CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW ON THE MIDDLE CLASS UNION: Need for Organization of Public to Protect Itself Against Strikers and Profiteers Set Forth by Former Senator Objectors Answered, Advantages Outlined

CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW, who was 88 years old last Friday, will not accede to the requests made in several letters that he organize a Middle Class Union, but his reason for declining is not doubt as to the practicability or effectiveness of such an organization. He is satisfied that it is needed and is feasible.

"I would like to get this letter as an orator and a wit give great initial impetus to the organization of a Middle Class Union, but his duties as chairman of the Board of Directors of the New York Central Railroad and director of many great corporations keep him busy.

"I am not going to underrate the movement, but because it is excited, it may not do the work, but I am not sitting for a fall," he said the other day in his office as chairman of the New York Central, "and I am also going to understand it on my eighth anniversary."

When I was called up suddenly (after I had assured that I would not be done) to speak at a luncheon of the New York Central, I was no surprise to me, but to be a member of the employees, to do the work and to have the privilege of the employees.

"I was thinking over the need for a union of the public, because I am sure that the way to counteract the evils due to the stoppage of transportation, through the improper union of the employees, must come through the proper use of the power of another union of the public. Everybody affected! All who want coal, all who want gas, all who want milk, all those children, all those persons who want to move from their homes, and the subscribers to their places of work or business, should have an organization through which to make themselves felt an emergency.

"I called that the great middle class. Statistic shows that it comprises 80 or 90 per cent of the population.

"In the great battles of the world, the classes in the fight have usually been the only ones immediately interested. In the physical struggle there are two parties, but in some strikes, such as in a shipyard, and in San Francisco, there is no ring of fire. Everybody is a participant. The 80 per cent, which so sorely affects the public, is no less concerned with the result than any other class. We need a union of the public, and it must be an effective union.

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AS VICE PRESIDENT MARSHALL SAYS IT

"Watching Congress work I sometimes get the notion that we only legislate for the very rich or for the comparatively small group of organized workingmen. The real public, the great majority of the people, seem to have no voice in our legislation.

"Here is the problem of the day. The public will stand just so much, and then it will assert itself. There are more than sixty millions of us plain, ordinary Americans. We are more than all the hilltops and valleys, and the valleys and hills. We are the majority, and as the majority the day will come when we will assert ourselves."

As Vice President Marshall said, it is not necessary that all the branch offices or unions engaged in railroad act together to stop transportation. It is not necessary that there should be a boycott of the strike, but it is necessary that the movement of passengers and commodities can paralyze the whole industry, as well as the activities of their co-workers. Now, if the public were organized for the public benefit, or if we had a general organization of all the middle class people in the country, we could form a very large council of the labor unions appeal at once to the whole of the public in their cause.

"For the people most susceptible to public opinion are the management and the stockholders of the transportation companies. Their sole support is the public, and if there is no organization of all the middle class people in the country, the public opinion made a decision it would at once affect their judgments and decisions.

"In our complex civilization, which imposes great difficulties in getting together for harmonious action, nobody has any right to expect a Utopia or a heaven on earth. I have been dealing with this same subject, and the public all my life. I have been for more than sixty-four years on the platform, preaching the gospel of public opinion, but I have found that the public opinion of the public is a powerful force when the public is united. The public opinion made a decision it would at once affect their judgments and decisions.

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