

Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press

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A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER.

C. M. A. AND RUSSIAN TRADE

It is indeed difficult to follow the Canadian Manufacturers' Association in the matter of trade with Russia. In a statement to the press a few days ago the C.M.A. says:

"It is difficult to conceive in what manner Canada could hope to get large amounts of profitable Russian business by taking action now. On evidence received from Soviet publications, factory production is very seriously diminished and her ability to pay very limited.

"The question, too, of whether Canadian producers can participate direct in Russian trade under the British agreement has not been settled.

"To sum up except for a few special industries, owing to hampering conditions, it is practically futile for many Canadian manufacturers to anticipate serious business in Soviet Russia. There is plenty of time and opportunity to get Russian business when it is on a better basis. At present it is as highly speculative as oil stocks in an unknown field."

This statement in view of the recent declaration of Mr. David Lloyd George, the British Premier, who urges the British manufacturers to trade with Russia and states that the Soviet Administration has of late shown a complete change of heart.

Canadian factories are closed for lack of orders—at least this is what the workers are told. A market is offered the Canadian manufacturers in Russia. The C.M.A. tells its membership not to trade with Russia but rather should they seek markets in the United States, South America—everywhere but Russia.

We have repeatedly stated that trading with Russia does not mean a recognition of Bolshevism. Canadian workers will never subscribe to the Soviet theory but we believe that the sooner trade is opened up with Russia the quicker will Russia be restored to peace and stabilized democratic government.

Mr. Washington B. Vanderlip, an American capitalist, who is at present in Russia, negotiating with the Soviet Administration in answer to a question concerning Russia's trade relations, is quoted in a British newspaper as follows:

"The best answer is that from April 20, 1920, to March 30, 1921, thirty-seven British vessels have brought goods to Russia and more are on the way; 150 have come from Germany; 142 from Sweden, and others from Holland, Denmark and Finland and some from the United States.

"All these goods were paid for in Russian gold, which eventually finds its way back to the Bank of England."

Thus it would appear that there is a market for Canadian goods in Russia. The more markets, the greater the need for production. More production means more work for Canadian labor and more profits for Canadian capital. We believe Canadian capital is anxious for returns, and accordingly there should be no hesitancy on the part of Canadian capital to look into the Russian situation. We suggest that the Canadian Government send a trade agent to Russia and ascertain to what extent Canadian products may be used in Russia.

The trade agreement between Great Britain and Russia has been ratified in both countries and the Russian Administration is at present endeavoring to negotiate a similar trade agreement with the United States of America. Possibly when this is concluded the C.M.A. will "sing another song" and follow the lead of the American capitalists.

INDIVIDUAL BARGAINING.

THERE is absolutely nothing new in the "individual bargaining between employer and employe" system that is at present being pushed to the front under the misnomer "Optional Plan of Employment" by the open shoppers who hope to destroy organized labor.

Individual bargaining was the method used for centuries, and until the dawn of the day when labor began to organize into trade unions the workers felt its full force and knew its fatal result. It was in full sway when skilled mechanics worked ten, twelve, and often fourteen hours a day for whatever the employer saw fit to hand his "individually hired" man. It was in the height of its glory when the workers' home held neither comfort nor convenience of any kind, and when eighty-five per cent. of the workers' children were deprived of an opportunity to obtain even a public school education. These miserable conditions, and many others as bad or worse, generally prevailed until labor through the power of organization put them forever out of its life.

These conditions which for so long a time made of the worker no more than a chattel are behind us. We do not propose to see the march of progress stopped in its upward swing and forced backward to gratify the desires of an industrial autocracy, as bad if not worse and more ruthless than the political autocracy against which the entire civilized world protested and in rebellion spilled the blood of millions of workers.

Let it be known now and forever that we have

POLITICS AND PEOPLE THROUGH THE TELESCOPE OF LABOR

J. A. P. HAYDON.

Mr. Angus McDonald, of Temiskaming, the only Labor member of the House of Commons, is perhaps the most regular attendant of the sittings of the House. It is a rare occasion when the "big" Labor member is absent from his seat. "Angus" has remained singularly quiet for most of the session. He could not be drawn into the debates and on all divisions he has voted against the Government. The Labor member from Temiskaming is of the opinion that the Government should go to the country and give to the people an opportunity of expressing their opinions on the public questions of the day.

When the resolution of Mr. Herman Deslauriers, Sainte-Marie, dealing with unemployment and the suspension of immigration was being discussed some loose statements were made concerning the workers. It was evident to all that the sole Labor member of the House of Commons did not intend to allow these remarks to pass unnoticed.

"Angus" could be seen making note after note as the various members spoke on the question. It was nearly the time for adjournment when the member for Temiskaming rose to address the House. Immediately upon being recognized by the Speaker a profound silence came over the House. The Minister of Immigration and Colonization, Hon. J. A. Calder, the only member of the House of Commons at the time, immediately curtained all matters of moment and turned in his seat to listen to the sound logic of the Labor representative.

The address of Mr. McDonald was unique in many respects. Angus was not very familiar with the immigration policy of the Dominion Government. As a matter of fact he said little concerning immigration. His chief object in occupying the time of the House "was to repudiate some of the loose statements made by various members concerning the workers of this country." We said his address was unique. It was. The only Labor member not only attacked the Government but he was equally severe on all the various parties represented in the House of Commons. However, Mr. McDonald struck a new note in the trend of his address. He left no doubt in the minds of the House that Labor was not responsible for the unemployment in Canada. To the charge that Canadian Labor was laying the blame for the unemployment on the member from Temiskaming simply stated that if this assertion was true "why have the employers kept these men in their employ until they decided that it was expedient to close their factories?"

One member suggested that Labor should give an extra hour daily to help meet the great national debt. tried individual bargaining and know the dregs the cup contains. We do not propose to drink again of its poisoned contents, be it labelled "Optional Plan of Employment" or anything else.

THE BRITISH MINERS' LOCKOUT.

PRESS despatches from the Old Land are very conflicting on the situation in the British minefields. It is difficult to analyze the exact situation. However, one thing is certain: the mines are at present idle, and the most recent despatches hold little hope for their immediate resumption of work.

No problem in recent years has so perplexing as the mining situation in Great Britain. No question has called for the need of statesmanship so strikingly as that of mining. The British Labor Movement has for quite a long time demanded the nationalization of the mines. A Royal Commission, some years ago, brought in a majority report substantiating the claims of Labor. Premier Lloyd George, for reasons best known to himself, has refused to put into effect the findings of that Commission, and there can be no permanent settlement of the mining problem in Britain until that is done.

The facts in the present case are related to the nationalization of the mines. As we have previously stated the whole facts are not before us, and we must, therefore, refrain from commenting on the present difficulty. However, of this we are convinced: that just so soon as the British Government nationalizes the mines the root of most of the trouble will have been removed and the way paved for future peace in the mining industry in Britain.

WHY NOT A TARIFF BOARD?

THE Independent Labor Party of Ontario in convention assembled at Welland, recently, made some slight changes in its tariff policy. That section of it pertaining to "free boots and shoes" was eliminated. However, when Dr. Heft, of Kitchener, asked that the convention rescind its tariff proposal the president of the I.L.P., Mr. J. W. Buckley, said:

"Don't you know, doctor, that the Peterboro election was fought on the question of tariff reform? The tariff question is only a cry for the purpose of blinding and dividing the working men when a great social and economic crisis confronted them, raised by a party that had no panacea to offer. It made no difference, because the workers were exploited even worse in protected countries than in those under free trade."

The president of the I.L.P. advanced an argument in favor of the Tariff Board. The Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, the body which speaks with authority for the workers of this country, asks that a Tariff Board be established for many reasons. One of them is, as President Buckley points out, "that the tariff question was only a cry for the purpose of dividing the workers." President Buckley and his band of followers in the I.L.P. have decided to stick to their own tariff policy in preference to the acceptance of a policy formulated by the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada at a representative gathering of workers from all parts of Canada at Windsor in September last.

The honorable member for South Oxford says that we want men who are willing to give an extra hour, if necessary, to give my honorable friend the right hand of fellowship so far as that is concerned, and I will go further than he did and say that I am one of those working men who like to see a man give an honest day for an honest dollar. But I want to tell you, that we want to see the farmers apply this principle to themselves, and not stick at the last farthing. I have been on the farm; I was raised there to some extent, and I know something at least about the farmer. I am going to find a farmer who will give you 2,240 pounds of hay for a ton anywhere—and I make that statement having farmed myself. Let me tell this House that the laboring men, like the rest of us, are human and are somewhat like politicians. No doubt they get into any of the centres of population because an inducement is there offered. In the cities, they can get work the year round, they can get a little more in the case on the farm, not on the western farms at any rate. I worked there myself. I got work for three months a year, and for the other nine months the attitude of the farmer was this: You can shift for yourself after you are through with us.

"Something must be done for the working man; he cannot starve for nine months while he is waiting for the three months work which the West offers him. The attitude of the farmer in the Province of Ontario, but is he likely to get work all the year round with a man who may be only earning 10s. a week, and the workman does not have employment the year round, and what are you going to do with him during the winter? He is idle, and we want some policy of a reasonable character adopted; and it will be unfortunate if the labor situation today is not taken into a little further extent than it is investigated by politicians. The workingman is just like the politician in this chamber—he gets into a rut, and he hates to be driven out just as a great many politicians have been driven out of Ottawa. I wish to place on record the statement that I consider some of the things that have been said here as a direct insult to the laboring class of this country. It is not taken into account, at perhaps have been earning their living under the very hard and very disagreeable conditions which the workingman experiences—could sit and listen to aspersions such as were hurled at labor this afternoon."

The question of immigration was one of the topics which was discussed during the past week. However, other questions of importance to the workers of this country were considered. The Canadian Merchant Marine Service was reported upon by the Minister of Marine, Hon. J. G. Macdonald, in a speech which was the same forces that are assailing our national railways are arrayed against this nationally owned industry. The report of the Minister of Marine, Hon. C. C. Ballantyne, differed from the report of the Minister of Railways in many respects. He stated that the Government is making that efforts would be made to reduce the wages of the men employed in the Service. No mention was made of a re-adjustment of working conditions. The report showed the

THE CURSE OF PACIFISM

By G. MOORE BELL, in "Justice," London, Eng.

Why has a record week for labor been spoiled in East Woolwich? Why, when Kennedy after a fortnight's campaign could romp in at the head of the poll, against the most influential man the Coalition could put up at Kirkcaldy, with a sweeping majority, and Wilson could drive a Cabinet Minister out of Dudley, did East Woolwich, the Labor stronghold that the Coalition dared not tackle at the general election, return a dude Tory candidate that not a single member of the Government troubled to support by a single word? Let Ramsay MacDonald answer in his own words uttered just after the declaration of the poll: "I think, considering the sort of attacks that were made upon me, considering how in a way I was vulnerable to those attacks, also considering the kind of appeal my opponents were able to make to the constituency—the more I think of it the more marvelous is our poll." And how came it to pass that MacDonald was vulnerable to those attacks? The plain answer is because as the campaign developed and the attacks were made upon him he had no defence, but proved himself a shallow and fanatical pacifist. The great error was made towards the close of the fight when Philip Snowden was brought on as a star turn and deliberately attempted to justify his attitude during the war. MacDonald, who followed, declared himself in accordance with Snowden, expressed impatience for his past actions and told the electors that they must accept him on these conditions or go and vote against him. He then spent the rest of a long and fluent speech in declamation about turning swords into pruning-hooks and summing the moral condition of the country to approve of all he said and did. That night MacDonald's doom at the poll was sealed. I sat in the gallery and watched a demagogic meeting of over two thousand Labor supporters, and I am sure that not more than two hundred noisy pacifists approved of what he said.

When MacDonald came to Woolwich last month as approved Labor candidate, I was hopeful that he would come to the problems that concerned Labor in the country and in the constituency, and that he would, if his war record came up, endeavor to "make good," otherwise what right had he to come here and what right had the party to put him up without some undertaking on his part that he would prove acceptable to the Labor electors of East Woolwich? Crooks for 18 years saw the seat to that part of the borough. East Woolwich not only gave Labor its majority, but wiped out the Tory majority in West Woolwich, and I am convinced that had a suitable Labor candidate come forward the Tories would not have challenged him. It was only after MacDonald

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