

# BRITISH STRIKERS GIVING UP FIGHT

## Birmingham Men and Others Vote to Resume Work in Munition Plants.

### UNION CHIEFS FOR YIELDING

## Woolwich Engineers Decide to Go Out Unless Labor Embargo is Removed.

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Special Cable to THE NEW YORK TIMES.

LONDON, July 28.—As anticipated, the week-end brought a better outlook for a strike settlement. The Press Bureau is able to announce tonight that the situation has distinctly improved and that the strikers in all probability will return to work tomorrow.

At Birmingham, where the situation appeared worse last week, a wiser feeling has prevailed, and a decision was reached today by which the strikers are to resume work tomorrow morning. At Sheffield proposals to involve the district in the dispute have been decisively rejected. Throughout both these great areas the weight of public opinion has been strongly felt against the strike movement, and it is hoped that the same force may bring back the Coventry strikers to a better sense of their duty.

On the other hand, however, a largely attended mass meeting today of Woolwich engineers, who hitherto had not been directly embroiled, voted in favor of stopping work on Tuesday unless the embargo on skilled labor is removed.

LONDON, July 28.—The Ministry of Munitions announced tonight that reports received today from all parts of the country indicated that the strike situation in the munitions industry "has distinctly improved, and that a majority of the strikers in all probability will return to work tomorrow."

As a result of mass meetings in Birmingham and West Bromwich today it was decided by the district committees of the strikers' organizations that the men should return to work on Monday. A majority of the men at the Birmingham meeting favored a continuation of the strike, but as a two-thirds vote was necessary and this was not obtainable, the committee advised a resumption of work.

At the West Bromwich meeting also there was a majority vote in favor of the men remaining out, but a decision was reached that the strikers should abide by the decision of the Birmingham meeting.

### Big Meetings in Birmingham.

The mass meetings in Birmingham took place in various districts of that city, which is one of the largest munitions centres in the country. Sixteen thousand persons attended the meetings, including many women.

At Worcester, action similar to that taken in Birmingham and West Bromwich followed a meeting of the strikers, but the engineers at the Woolwich Arsenal, notwithstanding an appeal made by General Seeley, Deputy Minister of Munitions, who addressed their meeting, decided to cease work Tuesday. A resolution adopted by these men protested against "placing an embargo on allied workers without their consent and its proposed extension to semi-skilled and unskilled workmen, and the possibility of a further curtailment of the freedom of workmen." This action will affect 11,000 men.

At meetings held at East Ham and Leeds it was also decided to resist the embargo on skilled workmen.

The Executive Council of the Workers' Union passed a resolution that its members remain at work, but the resolution said it thought the embargo should be removed and that more desirable methods could be used to achieve the results desired by the Government. It further asserted that the threat of "work or fight" was ill-advised and that in the interest of a speedy settlement of the situation it should be withdrawn.

### American Advice to Keep Working.

"A message from 10,000 workers of the Sun Shipbuilding Company of Philadelphia, urging the Coventry strikers not to strike with but against the Kaiser's Army and return to work in the interest of the common cause, was received today," said Charles Duncan, member of Parliament and President of the workers' union, after a meeting of

the Executive Council, which represents 400,000 members.

"The message," continued Mr. Duncan, "is appreciated by the men in the same cordial spirit in which it was sent, but personally I think the chances of a resumption of work by the strikers tomorrow are not good, owing to the complication of the situation by the Government's threat that the men must work or fight in the army."

Mr. Wilkinson, the district leader, said he believed a majority of the men in Coventry desired to continue work.

At Coventry a great mass meeting was addressed by J. Havelock Wilson, the labor leader, who was accompanied by 400 seamen from London and Liverpool, including forty men from the steamer *Justicia*, which was recently sunk in a German submarine attack. Mr. Wilson appealed to the strikers to return to work immediately pending a decision on the merits of the dispute. He said that if they returned he "would play them to the workshops with bands and banners" and remain in Coventry to fight their cause if he found it was just. Mr. Wilson proposed a resolution in favor of the men returning to work, and according to a dispatch from Coventry, only ten hands were raised against it.

### Cries Against Churchill.

It is asserted, however, that a number of those present at the meeting were not strikers. There were some interruptions and cries of "Get rid of Churchill!" referring to Winston Spencer Churchill, Minister of Munitions. Mr. Wilson defended Mr. Churchill.

At sectional meetings held in Coventry the workers decided to leave the question of the strike to a general mass meeting to be held tomorrow.

The workers in the Mersey district met at Liverpool and decided to ballot on a strike Tuesday, when the Barrow men, who remained at work, will also meet to take a final decision as to whether they will stick to their jobs or go out.

The Wolverhampton District Engineer Trades Committee today urged its members to keep working, pending a meeting to be held Tuesday. The union of enginemen, firemen, and electricians of Wolverhampton resolved to continue work.

Labor Minister Roberts, in a speech at Winton, said that the strikers were giving aid and comfort to the enemy, and dealing a great blow at the allied cause. He said he did not believe the miners would join them.