

# POOR DOCUMENT

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THE EVENING TIMES AND STAR, ST. JOHN, N. B., FRIDAY, MAY 31, 1918

## THE WAR AND CANADIAN WORKERS

(Ottawa Journal-Press.)  
Most of the world is fighting Germany for moral reasons and material reasons both. But no class has more cause for both reasons to fight than the membership of labor unions. No class should be more resolute to defeat the German autocracy; no class should for its own sake shrink more from any course of action, in Winnipeg, or Vancouver or Ottawa or anywhere else, which in any degree can injure the war effort against Germany.

The moral reason we need not go into here. It has been told again and again, so that all who run can read. The German political course has been always the course of ruthless tyranny endeavoring to exploit for the benefit of the few the freedom of the many; it has been the very negation of that democracy which is the salvation and hope of the common people in this world. The German course in the war has been the supreme flower of class arrogance and brutality, the junker class which looks upon labor as mud. The morality which can help labor is the morality of Christ; the German junker morality is the malignance of the devil.

But the mere economic reason for the defeat of Germany should be hardly less impelling to labor. The worst labor slavery in the civilized world has been in Germany. A German triumph would react throughout the world in the direction of lower wages and longer hours for labor, if the conditions which prevailed in Germany before the war furnish any criterion.

Conditions both on the farms and among the skilled laborers of German cities before the war were cruel as compared with conditions in others of the great nations, excepting perhaps Russia. The majority of the German working classes worked like beasts of burden,

poorly paid and poorly housed. Big reason existed for the fact that four million socialist votes were cast in the last general election in Germany prior to the war. The German criminal statistics alone have ever told a story of national squalor and distress. The German government and the government-controlled press promulgated the idea that the German working classes were well off, and a certain amount of old-age pensioning and similar grandfatherly legislation supported the pretence. But up to the beginning of the war, the average work day in Germany for even skilled labor averaged nearly ten hours a day, and for unskilled labor twelve hours, while on the other hand the wages were usually lower than in France or England. The progress of German manufactures was due in part to over-worked and under-paid labor. The British Board of Trade in 1908 sent a circular letter to German employers asking for information regarding hours of work in Germany in skilled trades. The answers showed, for example, fifty-four hours a week for printers; fifty-nine hours in the building trades; 59½ hours in the engineering trades. In the same year, a German Imperial Statistical Office report summarized wages in the "prosperous Fatherland" in a publication from which the following samples are taken:

Journeyman printers, \$6.55 to \$7.45 per week.  
Masons, \$1.26 to \$1.61 per day.  
Carpenters, \$1.24 to \$1.61 per day.  
Miners, hard coal mines, an average of \$3.34 a year.  
Miners, soft coal mines, an average of \$2.97 a year.  
Workers in salt mines and works, an average of \$2.69 a year.  
Miners in copper mines, an average of \$2.71 a year.

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## MEMBER FOR YUKON.



Dr. Andrew Thompson, declared elected M. P. for Yukon, by privileges and elections committee of the House of Commons. He was the member in the last parliament.

Miners in iron mines, an average of \$2.66 a year.  
Plumbers, gas fitters and steam fitters, \$1.13 to \$1.39 a day.  
Stone cutters, \$1.02 to \$1.72 a day.  
Krupp plant, at Essen, average daily earnings, \$1.27.  
Skilled state railway shop workers, 86 cents to \$1.02 a day.  
Engineers, conductors, etc., state railway, 70 cents a day.  
Employes, Prussian-Russian state railway, average 76 cents a day.  
Able-bodied seamen, Baltic and North Sea, average \$18.18 a month.  
The above list includes skilled workers only. Other kinds of workers in these different industries received much less than the skilled. An investigation at the same time made by the Federation of German Woodworkers—an industry employing nearly 800,000 persons—disclosed that the average weekly labor hours of joiners, turners, brush and basket makers, wheelwrights, wooden shoe makers, and box and toy-makers were fifty-seven hours. The average weekly earnings of adult males were \$3.99 a week.

According to a summary sent out by the German Imperial statistical office, the average earnings of men per day in certain important groups of industries were in March, 1914:

Metal industry	\$1.32
Engineering industry	1.28
Electrical industry	1.07
Paper industry	.93
Woodworking industry	1.01
Chemical industry	1.24
Stoneworking and pottery	1.07
Food, drink, and tobacco	1.36
Leather and rubber	1.30

In the textile industry wages were considerably lower than the low wages in other industries. An article in the *Socialist Praxis*, of Berlin, November 11, 1915, stated that in normal times weekly wages of from 7 to 10 marks (\$1.07 to \$2.38) for female workers and from 14 to 16 marks (\$3.88 to \$3.97) for male workers represented the average wages paid in some important textile districts in Germany. This is per week, remember, not per day.

How do German families manage to live on such wages? They manage to get along because partly a large proportion of their women work out, and partly because they are cheaply and wretchedly housed.

U. S. ex-Ambassador Gerard states that nearly half the families in Berlin, the great capital of Germany, live in one room. This sounds incredible, but he is specific; he says 46 per cent. However, we think he must be wrong. A German return, the Berlin census of 1913, states that of 555,416 dwellings, housing a population of 1,996,994 persons, 40,690 "homes" consisted of one room, 198,796 of two rooms, 199,530 of three rooms, and 62,676 of four rooms. It will be seen that if Mr. Gerard had said that nearly half the families of Berlin live in homes of one or two rooms, he would not be far wrong by the official Berlin census. This helps to suggest what sort of housing the average workingman is likely to have throughout Germany.

As to women working out. In 1912 T. St. John Gaffney, United States consul-general at Dresden—who afterwards turned out a noisy pro-German—reported to the United States department of state that a full third of the economic labor of the German empire was performed by women; that German statistics showed there were 3,900,000 wage-earning women in Germany, which meant that every second woman worked for her living. In 1910 Mr. Gaffney reported that the work-day for women had been reduced from eleven hours to ten hours daily, and eight hours on Saturday. As Mr. Gaffney was such a pro-German that he had to be removed from office by the United States government,

it can be assumed that he did not exaggerate the bad conditions.

In 1905, according to an investigation made by the Berlin Chamber of Commerce, there were more than 100,000 sweatshops in Berlin alone, employing women at from 75 cents to \$1.50 a week. That young girls worked in cannery-factories from thirteen to eighteen hours a day, and on Sundays for ten or more hours, was brought out by an investigation made by the German Factory Workers' Union in 1905. Their wages were three to four and a half cents an hour.

On the other hand, the German government takes a vigorous interest in suppressing strikes, which might help the working classes to get better conditions. In 1912, according to the German Statistical Year Book, 68.4 per cent, or more than two-thirds of the strikers, were compelled to return to work without meeting any success for their demands. In Saxony, where the general weekly wages of textile workers were from \$1.80 to \$2.12 a week, the workers in 1917 petitioned for the granting of a minimum wage scale. According to the Berlin Vorwärts of August 21, 1917, General Groner, who was charged with the enforcement of the auxiliary service law, declared himself against the minimum wage—and that ended it. When the textile workers in Landeshut, Silesia, declared their wages were sufficiently high and threatened, if the mills closed, to send all males into the army or war-material establishments and the females to farms in West Prussia. In the attempt last winter to promote a general strike in Germany, the government intervened with an iron hand and compelled return to work without change in working conditions.

Low wages, long hours and wretched housing are thus shown to constitute the status of the mass of the German working classes, combined with a military repression of strikes, and finally with lack of political means to better their position. For the German electoral system bases votes upon rank and money. The suffrage is general, but the man of property is given votes—or, to be exact, representation—in proportion to his means. The rich thus control individually a far greater share of political representation than the well-to-do; and the well-to-do a far greater share in turn than the poor. Consequently in the Reichstag and other elected political bodies in Germany, the control can always be decided by the "upper class" minority of the electorate.

Our Canadian working classes assuredly do not wish to see the German style extend to countries in which better conditions have prevailed for workers. The practical way to prevent that is to defeat Germany. For this, all our united energy in English-speaking countries is needed. To prevent Germany from winning the war is not enough. Germany must be beaten. A draw will mean first that the German working classes will continue to be slaves under the will of the junkers, and secondly that the junkers will simply prepare for another war. The German junkers must be beaten and discredited. This needs all our joint energy. English-speaking men can not afford to be quarrelling among ourselves. We can not afford strikes. Least of all can our working classes afford to risk them unnecessarily. And there can be no necessity to begin with, when the law compels employers to negotiate and argue before a conciliation tribunal.

U. S. Treasury Secretary McAdoo is advising congress to increase war taxation at once, as the estimates for the coming year are ten billions in excess of 1917's.

## MILLION WAR WOMEN NOW IN GREAT BRITAIN

Remarkable Development in Work Done by Them in Last Fourteen Months

Speaking at the London Exhibition of Women's Work in Munition Production,

Frederick George Kellaway, secretary to the minister of munitions, said that in every one of the defensive measures taken when a raid on London is carried out the women have taken their part, except in the actual flying of aircraft.

The development which had taken place in women's work during the last fourteen months, continued the secretary, was quite as remarkable as its development at an earlier period of the war. In July, 1914, he said, there were 220,000 women engaged in munition industries, while in January, 1917, that number had been increased to 691,000, and today their number was 1,000,000. A steady stream of trained women was being sent into the munition factories from training schools at the rate of 500 a week. Since the ministry of munitions had started the schools, said the speaker, between 40,000 and 50,000 trained women had been placed in munition industries.

Health Commissioner Mahoney of Boston has issued an appeal to all citizens to submit to vaccination on account of the threatened outbreak of small pox.



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