

Governor Henry Allen to John Barrett

Kansas Governor Henry Allen, of Topeka, writes to the Honorable John Barrett, Director General Pan American Union, of Washington D.C., thanking him for his endorsement of the newly created Court of Industrial Relations in Kansas. In this letter the governor writes, the court "takes away from labor the right to conspire, or strike or blacklist; it takes away from capital the power to punish by lockouts..." The governor firmly believed the Court of Industrial Relations represented a fair and impartial solution to labor disputes. Though the court remained controversial throughout its existence, it endured only a short history in Kansas. In 1923 it was declared unconstitutional by the United States Supreme Court and ceased to exist shortly thereafter.

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Governor Henry Allen to John Barrett

J. C.

February 6, 1920.

Hon. John Barrett,
Director General,
Pan American Union,
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. Barrett:

Thank you for your good letter of the 3rd inst. I am asking my secretary to send you several copies of the industrial court bill which was adopted by our special session of the Legislature and some copies of my message, outlining the need of the legislation and containing some of the arguments for its passage.

The law has been upon our statute books only a few days, but already there are coming voluntarily into the court of industrial relations a number of union miners who ask for the assistance of the court in solving some of their grievances. This is very significant, in view of the fact that one of the fundamental principles of their by-laws is that the miners shall present all of their grievances through their own officials. The action of these various groups of miners, in coming over their own officials' heads, is a very hopeful sign that they are accepting the court as a real remedy.

It is rarely the application of the principle that government has the same right to protect itself against the offenses committed in the name of industrial warfare that it has against recognized crimes and misdemeanors. It takes away from labor the right to conspire, or strike or blacklist; it takes away from capital the power to punish by lockouts or any other conspiracy that would shorten production, but it gives to both capital and labor a sane and just remedy in an impartial court which does not represent either side and is pledged to equal and exact justice in the name of government.

Deeply appreciating your kind words of indorsement and thanking you for the trouble you have taken to write me, I remain

Yours sincerely,

Governor.