor predominates they should nominate, finance and elect members of their unions to all offices, and in all other places the unionized farmers should do the same. This would put the government where it should be—in the hands of the great majority.

The majority of Congressmen now are lawyers, though they are but a small fraction of one per cent of the population. Of the 96 Senators of the Sixty-third Congress, 55 are lawyers, and of the 435 Representatives 247 are lawyers. Thus over 56 per cent of Congress are lawyers to less than 4 per cent farmers, and no union labor members mentioned. Of the 302 lawyers, 256 are college bred men.

These lawyers as a class can have no sympathy for, nor interest in the welfare of laborers or farmers for two principal reasons: they are of the small wealthy class who are



neither laborers nor farmers, and who are the retainers of the rich at such fees and salaries as farmers and laborers could not give. Therefore, they will favor the wealthy class at the expense of both farmers and laborers in all legislation to enable them to stay rich and continue paying huge lawyer fees.

As a life-long farmer I would much rather have members of labor unions in Congress in place of these lawyers, though they never saw the inside of a rich man's college. Their interest and concern would be for the working people instead of the idle rich, who prey on both farmers and city laborers.

Now, what do you unionized laborers say to the proposition of uniting with unionized farmers to oust these lawyer-retainers of predatory wealth from Congress and placing therein our own representatives? It can be done, and it should be done. It would be worth billions of dollars annually to each of our classes. We have the voting power to do it. Why not use it for our own interests instead of using it against our interest as both our classes have done in the past?

Farmers everywhere should unionize as fast as possible to get in position to vote as a unit and put members of their unions in all offices where they have the voting strength to do it, and to unite with union labor where they have not. They should discard Democrat, Republican and Socialist, etc., as party labels and adopt their union name. This would put them in position to know and vote for their friends for offices. Each nationally unionized product would have its political advisory board, which in connection with all such boards would direct the political power of farmers in unison to prevent its dissipation in divisions as it has been. Without such guidance farmers are as liable to vote for their adversaries as for their friends, as they did in the last election in Kansas by voting against their Congressmen who worked for higher wheat prices.

### **United States to be Operated as a Single Farm.**

One of the greatest advantages to be had from the unionization of farmers is the balancing and constant adjustment in the production of the many different farm products throughout the United States to prevent any of them becoming a drug on the market from overproduction in a series of years, and to produce things most needed. As it is now, the pendulum of production swings to extremes in any product that happens to be for a while, through scarcity or manipulation, above its normal price compared with other products. When there is more money to be made in raising and feeding hogs and cattle than in raising cereals for a few years, then all who can turn to their production. Farms are seeded to hay crops and production of grain crops abandoned. This, then, is carried to the other extreme, which reverses prices, putting grain, especially corn, too high to feed to an ever declining beef and pork market. Then at once all abandon stock feeding and go into grain production until the price pendulum swings to extremes in the other direction. The same process goes on between the several different grain crops and between grain and cotton, owing to such large sections of the United States being adapted to the production of a large variety of products.

There is nothing now to guide a farmer in determining in advance what products he should raise to produce the most money. It is the blindest kind of a gamble if he hits it. Were the farmers unionized by products an executive committee of each would form the National Crop Survey Board, to determine in advance what crops should be increased and what decreased and to what per cent in the several districts the nation would be divided into. The entire United States would thus be operated as one mammoth farm in the production of all its farm products for both home consumption and export. This service alone would be worth billions of dollars annually to the farmers and more than justify all their expense and work of unionizing.

As the farmers of other nations unionize, delegates from their National Crop Survey Boards would meet to form an International Crop Survey Board, and thus to a large extent direct the farming of the entire world, as it should be done, from one central overseeing body. This is necessary to prevent acute famine in some parts of the world in some products and overproduction of them in other parts, or a possible world shortage of some crops.

### **Crop Optimist Should be Canned.**

Another good result, to the Central Western States at least, through unionizing would be the canning of the crop optimists, who have cost these States many billions of dollars in the aggregate. The wind-jamming and tin horn blowing about the size and expectation of bumper crops have for decades been the bane of Kansas and other wheat-producing States. This propensity developed abnormally in the years from 1870 to 1890 from railroad and real estate advertising to induce people to come west and settle up the country. It became epidemic and remained chronic over all the West. All newspapers gladly gave it any amount of free space. All classes were clamoring for a greater immigration, and the knocker was tabooed everywhere. No pessimistic news or conditions were given a hearing anywhere, as it might injure the real estate business and discourage people and capital coming to the locality.

People bore their poverty, crop failures and disappointments in silence, but when luck and weather conditions combined to favor them with even the prospect of a good crop their joyous hopes of a bumper crop were heard 'round the world. Option gamblers made a note of it, and next day sold it down on the boards of trade all over the world. Every dealer in blue sky get-rich-quick schemes rushed their agents to the favored country. Trusts voted a 25 per cent raise on all goods going into this new-rich country. Goods

and professional services to the farmers advanced sharply, for why shouldn't people with such glowing prospects for wealth pay more? Every rain or snow from the time farmers begin to plow for next year's wheat crop until it is ready to harvest—from August to June—is heralded as a million-dollar donation to the farmers, and everybody living off the farmers' patronage want their share of it immediately. When the crop finally fizzles out from too much hot air, everyone looks blue but says nothing, and the outside world is left in the dark as to what became of the farmers' immense wealth they had heard of.

Should the crop, from some occasional freak of nature, really turn out to be a mortgage-lifter, as they are erroneously called from their great size, it is found that their excess has been more than discounted in price by the grain gamblers, and less money is realized on them than on poor crops. Yet the fiction is still kept alive that they are mortgage-lifters, when in reality they are the reverse. But one never sees these mortgage statistics in the papers because they tell things the population boosters do not want made public. So I shall just drag them out from their hiding place and show them up.

Of the 118,031 owned farm homes in Kansas in 1890, 65,483, or 55.5 per cent of them, were mortgaged to an average of \$1,126 to the farm, a total of \$73,749,283. Of the 111,108 owned farms in 1910, 49,249, or 44.8 per cent, were mortgaged on an average of \$2,326, a total of \$70,819,736. The number of these farms decreased in the twenty years 6,923, while the mortgaged debt per farm increased \$1,200. That does not speak well for the great mortgage-lifting crops doing their expected duty.

In 1880, 22,651, or 16.3 per cent, of Kansas farms were operated by tenants, which in 1910 had risen to 65,398, or 36.8 per cent of the farms thus operated. These rented farms represent largely those on which mortgages were fore-

closed. These statistics do not indicate a thriving condition for the farmers. None should brag about the prosperity of the farmers until these mortgages are all paid off. And they should not be paid off by the Federal Farm Loan plan either, but by an increased price for their products.

The Federal Farm Loan plan is the banker's device to get a perpetual mortgage on all the farms and to hold all for the security of each. Before the scheme was in working order three months, over \$7,000,000 had been loaned the farmers, and over 5,000 farm-loan associations were being organized throughout the United States. It was expected that over \$200,000,000 would be loaned to these farm associations within the first year. The government aided the banks in this scheme to get a strangle-hold on the farmers, but will not aid the farmers the least bit to get released. They should unionize to release themselves through higher wages to save mortgaging, and pay off the old debts.

### **Governor Sees Conditions But Not Remedy.**

Excerpts from Governor Allen's message to the Kansas Legislature on January 15, shows that he recognizes a deplorable condition in agriculture, but suggests false remedies unless safeguarded by the minimum price system :

"In my judgment, the most rapidly growing question in Kansas today is that which concerns the increase in tenant occupation of farm lands.

"All countries have had their day with this menace. The Eastern States have struggled with it for years. In Illinois it has grown so alarmingly that something like 60 per cent of the best land of that State is now owned by men who hold it for speculative purposes or for what it will yield to them in rentals. For so many years in Kansas we were free from the evil that we had grown into the easy habit of believing that we would always be exempt. It has been the boast of all citizens who eulogize the State that we are 'a commonwealth of homeowners.' Therefore it comes as something of an alarming surprise to note that since 1880 the percentage of farms operated by tenants has been increasing as rapidly in this State as in any State in the Union,

and much more rapidly than in many of our sister States. Today in some of the counties comprising the eastern half of the State, practically 50 per cent of the farms are operated by tenants. In 1880, the percentage of Kansas farms operated by owners in proportion to the whole was 83.7. In thirty years this decreased to 63.2; during the past ten years it is apparent, so far as figures are available, that the farther decrease has brought the situation almost to a point where half the farms of this State are operated by tenants. . . .

"I think it will be accepted almost without argument that no more overwhelming disaster can come to any commonwealth than that which is threatened in the present tendency. As we contemplate the after-war conditions which now confront us, the greater danger in America, it appears to me, is that peculiar tide of unrest which we call Bolshevism, I. W. W.ism, and the other forms of social discontent. The world is uneasy with this spirit just now. In Russia first, and later in Austria and in Germany, the discontented classes have destroyed government and now seek to restore the equilibrium without any very definite program of order. . . .

"In a just government there is only one real remedy against the rising tide. There is only one sure process by which you may make a man an optimistic, constructive influence in this country, and that is by adding him to the home-owning class. . . .

"To get rid, as far as possible, of farm tenantry, to promote the tilling of the soil by the owner of the land, to increase the number of homes owned by farmers and others, should be the most important governmental object of the present hour in this State. Every consideration calls for it. Not only the protection of the State against the rapid increase of speculation in our farm lands demands it, but a new reason impels us especially at this time."

Now for his suggested remedies, which would make conditions much worse through overproduction if put in force:

"Secretary Lane has suggested a plan which will bring relief in some States. This plan places at the disposal of soldiers, on easy terms, public lands and lands secured through reclamation projects. We have no such lands in Kansas, so that our measure of relief must be in whatever provisions are possible to secure a redistribution. Any effective plan in this direction depends first upon cheap money and the possibility of buying on easy terms.

"California has taken a very progressive step in this direction in the creation of a fund through which she buys lands in large holdings

and resells them to small farmers on easy payments. Other States are studying the proposition of creating associations backed by the States to create a system of credits through which a good tenant farmer can borrow up to 90 per cent of the value of the land. . . .

“A valuable addition to small land holdings might also come from a more intelligent and effective interest in the possibilities of irrigation in the western portion of the State.”

His program further suggests: Exemption from taxation of all improvements on land farmed by owners; special tax on absentees; exemption of mortgages from taxation; cheap money for loans to near value of the land; limiting amount of land a man may own for speculation; higher rate of taxes on tenant lands than on owner-farmed; land indebtedness not included for taxes on farms less than 160 acres; increased tax rate with increased holdings of all kinds of property. State aid in buying farms for those who want them for homes.

Now, all these schemes to increase the number of farmers and quantity of farm products would be in vain were there no minimum price system enforced by the farmers to insure good wages and overhead expenses, for without it prices would go so low that people could not make a decent living on 80 or 160 acres, though they be relieved of paying taxes, interest and payments on the land. Land would become worthless again and people would desert it by thousands as before for the better wages and living conditions in cities. Only by having a large family of working age to furnish free labor could an industrious farmer by good management survive through buying out a half dozen of his neighbors when they become dissatisfied to the extent of almost giving it away to seek a living wage elsewhere.

Those were the exact conditions I lived through in Kansas during the time of practically free government lands and very cheap railroad land on eleven years' time with little or no taxes, interest or payments to make for years. Those were the good old times when farmers fed the world free,

that union labor and union employers hope to see again, but which farmers should unionize to prevent coming.

No scheme will work to keep men on a farm at fifty cents a day when they can get six dollars a day in town, and it need not be tried out again. Union wages in cities must either come down or wages to farmers kept up or they will inevitably desert the farm to scab on union labor if not admitted as members.

As to land redistribution and farm homes being a panacea for Bolshevism and I. W. W.ism it is nothing of the kind. What those men want that some writers mistake for "land-hunger" is in reality only loot by mob violence of the farmers' supplies and homes to sell and squander in excesses and debauchery in cities. Besides a ball and chain, the government would need a soldier with a shotgun to keep each one on a farm and at work. Why, it's impossible to keep most of that kind of men on a farm more than a week in harvest or threshing time, though they be paid four to ten times the wages the farmer himself gets out of his crops.

Here is an incident reported in the press concerning the present Kansas Legislature, showing that men with experience do not desire to return to the farm under present conditions :

"During the debate on the farm tenantry resolution in the House of Representatives yesterday one very loquacious orator sought to enlist all of the farmer members on his side.

"'Every member of the House who was raised on a farm please raise his hand,' he pleaded.

"All of the members, including lawyers, held up their hands.

"'How many of you still live on the farm?' he next asked.

"About half of the members raised their hands.

"'How many of you who left the farm want to go back?'"

"Not a hand went up.

"'The farms are in great luck,' he drawled."



## Some Sensible Remarks by Secretary of Agriculture.

THE AGRICULTURAL DEPARTMENT AND THE FARMER'S MARKET.

"In his address before the Trans-Mississippi Congress, at Omaha, February 28, 1919, Secretary Houston declared that 'livestock growers do not believe there is an adequately free market.'

"If the interest of the farmers and growers of livestock is analyzed it will be found that it focuses on markets.

"This is significant and it should give direction to the thinking at Washington in respect to what the Agricultural Department of the government should attempt to do in behalf of agriculture.

"That department expends annually many million dollars, ostensibly for the benefit of the farm industry. Yet the farm industry is not progressing in step with the other large industries of the United States.

"If the farmer is asked as to what he wishes this great department to do he will sum it up in marketing, not producing. The department issues tons of pamphlets and documents instructing the farmer how to raise wheat and corn, how to feed hogs and cattle, and the like. This is a great part of what it does for the farmer. It supports agricultural colleges, and these also tell the farmer how to produce and how to feed, and the time will come, at the rate matters are going, when the agricultural colleges will be the most aristocratic institutions in America, because the time will come when only men of wealth can own land.

"The average farmer throws too many of these documents in the stove, saying: 'I know how to raise corn and wheat and how to feed cattle and hogs. I can attend to that part of the business, if you will look after my market. What is the use of my putting money, brains and muscle into my work, when, after I have finished the job, the bottom of my market drops out?'

"There are those who have market knowledge, but they obtain this invaluable thing for themselves, at their own expense, and it is exclusive property. The packers, for example, receive data through their own facilities from every part of the globe. This their experts assemble and relate together and classify, and from it they draw certain inferences. From the data exclusively in their possession today they can see the market for hogs or cattle in February, 1920. It may be that the data gathered by them show that in February, 1920, the way matters are going, there will be an increased supply of hogs to such a degree that it will be excessive, in relation to their facilities to handle it at maximum profit to themselves.

"In such a case the packers do not wait for 1920. They drop the price at once, to discourage the farmer, who does not know what has happened to his industry. He has built his hogs on conditions in 1918

and early 1919, but his price suddenly is made for him with regard to conditions that the packers foresee for 1920. The sole method by which he is now turned from one specialty to another of his business is by being pinched out of his profit.

"A great grain manipulator acts in a similarly scientific way. He has his lines out for information from every quarter of the globe as to oats, or corn, or wheat. When he assembles all the information obtainable he draws his inferences as to what must be true next July or September, and he buys or sells accordingly, sometimes finding conditions such that he can actually corner a grain product.

"Mr. Baruch, whom the government drafted for war work and who thereupon cut all his lines of communication with Wall Street, is often referred to as a stock gambler. What Mr. Baruch is in fact is a man of scientific methods and knowledge regarding certain corporations and their properties. He assembles the data regarding them, what their capital is and how it compares with their assets, whether they produce a marketable article, what its future is likely to be, whether they have been distributing their earnings in dividends or putting them back, 'plowing them in,' extending and improving their plants. When he has all obtainable data assembled he draws his inferences and acts accordingly. It is not surprising that he is a successful speculator in stocks. He has the information not possessed by the public or by Wall Street's 'lambs.' His methods are scientific.

"All these speculators see ahead, on information exclusive to them and obtained by them at their own expense.

"Not so the farmer. Now, what the farmer should get from the Agricultural Department in a market bureau is just such data, assembled from all parts of the globe by the department specialists, and more than that, with the inferences drawn. Periodically the department should give out its data and its inferences therefrom for the benefit of the public, data more exhaustive than that of the packers on meat products or the grain speculator on grain. The department market bureau should take the risk of making market predictions, months or whole seasons ahead, just as it takes the risk today of making weather predictions a week ahead. It may occasionally miss, but in a large preponderance of predictions it will hit the mark.

"Such a prediction was made, for the first time, so far as we know, the other day by Herbert Hoover, with regard to the present conditions and future prospects of the fats market, especially with regard to hogs. He advised American farmers to discontinue marketing half-fattened hogs, and while he admitted that at present prices the farmer cannot afford to continue feeding, yet he predicted that as soon as peace is signed the demand for fats throughout the world will suddenly leap forward and the farmer with fats for sale will reap a rich reward.

“The government at Washington need not advise farmers, but it can at least print for the general benefit the inferences drawn by its experts from the data assembled. It can make knowledge as to ‘futures’ public instead of private, and universal instead of exclusive. The effect of such a work in behalf of the farmer will be to stabilize the industry of the food producer as it never has been stabilized before, to save him to a large extent from sudden and violent fluctuations disturbing his entire program and forcing him suddenly and violently, and at serious loss, instead of permitting him gradually and long enough in advance, to diversify and vary his program, from cattle to sheep, or from sheep to hogs, and so on.

“It is in reference to markets that the Agricultural Department’s future work is of main interest, or can be made so, to the practical farmer.”

Now, this aid, information and advice is just what the farmers need. But they need not expect the government to furnish it, because the government is now controlled jointly by union employers and union labor, both of which want only increased farm products and decreased prices for them. So it is up to the producers of each farm product to unionize and employ an executive board to do this service for them.

### **Packers Control Government and Exploit Farmers.**

“The large packers have been for months flooding the country with misleading advertising. Their primacy in the packing business comes from their piracy in finance and criminal methods of competition, not from efficiency or the economic soundness of their methods of concentration, of slaughter and distribution.

“Their assertion of ‘Small cost to the nation for services rendered,’ rests upon ‘camouflage,’ and not upon demonstrated or demonstrable fact. In none of the European nations is there as great waste between farm and table as there is in the United States.

“If we are to continue a meat-eating nation, the concentration of the live stock of the nation in a few packer controlled markets must cease. The following are some of the facts to which they do not give publicity: They divide among themselves the live stock of the nation on the following per cent basis: Armour, 292.66; Swift, 357.51; Morris, 149.83; Wilson, 100.00; Cudahy, 100.00; Total, 1,000.00.

“They prorate the funds used in debauching congressional committees and other governmental agencies on the same basis. While many were aware that these things were being done by the packers, these facts have never been brought to the knowledge of the whole people, as it has been done by the public hearings of the Federal Trades Commission in the investigation conducted by Francis J. Heney.

“If the packers are the beneficent agencies that their advertising asserts, why should they have made the fight that they did make to prevent the facts from being made public by a national governmental agency? Why should they have broken their agreement of December 6, 1916, made by them with the Market Committee of the American Live Stock Association, to wit:

“To withdraw their opposition to an investigation by the Federal Trades Commission of the packing industry. Subsequent to the agreement with the Market Commission, they defeated the efforts of the producers to have a resolution passed by Congress appropriating funds with which to make the investigation. The appropriation was secured only after President Wilson had ordered the Federal Trades Commission to make the investigation and in spite of the continued opposition of the packers.

“The last of July, 1917, Mr. Hoover stated to me that: ‘The Chicago packers had not only a national reputation, but an international reputation that smelt to heaven. I would not invite one of the large packers to a seat at my council table.’

“Within thirty days from the time of making this statement, the packers and their allied interests were in charge of the Food Administration. Within four months, Mr. Hoover’s appointees were telling the producers that, ‘The high cost of living did not permit them to make a profit on this year’s finished live stock; that they must remember the consumer and make up their minds to patriotically practice self-denial.’

“Under the terms of the packers’ license, as made by the Food Administration, the packers are permitted to have a profit on capital owned of from thirteen to nineteen per cent. It is true that the packers may be foregoing some measure of their accustomed profit, but the producer is unable to realize how the rate of profit mentioned calls for any practice of self-denial on the part of the packer. You cannot harmonize with the rattlesnake. It is either kill or be killed.

“Recent occurrences have proven that the packers and their allies, the house of Morgan, the Rockefellers, are actuated by the same principles that move the Hohenzollerns and Hapsburgs of Europe; the one

would deprive humanity of its political freedom, the other of its industrial or economic freedom. We must preserve both. We can preserve neither unless the national government eliminates exploitation from the conduct of the affairs of the nation.

“The first step demanded to stop this evil is for the national government to take charge of the five large packers. To win this war, we must make our food supply secure. No nation can be induced to produce to the limit for the benefit of five families, even though the five be the Armours, Swifts, Morrisises, Wilsons and Cudahys. To feed our Allies and ourselves, maximum production is essential. Prove that as a nation we deserve to exist by making ‘ours a government of, for and by the people.’”

ED C. LASATER.

Mr. Lasater is a big farmer and rancher of Brooks County, Texas, but he should know from observation and experience that the government can do nothing to relieve the farmers from the grip of their oppressors while those same oppressors control the government. He should also know that by unionizing and voting as a unit for all government officials of their own choosing the millions of farmers have the voting power to take over the control of government to themselves, and then through its power correct the evils complained of.

The key to the situation is to unionize and seize control of the government through the ballot, and good wages and overhead expenses through the minimum price system. Will you dissatisfied farmers use the key at your hand to unlock to you this great source of power and wealth?

### **Money in Unionizing.**

The first question in the minds of all wheat growers when asked to join the wheat growers' union will be, “What's in it for me? What do I get for my membership fee and dues? I'm from Missouri and must be shown.”

Well, here's what's in it for all wheat growers, and you can figure out your portion by multiplying the increased price on one bushel by the number of bushels you sell an-

nually, and that product by the number of years you will raise wheat. Unless wheat growers unionize to adopt and enforce the minimum price system based on cost of production, the big wheat speculators will set a minimum price themselves on wheat at about fifty cents a bushel at the farmers' delivery time, and a maximum price of all they can get for it when in their own possession, which would probably be around eighty cents a bushel. I have shown that the average cost of producing wheat is \$2.50 a bushel, which should be the union's minimum price at the beginning of the threshing season, with a monthly increase of two and a half cents a bushel for carrying charge, which would make the maximum price during the year \$2.80 a bushel. Now this is just \$2.00 a bushel for unionizing. Any wheat grower can easily see what is in it for him. Any township, county and state can easily estimate the increased flow of money to it. Villages, towns and cities will have their patronage from wheat growers increased five-fold. Merchants, laborers, mechanics and professional people will have their business with wheat growers multiplied by five. Manufacturers of the thousands of articles needed by wheat growers and their families will get five times the business from them, and that will furnish union city labor five times the labor needed to produce them. It is thus seen how all classes except the gamblers and profiteers in wheat would be benefited through the wheat growers unionizing to inaugurate the minimum price system. Two dollars on our 800,000,000-bushel wheat crop would keep in circulation \$1,600,000,000 and side-track the financial and industrial panic that is bound to come with fifty-cent wheat.

### **Cost of Raising Wheat in Kansas.**

One of the most necessary duties of farm organizations is to teach farmers what to figure in as cost of products and the price of each element in their production. So much de-

depends on the yield that a ten-year average should be taken as a basis of production. The good yields must not only pay for their own production, but also for the labor and expense of the poor yields and total failures.

In all itemized cost accounts by crop experts and agricultural colleges I have seen, the wages of the farmer has been set far too low, while some of the biggest cost items and many of the smaller ones were omitted entirely. In the *Ottawa Herald* is an itemized cost of wheat crop by Mr. J. M. Conard, of Ottawa, Kansas, that I believe is a fairly good average of what should be included and the cost of each item:

“What is the average cost per acre for growing wheat? And does the average farm break even or make money on the various farm activities?”

“Farm accounting has been discussed a great deal in recent years, and just now is strongly urged. Some farmers, it is claimed, lose what they make in some lines by leaks or overhead expenses in others.

“J. M. Conard, one of the enterprising farmers of Franklin County, has figured out costs for some time. Recently he prepared a statement of the costs per acre of growing wheat. His figures are based on the 1918 harvest of the 1917 sowing and the sowing of the new crop in the fall of 1918. In it he has figured all items of sowing and harvesting and has put in those items of overhead expense that are frequently overlooked. He even charged a percentage of insurance, taxes and the like to the wheat crop.

“Mr. Conard’s estimate is that wheat cost \$27.68 per acre during the last season, and that to make a profit a large yield was necessary. A 15-bushel production per acre would allow a farmer to break even, he said. His estimates are based upon the crop grown on 140 acres sown in 1917 and harvested in 1918, averaging 30 bushels per acre, and followed by a crop of 200 acres sown in the fall of 1918.

“Mr. Conard prepared an article on his estimates, and this was distributed locally through the farm bureau. The article follows:

“In undertaking to arrive at or near the exact cost of producing wheat, I have followed closely the plan laid down by Prof. W. E. Grimes, specialist in farm management of the Kansas State Agricultural College. In his investigation of the wheat industry of Sumner County it was found that the yield was 17.84 bushels to the acre, and the cost of producing and placing same on the market was \$1.70 per bushel. In that county they found on farms yielding but nine bushels to the acre

that the cost of the wheat was \$3.53, and on the best farm in the county, \$1.28, all depending upon the yield and price received. Considering the whole State, the average wheat yield of Kansas does not return a profit.

"I have at hand the larger items of expense entering into the harvesting of the 1917 crop, also a very accurate account of all costs incurred in sowing the fall (1918) crop. By putting the two items together we have a very accurate estimate of wheat production ever experienced in this county, as to weather, yield and prices. Our profits here are due to a big yield. I understand it to average 23 bushels to the acre for the county. Under the prevailing conditions a 15-bushel yield to the acre would allow us to break even."

"Here are Mr. Conard's figures on the basis of a single acre :

*1917 Crop Harvested in 1918.*

Harvesting.....	\$2.00
Shocking.....	.75
Twine.....	.75
Threshing.....	4.60
Hauling grain to market.....	1.00

*Sowing New Crop (Fall 1918).*

Plowing.....	\$2.50
Disking, 4 horses, twice.....	1.25
Harrowing twice, 4 horses, man riding harrow.....	1.20
Rolling, double roller, once over.....	.40
Seeding.....	.60
Seed.....	2.81
Rent.....	6.50
Use of machinery.....	.53
Interest figured on cost of seed-bed preparation and seed, ten months.....	.80

*Overhead Expenses.*

Insurance.....	\$0.25
Use of buildings.....	.30
Fertilizer.....	.20
Storage and cleaning grain.....	.10
Interest on implements and harness while idle.....	.37
Repairs on implements.....	.03
Upkeep of fences.....	.11
Taxes.....	.40
Feed of teams while idle.....	.20
Oils and grease.....	.03

Total cost per acre..... \$27.68

*Other Items to be Charged.*

"Continuing his deductions, Mr. Conard said :

"There are many other minor items of expense that enter into the cost of producing a crop of wheat which I have not tried to figure out. They should be taken in the same ratio as the wheat crop is to the whole farm. They are: Veterinary bills, shoeing of horses, crippling



or death of horses, breeding and raising of work teams, accidents, breaking up of implements and tools, repairing and oiling of harness, new fly nets about every year, draining of water off wheat fields, hunting up help and going after and taking the same home.

“The taxes upon your improvements, now that they are taxed, must in part, fall upon the wheat crop. A part of your income tax can be blamed to your wheat crop and charged in as an expense against it. I will venture to guess that when all items of expense are accounted for it will be found that wheat in this county has cost the farmers about \$30 per acre to sow in 1917 and harvest in 1918.

“These items are based upon a crop of 140 acres sown in 1917 and harvested in 1918, averaging 30 bushels per acre, and followed by a crop of 200 acres sown in 1918. The item of board and lodging has entered into the figures of the different items.’”

You will note that having 30 bushels to the acre it was produced for \$1 a bushel. But as a ten-year average, from 1906 to 1915 inclusive, the United States produced only 15 bushels per acre; that should be the basis of computation minus a still lower yield to cover the uncut acreage sown but lost, which would probably cut it down to 12 bushels per acre, as the 15-bushel yield includes only the acreage harvested. That would make his wheat cost \$2.50 a bushel in labor and overhead expense. That is the price he should have had. But when the government guaranteed price expires June 1st, 1920, and the board of trade gamblers sell the price down to 75 cents or less, what will or can wheat growers do about it? Well, of course, they can do nothing except to take it for wheat that cost them \$2.50, if they refuse to unionize to adopt and enforce the minimum price system. Now——

“There, there! I’m converted to the unionizing idea. You needn’t give any more proof of its necessity and desirability. By heck, I’ll join it at the first opportunity if it costs a hundred dollars. But I have a few questions written down that occurred to me as you went along in your argument that I would like answered, but was afraid to ask them because you were so cranky.”

All right, Mr. Wiseman; fire when you are ready. I am so glad you could comprehend the helpless condition of farmers while unorganized and their great power, influence and advantage by unionizing that I have changed your name to Wiseman as a more befitting one.

### **Twenty Questions Answered.**

Now, Mr. Wiseman, please give me your list of questions and I shall write them down and answer each under a corresponding number.

"Well, here is the list of questions I am sure some wheat growers would like information on before joining the union. How would it handle these cases?

"1. Wheat growers who would not join the union?

"2. Big farmers who might undersell the minimum price?

"3. Surplus of a bumper crop not taken at the price?

"4. If too many engage in producing wheat?

"5. In case wheat is boycotted by the consumers?

"6. If foreigners should undersell the minimum price?

"7. If the union should be declared in violation of anti-trust laws?

"8. Were farmers to complain of high prices of flour?

"9. In case of a non-delivery strike, what of the needy grower?

"10. How and by whom is the minimum price to be determined?

"11. How will the union be financed?

"12. Suppose the government should continue pricing wheat?

"13. If the price of wheat is lowered, will not other prices tumble?

"14. How will the union enforce its mandates on its members?

"15. Could not union officials sell out and betray the union?

“16. What if union labor, employers and millers import wheat?

“17. What of the poor people in cities unable to pay for bread?

“18. Suppose foreign governments refuse our surplus wheat?

“19. Would not farmers quit other crops for wheat raising?

“20. Would not people abandon flour for cheaper substitutes?”

I have previously suggested answers to many of these questions but shall do it again specifically and more condensed. However, all these questions and scores of others will be settled as they come up by the union officials in their own way as part of their official duties. All I can do now is to merely suggest things that might be considered by them. The national executive committee of the wheat growers' union could be composed of one member from each State having over a million acres in wheat. That would give it fifteen members, and it could appoint a sub-committee of one or more of its members to investigate each subject as they come up and report their findings and recommendations to the full committee for action. We can't cross bridges before we come to them. The time and circumstances must determine the course of action :

1. A committee on slackers would see those who expect benefits without contributing aid, and use such argument as each case requires. A present of this book with instructions to read it and report to the membership committee in a week would find them there on time to apply for membership in the union.

2. Big wheat raisers would want as good wages and overhead expenses as the smaller ones. But should they through superior producing advantages undersell the fixed minimum,

they could be controlled by a proposed law to limit the number of acres one man could hold or farm to any one crop. The union could if necessary obligate their members to observe a certain limit.

3. Wheat being a good keeper if put in a good granary in good condition, the surplus from big crops could be and should be carried over to the poor crop years as an insurance against famine, and consumers should pay the interest and storage on it for their protection. A per cent of production of big producers over a certain amount could be required held in reserve by the union, or held in terminal elevators, which the union should own, either by the union itself or by foreign importing governments or by our own government.

4. If from any cause too large a surplus of wheat accumulates, the national control board of the executive committee could order a certain per cent reduction in acreage sown over a certain amount allowed each member.

5. It is not likely consumers would deny the producers of their favorite bread cereal skilled labor wages and overhead expenses while producing it, and that is all the price asked for it. But should it be boycotted, the union officials should convince the public by figures that don't lie that the price is not unreasonable, that the growers need the money to buy necessary supplies with. Most consumers are better satisfied if good prices go to the producers of an article than to speculators and profiteers in it.

6. The minimum price to producers fixed by our national union would probably be adopted by wheat raisers in all exporting countries. Our national union would send organizers to all such countries to unionize the wheat producers, and the minimum price fixed here would likely be in agreement with such unions. Also an agreement might be made to not sell wheat for export to any country having wheat to export.

7. Since many other classes of laborers, professions and producers do agree collectively on uniform wages and prices for their services and products, it is not likely the wheat growers would be singled out as a class to be denied that privilege. But should they be denied, it of course would be fought through to the highest courts by the union; and if denied there, the union would see to it that the law was amended to exempt farmers who collectively fixed their indirect wages.

8. The union would see to it that the milling trust did not profiteer in wheat products and then blame it on the union, nor would the boards of trade be allowed to gamble in wheat or its products.

9. The wheat being a good collateral when the price is assured, any grower could borrow on it near the minimum price.

10. I have in answer to No. 6 suggested how the price could be set. The national executive committee could appoint from its membership a sub-committee on wheat statistics to gather and summarize the cost of producing wheat in all parts of the United States, its general condition, supply and demand throughout the world, and from this information, in agreement with the wheat growers' union of other exporting nations, determine the minimum price at least a year ahead so that producers would know before they did the work what wages they were to get for it. In certain cases it might be left to a vote of the union members.

11. A membership fee, say of ten dollars and monthly dues of one dollar per member, should provide ordinary running expenses for a very efficient organization including the township, county, state and national officers' salaries, and equipment of necessary offices. Were any special funds to be raised for the purchase or building of local or terminal elevators, or for other purposes a graduated assessment on production over a certain amount could be provided for.

12. The government will leave the wheat growers to the mercy of profiteers and gamblers after June 1, 1920, and they will sell the price down to probably 60 cents, as they did in 1914 when the growers have a crop ready for market. Wheat raisers have until then to unionize and prepare to take over the pricing of their wheat, and they have no time to waste. But should the government continue pricing the wheat it would still be necessary to unionize to have competent and authorized representatives to inform the government what the price should be and to insist on it being adopted.

13. Prices of nothing, except some other farm products, would follow wheat down. Union labor has declared it will not allow their wages lowered regardless of lower prices on anything else. Mr. Hoover has stated that to reduce flour prices fifty per cent would not cause more than one or two cents reduction in the price of a pound loaf of bread. Here is a couple of excerpts from Mr. Hoover's statement dated at Paris, March 10, 1919:

"The needs of Europe are larger than our previous estimates. Altogether the balance of the supply and demand for our present wheat now looks as though we might see wheat at \$3.50 a bushel as it was in the spring of 1917, if there is a free market in wheat and uncontrolled prices for the 1918 crop. There can be no free market of ninety per cent of the world's exports. Wheat is controlled by the wheat executive in London.

"Therefore to all present appearances it should be possible to market the whole of next year's crop without loss to the government.

"As to whether the government will deliberately take a loss below the price of \$2.25 a bushel in order to lower the price of bread is a matter that will have to be determined by the officials of the day. It appears to me that the world price of wheat, if there is a free market, may be above \$2.25, and in any event, such a loss would be a direct subtraction from bread prices just as it is paid now in European countries.

"There are very great technical difficulties in the way of such procedure in the United States. Furthermore it would, I believe, be proved upon investigation that to lower the price of flour by fifty per cent

would only reduce the price of a one pound loaf from nine or ten cents, as at present, to seven or eight cents because too large a proportion of the increased cost of a loaf since the war is due to higher wages, manufacturing cost and the cost of other supplies."

So this "wheat executive in London" prevents the price of our wheat going to \$3.50 a bushel which it would do were the law of supply and demand allowed to rule prices. We have all been taught the falsehood that this law was the supreme price ruler. But we see here how it can be repealed or annulled by a made-to-order arbitrary price. As England is a wheat-importing country, and as most of our surplus wheat goes there, and as the price of that surplus, no matter how small, rules to a great extent the price of our entire crop, our union should have a representative in London to deal for us collectively with that "wheat executive" for our surplus wheat, and if it will not pay the price demanded, then try other importing countries. Why should we be forever unrepresented in the most vital deal of our business—that of pricing our product, and indirectly our wages? I have contended all along that the high or low price of wheat makes very little difference in the total cost of living, but it makes a huge difference in the wages of the grower. If to cut the price of wheat in two to allow a like cut in flour only makes a cent or two difference in a pound of bread it amounts to almost nothing in the cost of living, and therefore nothing would decline that the wheat grower buys were the price of wheat reduced one-half.

14. The union's constitution and by-laws will provide for fines as other societies do for violation of its laws. It could also deny the right to vote or hold office to offenders.

15. Only members known to be trustworthy, tried, responsible and loyal to the union would be given important places of trust. The recall of all officials would be provided for in the union's law. Books would be audited by disinterested persons and statements made to the membership through the daily wheat bulletin at regular intervals.

16. The national wheat growers' union would seek to unionize the wheat raisers in all wheat exporting countries and with their national executives form an international wheat growers' union. This body would seek to make the minimum price uniform so far as possible and practical, and probably divide the needs of importing countries among the exporting countries, supplying those nearest them and agreeing to not ship to each other's territory, especially if a strike or boycott is on. This international executive commission would be composed of delegates from each of the national executive committees and be authorized to deal with the "wheat executive" of importing countries collectively. Since the needs of importing countries are pooled and bought through a single agency, there is no competition in the buying, and the need of exporting countries pooling their wheat and selling through an international agency is imperative if fair prices are to be had.

17. As shown, the high or low price of wheat cuts little difference in the price of bread in cities. With a low price the wheat raisers would be unable to do anything for them, but with a high price they could help them in several ways by giving some of them work on the farm, and others work in the factories, supplying things needed on the farms.

18. As explained in No. 16, it is contemplated that an international wheat growers' union would be organized as soon as we take the lead. Then wheat prices the world over would be virtually uniform and stabilized. Then there would be no object in boycotting any member nation. If this unionizing of wheat growers is not done, then the international buying syndicate will play one selling nation against another to beat down the price. Their agents will work through the board of trade in surplus wheat countries to sell the price down and buy at the lowest possible point, first in one country then in another. But should the time



ever come when we could not sell all our wheat at the fixed minimum price, rather than lower it the national executive could order a per cent of it fed to stock on the farm if the surplus is too much to carry in reserve.

19. It is contemplated that all farm products will separately unionize and adopt the minimum price system as soon as wheat is unionized. Their minimum price will cover the same rate of wages and class of overhead expenses. Then there would be no object in quitting them for wheat. All these crop unions would then organize a national federation, and its crop equalization board would advise the unions on increasing or decreasing each product in order to stabilize production and prices.

20. The foregoing plan would tend to keep prices of the various products equalized so there would be no advantage in prices of any over others. Consumers would not object to the price of wheat when it covers only skilled labor wages and overhead expenses as no profits whatever are to be added.

### **Mr. Wiseman is a Convert to Unionism.**

“Well, those answers are as satisfactory as they can be made in advance. I see that all questions can be met by the union as they arise, that will be part of its officials’ duties. I am a thorough convert to the minimum price system. I don’t see why it wasn’t thought of long ago, and all farm products unionized to adopt it. I have always wished the farmers could have something to say in pricing their products, and this plan fills the bill. Can you suggest a method or plan for unionizing the wheat growers?”

No, I cannot do that. No one could unionize them by any plan. They must unionize themselves if it is ever done. But I can suggest a tentative outline of a plan for them to follow which they can amend to suit themselves when they become members, or adopt some other plan by electing a commission from their own membership to write a constitu-

tion and by-laws for the union to adopt by a referendum vote of its entire membership. My plan will do as a temporary form to unite in membership on, then, of course, they will take charge of their own union and make such changes in its organic laws and officers' duties as they deem best.

"Well, let's have it quick and short, as I am rarin' to go to the unionizing meeting to apply for membership.

### **General Guiding Principles for Unionizing.**

Well, Mr. Wiseman, I shall just give a few principles as a general guide to unionizing :

1. It should be planned so everyone above 18 years of age of both sexes who raise wheat to sell, or who derives his greatest income from land rented for wheat, can be members of the wheat growers' union.

2. The union should not be a secret, ritualistic or social affair, but strictly a business organization for the one main purpose of so controlling the price of wheat through its own elected officials by the minimum price system as to cover skilled labor wages and overhead expenses in producing it, and for the secondary purposes of collectively buying wheat farming implements, twine and other supplies, securing extra labor for harvesting and threshing at uniform wages, and for other business of mutual interest to wheat producers.

3. The unit of organization should be the township in all localities where wheat is the principal cereal crop, and the county where thinly inhabited, or but comparatively little wheat is raised, or district union composed of two or more townships or counties.

4. Meetings should be held where the general political elections are held, or at the most convenient place centrally located for all members, and not oftener than there is important business to transact that can't be postponed to a regular meeting, which should be held quarterly and on the same date throughout the United States, say at 2 P. M. on

the first Wednesday in March, June, September and December. The executive committee of the township, county, state or national union should have power to call a special meeting any time for some specific duty of the members, or of any class of the executives.

5. The referendum should be used whenever possible on all important matters, changes or policies affecting the members, and the recall of all officials should be provided for when incompetency, inefficiency, neglect of duty, mismanagement or misrepresentation is sufficient cause.

6. All should pay a membership fee and then quarterly dues, those for women, and males under 21, being less than for adult males, and they should be adequate for organizing and all necessary running expenses for all divisions of the union.

7. The union should build, buy or lease all necessary elevators for handling their wheat, but they should be acquired as necessary implements and not as money makers for stockholders. A graduated assessment on wheat raised in the delivery district should be made to acquire the elevator and buy wheat, and then only a margin charged on wheat delivered to cover operating expense, leaving the interest to be added to the minimum price as overhead expense. Where other grains are raised and are unionized they should take a joint ownership and management in the elevators.

8. All officers and agents who handle the union's money should be put under bonds, and reports required at regular intervals, and books audited by competent parties regularly.

9. At the organizing meeting the three officers—president, vice-president and secretary-treasurer—should be elected for one, two and three years respectively, dating from the next regular annual meeting, which should be one of the regular quarterly meetings, say the December meeting, and then the vacancy filled for three years at each succeeding annual meeting. These three officers should constitute

the executive committee of the local union, as they should of the county, state and national union, and be elected in the same manner. A township delegate should be elected at the same time to membership in the county wheat growers' union which should be composed of these delegates from each of the unionized townships in the county.

10. When ten or more unions in a county are organized they should be entitled to a county union, and the township delegates meet at the county seat to organize their county union, and elect one of their number to membership in the state union.

11. When ten counties in a State are unionized they should be entitled to organize the State union and the county delegates meet for that purpose at the State capital. They should elect one of their member to membership in the national union.

12. When five States have unionized, they should be entitled to organize the national wheat growers' union and their delegates meet at Washington to organize it. Every unionized State that produces a million bushels of wheat should be entitled to a representative in the national executive committee of the national wheat growers' union, and one additional member for every ten million bushels of wheat produced each year, to be elected by its State union.

13. Each of these four executive committees should deal with all matters in their respective jurisdictions, or appoint or elect special commissions to investigate and report to the full committee any matter of special interest and make such recommendations to it as appears appropriate.

14. Two methods of communication between the members and the officials of the four unions should be provided for. One through the official daily bulletin that all members should take, and one by letter or telegraph and telephone through union officials. The dues by adult males should include subscription to the bulletin.

15. The national union should be incorporated, and then charter the State unions, and the State unions in turn charter the township and county unions. A part of the membership fee and dues should go to each of the four unions—the township, county, state and national union.

16. The national union should be the chief executive for the union and control its policies and activities to make them uniform over the United States. From its members would be selected the many important sub-committees on all matters of national and international interest to the union for its information and guidance. This national executive should have its offices in Washington and be on the job all the time.

“Well, that is all fine; but let’s get busy now and unionize and get to work so we will be prepared to apply the minimum price system to our next crop. You call a meeting of the wheat growers of the county for next Saturday afternoon at the court house to unionize and we’ll all be there and start it with a big membership roll and a great sendoff. Most of the wheat growers will be in town that day, and all of them will surely join the union when there is to be so much power and money in it for them. I know no one can resist the power for good that unionizing will bring them through the minimum price system you have so fully and plainly set forth.”

### **Conversion of Farmers to Unionism the First Step.**

Well, well, Mr. Wiseman! I thought you were a farmer and knew farmers.

“I am a farmer, and a wheat grower. Have been about all my life, and I know farmers like a book.”

Then your name should be Dubb, for you don’t know the first thing about farmers. They are just like you, but you don’t know it.

“How do you figure that out?”

Why, you and I would be all that would attend the meeting. The balance have to be converted to unionism just as you were before they would attend a meeting to unionize. They would say or think "grafter," just as you did at the beginning of this book and pay no more attention to it. They must first be taught to understand what the minimum price system is, how it can be made the means for collecting skilled labor wages and overhead expenses in producing wheat, the great increase in its price in normal times, the advantages to them in that increased value, also their political power, and many other desirable things they can secure through unionizing.

"By George, you are right again. But how in the world can they be converted to the minimum price system so they will answer the call to organize?"

This little book converted you, didn't it?

"Sure, it did."

Well, it will convert them, too, if they only have an opportunity to read it. The first step then is to get this book into the hands of millions of wheat growers, and when they read it hundreds of thousands of them will begin calling for the organizers just as you did. Then it will be the time to provide them, and the meetings will be attended by all wheat growers. Unionizing will then spread over all wheat-raising States simultaneously like a spontaneous combustion, as it should do. No wheat grower will want to be a slacker, or wait to see if it will amount to anything, or let his neighbors pay the expense of unionizing while he expects to get the same reward without it. All will have to join the union and do team work under the direction of their own official national executive to get the best results. It will then sweep on to victory, power, influence and control of the wheat price at once, as it should do.

"That's so. Desire must precede action. Let me tell you what to do and then I'll tell you what I'll do."

Proceed.

“You give a copy of this book to publishers of all farm papers, especially in the big wheat-raising States, and ask them to act as agents for it, and advertise it through their papers if they approve of the farmers unionizing to get fair wages and overhead expenses for their crops. They will surely do it if they are really friends of the farmers. Then get all the farmer boys and girls you can all over the United States to write you for an agency for the book and thus get it into the hands of farmers just as fast as possible. Now I will order one thousand copies to sell to farmers, and as soon as they are gone I'll be back for more.”

Bully for you! Those are good suggestions. I shall request the printer to rush off an edition at once to supply you and the farm papers. If they are all as enthusiastic as you are it will keep his press busy supplying the demand. Then it will be but a short time until I get thousands of calls for the organizers, and from the callers I shall select one or more from each State to constitute the temporary organizing committee to incorporate the National Wheat Growers' Union, adopt a constitution, and commission field organizers. This plan gives the rank and file of the wheat growers themselves the chance to inaugurate the movement as they should do from their own numbers and class. In the meantime I shall try to get up a tentative draft of a constitution and by-laws to submit to the organizing committee. When anyone wants a local union organized it will be up to him to convert the wheat growers of the district to be organized to the minimum price system by getting this little book into their hands. I shall arrange to give any reliable person a commission agency for the book who desires to aid in its distribution, and to publishers of all farm papers who wish to aid the farmers in unionizing on this plan. Those wishing to aid on the organizing committee may write me stating age, experience in organizing work,

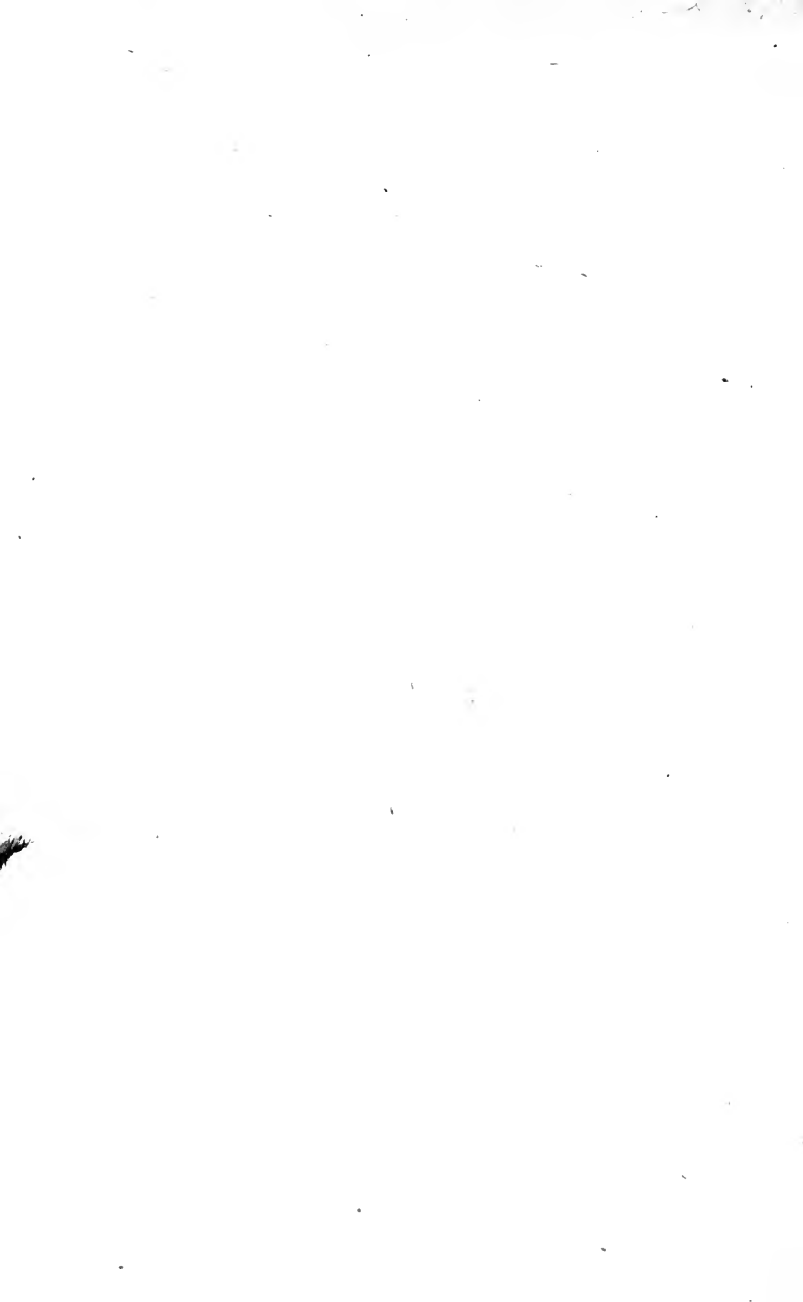
how many years they have raised wheat, how many bushels annually, and give the address of their banker and two wheat growers as reference. When I get representative wheat raisers from several States on the organizing list I shall call them together to organize the union, elect their officers and take full charge of all its organizing work until the union is established and its elected officers are ready to assume their duties. When this book is well distributed among wheat growers there should develop a big demand for organizers of township unions in all the big wheat raising States, and my plan would be to commission a State organizer for each State, who would in turn commission county organizers for counties in the State, who would organize the township unions, thus mobilizing the full strength of wheat growers into the union in the shortest possible time.

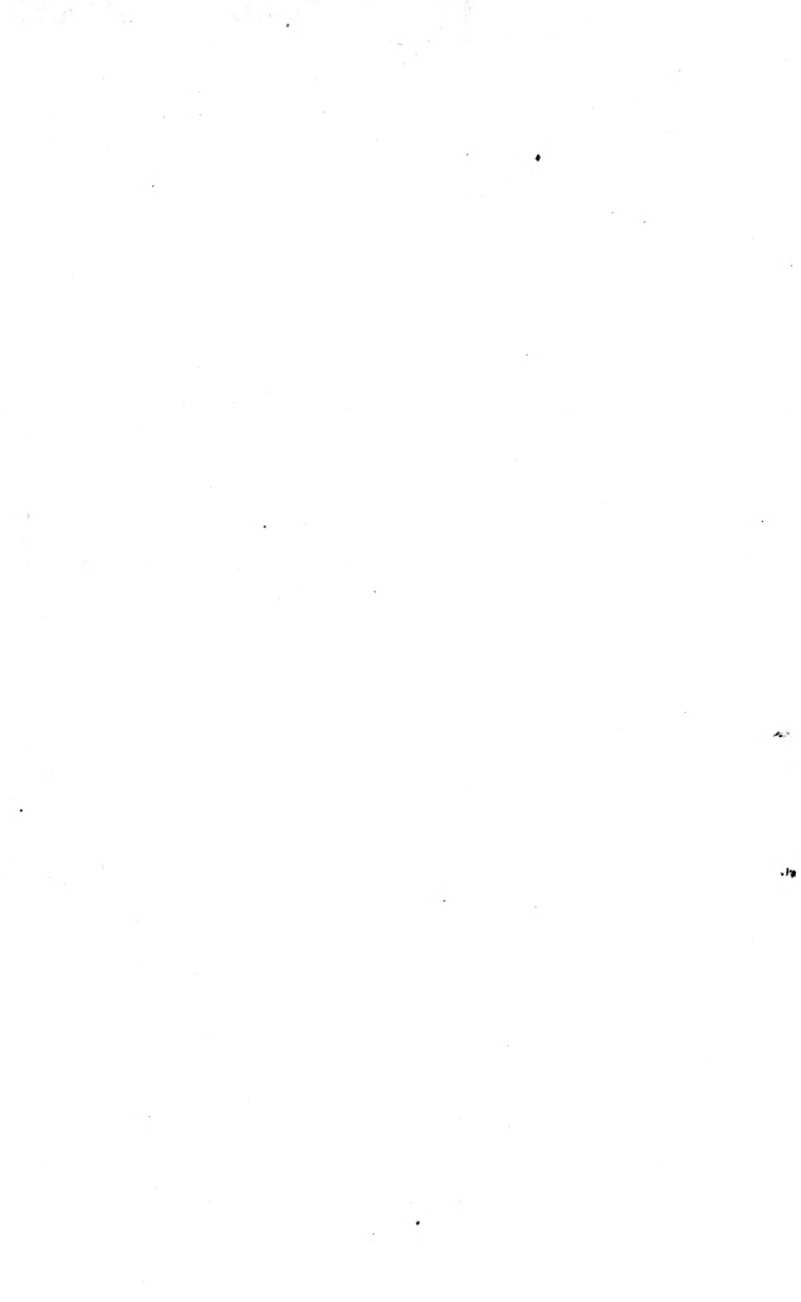












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