

***Strike committee of the striking textile workers of the
American Woolen Co. to President William M. Wood:***

SIR: We, a committee of the strikers, take this means of answering a statement published in the papers of this city and elsewhere with your name attached. It is our intention to be as brief as possible in dealing with your open letter.

Thursday morning, January 3, 1912, a committee called upon the agents of the Ayer, Wood, and Washington mills and endeavored to hold a conference with those gentlemen, and so come to a peaceful understanding concerning the demands of the workers. Two of the agents refused to have dealings with the committee, while the other advised the committee to write to or consult with you at your Boston office. As a result of the above advice, the committee sent a letter to your address containing the demands of the workers, but for some reason or other the letter was not answered. Previous to the strike the Italian workers held several meetings which were largely attended, and they were very clear in their demands.

We are of the opinion that you have had ample time to consider the demands of the men, women, and children who have made the American Woolen Co. what it is to-day. In view of the fact that machinery has been improved and as a result the workers turn off more and more work, but they are not paid accordingly, even though the price of food, clothing, and shelter has in many cases increased 50 and even 100 per cent within the last few years. We, the committee, are willing to meet the officials of the company at any time and submit the grievances of the strikers. So, if you believe in a square deal you will not refuse to meet with us but will come forward at once and try to bring the trouble to a final conclusion. You must bear in mind the fact that these men, women, and children have not gone on strike for light or transient causes, but because they could no longer bear up under the burdens laid upon their shoulders. It seems to us and to the strikers that the American Woolen Co. has within the last few years built

several mills, which are paid for according to your own figures, and the company has even in the worst of times managed to pay dividends to its stockholders. So it has come to this: The workers are of the opinion that the only competition left is the struggle among themselves for a miserable job at \$6, \$7, or \$8 a week, and they feel fortunate when they manage to hold down such a low-paid set of jobs. You speak of men from out of town who know nothing of the textile industry.

We, the committee, would like to know if the militia, the special policemen, and the Pinkerton detectives, recently brought into this city, know anything about the textile industry except to bayonet and club honest workingmen into submission?

Your attention is called to the fact that all the mills of this city are more or less affected. So the committee desires the news to be spread broadcast that there is a general strike on in Lawrence against the slavery of the textile workers and a united opposition against the starvation wages of the past.

These are the demands of the strikers:

1. Fifteen per cent increase in wages.
2. The abolition of all bonus or premium systems.
3. Double pay for all overtime work.
4. No discrimination against the strikers for activity during the strike.

STRIKE COMMITTEE.