Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press

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A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER.

AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT WARNED

Continued From Page One.

aspect of the question. You have heard of the terrible strike in our country, a strike unprecedented in any country, where blacklegs or scabs are unknown. Don't get it into your head that there is any question of 'open shop'. The miners, a million odd, went on strike without a brass copper in their fund. Strike pay ceased the first week the strike started. It has now gone on, this is the eighth week. They are still standing unbroken, no man going back, no scabs imported, and God knows I hope it will soon be settled and settled honorably, but whenever it is settled you may take it from me that it will be a settlement recognized, signed and accepted by the recognized miners' trades union.

Strikes Responsibility.

"There will be no doubt whatever about that, but how many of you know that you have got to bear some share of the responsibility of that strike. How many of you delegates, how many of you American people know that there is a direct and pregnant interest between that strike and America, France, Italy, in fact every power that was a party to the peace treaty must bear a share of the responsibility of that crisis. I know today it is an easy phrase to repudiate governments.

Govt. Reflection of People.

"At our conventions in London I frequently hear condemnation of our Government, resolutions abusing them. You will have the same here. But as a matter of common fact those resolutions are condemnations of yourself. It is perfect hypocracy to talk about democracy and the virtues of democracy and democratic government and then proceed to denounce the Government in power. The Government is only a reflection of your own intelligence, and if you elected its officials you must bear your share of the responsibility.

Peace Treaty and Miners.

"Therefore, when you were party to the peace treaty, you must share the responsibility of that treaty. How does that treaty affect the miners' strike? As you know, Great Britain pays for her imports by her exports. All nations do that. If your imports are exceeding your exports you are in a very bad way. Now, our principal export is coal, and we buy our food from you and our colonies and pay for it by the export of our coal. When the war was over, all the American labor movement and all the British labor movement and all the French labor movement, and all the Belgian labor movement, and the people generally, all started off with one cry. They said, Now, we must make Germany pay'. I don't want to say a word that would be even interpreted as a justification of Germany's action. No language could adequately express my feelings. No language would be sufficiently strong to condemn the brutal, wicked atrocities that I know of too well, no language of the historians of the future will do justice to their crimes. But in these matters no greater mistake is made than people allowing their hearts and not their heads to direct their judgment

Germany Must Pay.

"Nature never intended that your heart or your stomach should direct your intelligence. Unfortunately it frequently happens. And the result was that the peace treaty was interpreted, was put on the statute not visualized in a world 25 years ahead. The statesmen ought to have said, 'If I have lost a boy, if I have lost a son in the war, I must forget my son and I must visualize a period 25 or 50 years ahead, which will be your only testing time of my statesmanship at the moment.' But, instead of that, with the war fever, with the spirit of hatred, they sat down to make this peace treaty. One of the clauses said, of course, 'Germany must pay'. And we all said it, but how many of you, or how many of us proceeded to ask ourselves 'How are you going to pay?' Payment can only be done in three ways: You must pay in gold, you must pay in kind, or you must pay in service.

No Gold.

"So far as gold is concerned there is not enough in the world to pay the debt, therefore, that is ruled out. When you come to 'kind', you have got to ask yourself what you mean by Germany paying, and we didn't ask it and neither did your American representatives ask it and therefore we said Germany has got in the Ruhr Valley very good coal fields and therefore Germany must pay to France 2,000,000 tons of coal per month. Everybody said 'That is the way, that is it, make Germany pay; that will do it'. They proceeded to send their 2,000,000 tons to France. As I have already said to you, our existence depends on our export coal and we were selling our coal to Italy at about 7 pounds per ton, we were selling it to the Mediterranean ports, and we were not only making a profit, but we were selling our home-consumed coal at 17 shillings and 6 pence per ton less than the cost of production, because we were able to make the difference by the high price that we were getting from our export coal.

France Has Surplus Coal.

"Then 'Making Germany pay' started, and the 2,000,000 of tons of coal for France was not only more than she ever imported prior to the war but it was actually more than all the requirements of all her people. France said 'Well, this is excellent business. Here we are getting a surplus of coal; let's proceed to sell it', and she proceeded to sell it, and getting it for nothing she was able to sell it at considerably less than we could produce it.

Italy Refuses British Coal.

"Italy said, 'Why should we buy coal from John Bull at 7 pounds a ton when we can get it at half the price from France?' Belgium said, 'Well, this is pretty good commercialism; hitherto we have kept the Orange market' and she proceeded to sell to Holland and Holland was paying 60 guilders per ton. We woke up one morning and discovered that the mines that were taken over during the war, and controlled by the Government, were losing 4,500,000 pounds per month, and the Government in a panic said, 'This is no good to us, we don't mind running mines when we are making a profit but it is shocking bad business when we are making a loss,' and they promptly gave notice to decontrol the mines.

Miner Owners Fair.

"We pointed out to them in Parliament what it meant, but the bill was passed and the result was that the coal owners then said to themselves, 'What are we to do?' They put their experts to look at the balance sheets. It is only fair to tell you that they offered to waive every copper of profit, not a solitary copper of profit did they want. They fixed a wage—they fixed a wage that didn't give them a copper's profit and said to the men 'This is the wage' and that wage worked out in that way.

Cost Of Living Increased.

"But the cost of living in England at this moment is 241 above pre-war conditions. The average increases of the miner during the whole of the period of the war was in the neighborhood of 160 per cent. over all, therefore, you see there was approximately 20 per cent. above the 1914 standard, but the offer of the coal owners meant a 50 per cent. reduction. A 50 per cent. reduction in many cases which worked out in this way. Taking the cost of living today and comparing it with 1914 the coal miners were asked to work for less than a spending power of $4 per week. Four dollars per week for cutting coal. None of you here can therefore wonder that the answer of the British miner was 'No', we would prefer to fight to death than be starved to death under such circumstances as that'.

French Mines Idle.

"But, here you have,—there you have the real connection, the making of Germany pay, first, through the French collieries on three days a week. It then paralyzed the whole of the coal industry in our country and the net result of it was it wasn't Germany paying, it was the French and the British miner who paid, which showed the connection, as I say, between the peace treaty and the strike.

Peace Treaty and Shipbuilding.

"We have one other illustration: The first high treaty provided that the tonnage should be distributed amongst the Allies and Great Britain and Great Britain's quota was 1,000,000 tons, and the dead-weight price of shipping in our country was between 27 and 30 pounds per ton and we had large orders on the stocks in all our shipyards at that price. And then the Government found themselves with 1,000,000 tons of shipping. They said, 'We are not going into the shipping business and we must start to dispose of it; and they put it up at auction and they got between 7 and 10 pounds per ton dead weight. Then the shipowners who had given orders at the different shipyards at contract prices of between 27 and 30 pounds per ton said, 'Oh, no buying ships at 7 and 8 pounds a ton is much cheaper than paying 27 and 30 pounds a ton'. They cancelled their orders and 70 per cent. of our shipyard workers were thrown out of work as a result of 'making Germany pay'.

No Country Can Remain Isolated.

"I want to draw the moral from all this. It is, don't make the mistake of assuming that any country today can merely lock themselves up in a water tight compartment. It is impossible to do it. The world, every nation in the world is dependent and inter-dependent upon each other. There is no American that would dare say 'We will build a huge wall around our ocean,—isolate ourselves from the rest of the world'. No one but a fool and a fanatic would say that. What he would say is: 'No, for good or for ill, we must play our part in these great world problems'. And our part is the part of peacemaker.

War Loses.

"Is there any man in this room, or any woman, who would look back with satisfaction and say, 'Yes, we are satisfied that the war was a good thing.' Someone from your platform, gentlemen, said yesterday, that you had lost 50,000 of your bravest and best. Yes, I can understand the feeling of pride and reverence with which you bow to those dead heroes. I can understand your action in saying, 'Yes, they died in order that liberty might live.' Fifty thousand that we will honor and pay tribute to. But can you excuse me from also feeling this matter when I know, not 50,000, but 1,000,000 of our bravest and best gave their lives in this cause; one million under 41 years of age out of a population of 45,000,000; fifty-two thousand blind at this moment; and four and one-quarter million casualties, 262,000 maimed beyond description. Am I not even entitled to feel with you that that honorable sacrifice ought not to be in vain?

We Won The War.

"We did win the war. We won the war by the fearful sacrifice, the heroism of our brave lads, and no one nation is entitled to claim credit for winning the war. Don't make the mistake of assuming you did it or assuming that we did it. Let's all realize that it was a common sacrifice and all must share in the glory of that victory. But don't equally make the mistake of confusing, don't make the mistake of confusing the winning of the war with the winning of peace. It is one thing to win a war, it is another thing to win a peace, and whilst I believe that we have won the war I am very apprehensive as to whether we have won the peace, and the only triumph, the only justification, the only thing worth that sacrifice would be the knowledge that we made war impossible in the future.

Have We Won The Peace.

"Have some of you realized what is involved in this question of peace? If anybody, more than another ought to be interested in this question it is a labor body, because people, whilst I don't believe for a moment that any section won the war, because men left their homes of comfort and luxury equally with those who came from the slums and misery and all did their bit, whilst I don't claim for a moment any class victory, Lord knows I know that the greatest contribution must inevitably come from the workers themselves and the greatest sacrifice must therefore be theirs. How many of you know that before the war was over the Dreadnaught which cost $8,000,000 was at the mercy of the submarine undersea craft? How many of you know that before the war was over they had developed science so that airplanes were being experimented with to actually go without a pilot and drop bombs and return to the spot they started from. When our opponents charge us with being pessimists I give the answer and say, that if this development took place in four years of war, get another European war, and nothing short of the destruction of civilization must inevitably result.

Disarmament.

'There is only one cure and the cure is disarmament. You cannot go on building armies and navies without leading either to bankruptcy or explosion. The first time I came to America the one thing that riveted itself on my mind was as I crossed from Canada to America at Niagara, where I paid that five cents and came across the river, I saw no forts, no guns, no soldiers, but these great countries relying upon their moral force and their common sense to solve their problems. If America had said, 'We are suspicious of Canada, we will build two guns,' Canada would have replied with four, America with eight, Canada with 16; and so it would have gone on and on and at the first difficulty that arose both sides would have said, 'What is the strength of our protection?' and that is how war takes place, but when a difference arises today you people say, 'No, it is not the gun or the sword we rely upon; it is common sense and a fair deal for humanity as a whole.'

"Therefore, it is for these reasons that I welcome your profound declaration with regard to armament, but, sir, have we,—have we as trade unionists and leaders, known our responsibility?

The Old Guard.

"I sometimes feel that there are many of our men, come into our movement when the fruit was ripe for harvesting. Many of our men only came in when they went to the tree and the fruit was ripe and dropped into their hands and it was calculated to make those people forget the sacrifice that was made to build up the trade union movement. Are we for the glib phrase of the young man who says, 'These old fogies are too old, they are getting out of date, they are getting to be obsolete. We young men with our young virile blood and energy are the people that must direct the ship.' Yes, let us always have that enthusiasm, let us always have that youth, let us always have the young man's point, —let us always have the young men pointing upward and onward and saying 'That is the goal we intend to climb' but don't let us equally forget the great veterans that made the sacrifice to create the platform that we enjoy today. I, as a young man, was in the movement when we didn't dare wear our badges, when there was no civil reception, when it wasn't an honor to be a trades unionist, when you had to meet in a public house and excuse yourself for being there.

Trades Unionism.

"All these things were fought down by men who were victimized and scrapped and sacrificed, but who went steadily on saying, 'It is a cause that must ultimately triumph.' Trades unionism doesn't mean wearing your medallion,—trades unionism doesn't mean sending your contribution to the club room and taking no interest yourself. Trades unionism doesn't mean talking about brotherly love of a Sunday afternoon and cutting each other's throats of a Monday morning. Trade unionism means something higher and nobler and greater. If the mere hours and wages was the only conception of our movement I should refuse to have anything to do with it. No, I believe our movement is a great moral movement, uplifting and giving freedom to the men and women in every country.

Your Responsibility.

"But equally, don't make the mistake of forgetting your responsibility. Today we are tempted to ask from others what we are not prepared to concede ourselves. You have no right to demand from an employer a standard of honor that you set up unless you are prepared to concede that same standard of honor to the other side. In other words, our movement has gone beyond the stage of agitation,—our movement is part of the life of the community.

Be Honest.

'We must stand forth, where with honor and dignity and satisfaction, we will treat with honest men but we treat with them because we are honest men ourselves. And I would like, sir, without presuming to interfere, to say one word on this open shop question, and I am afraid that some of these people who are advocating this policy quite conscleftiously no doubt, quite honestly and quite sincerely, whilst there are others, of course, that would have me come under that, but I would rather say to those who really believe what they say, really believe that they are fighting as they call it, 'the battle of freedom,' by advocating the 'open shop,' do they realize that there is in the world today, in your country and out, two clearly defined movements?

Class Warfare.

"It is your movement as well as ours. It is in France, it is in Italy, it is in Germany, it is everywhere—two clearly defined movements, one directed by men and women who say 'to hell with this form of civilization, let us scrap all the existing order, let us tear up the Constitution, let the workers as a class in the majority enter into a class war and have a victory for the worker as against the other class.'

Power Of Ballot.

"That section is in America, that section is in our country, that section is in all countries. Now, there is the other section, the section that says, 'Yes, we are dissatisfied with existing order, we are opposed to the misery and degradation of our people, we are opposed to the condition and we are going to work for a better and nobler order of things, but they say there is a right way and a wrong way, the right way is that men will use their power through their trades union, constructively and honestly and they will exercise their political power through the ballot box.

Construction.

"In other words, the choice of those sections is between the ballot on the one hand and the bullet on the other. We in the labor movement prefer the ballot. We in the labor movement prefer the constructional way because we know the bloody upheavals never bring statesmen to the top, they merely and invariably bring the bullies. No, we want this same way because we know it is the slow way, the sure way, but it is the certain way and if those employers who have fought our movement, who are weakening our authority, who are playing right into the hands of the other people,—do they realize that they are playing with fire?—rendering more difficult the position of those of us who believe in order and construction. They are difficult indeed. I would put this question, Mr. President, to those people and I would give one other answer.

Labor Not A Commodity.

"Is it not an insult to treat human labor as a mere marketable commodity? Is there any greater insult that men and women with dignity and pride could receive than to be told they are put on the same plane as soap or chewing gum? No; no, our answer is, that the constitution of American law and the constitution of Great Britain provides that if a man were put in the stocks charged with the overwhelming evidence of murder, the evidence against him is clear and conclusive, there is no doubt about his guilt, the law of your country and our country says, notwithstanding his guilt, every legitimate defense must be made in order to secure justice for the murderer. If the murderer is entitled to representation in order to establish his case, what right have they to deny it to the American working man who is giving his labor to the best advantage?

Difficulties Ahead.

"Oh, sir, all those things are part of the things that you must do. I convey to you the fraternal wishes of the British Trades Union Movement. I recognize that you have many difficulties and problems ahead. I recognize that you are face to face with your critics and your opponents. I recognize that you have a press that seems to be more interested in directing your affairs than you are interested yourself. All of which, I am sure you feel deeply grateful for, but I say to you, if I presume to give advice, if you want to do anything, do it yourself. Be loyal to your own people, recognize that not as a class but as citizens of the great community, you must discharge your obligations.

"When you are privileged to meet in 12 months' time I hope it will be to see you stronger, more powerful than you even are today. The great country of which you are proud to be citizens will be better as a result of your citizenship."

HEART OF AMERICAN LEGION BEATS FOR LABORING PEOPLE OF AMERICA

Time Has Come When Defenders of Nation From Foes From Without Must Join Hands to Defend it From the Foes Within.

Special to the Labor Press.

DENVER, Col. — Quoting the late Commander Galbraith, as having said, "You must go to Denver and say to the representatives of the laboring people of America that the heart of the Legion beats for them," Col. Alvin M. Owsley, Director-General of the American Legion, addressed the American Federation of Labor convention.

"The time has come," said Col. Owsley, "when the men who defended this nation from foes from without must join hands to defend it from the foes within, and when the great laboring masses of this country join hands with their brothers in the Legion this nation will go forward. We believe that the harmony of this nation and the best interests of all the people can be preserved by upholding and defending the constitution of the United States, by wiping from our statute books every law that oppresses one for the benefit of the other.

"Let us give to every man and woman in this country an equal and exact justice. Let us frown down those who would enkindle the fires of hate; let each man believe that others are striving to give the greatest good to the greatest numbers, to give peace and prosperity and happiness to the greatest number of our people.

"Upon these three great pillars of American society rests this great Republic—equality of right, community of interest and reciprocity of duty. Riches and honor and length of days will mark the nation that rests upon that imperishable basis."

FROM MANY SOURCES.

Pessimist—"No, but they seem so."—Punch.

* * *

Kautsky shares the opinion of most trade unionists that no sort of dictatorship can ever be a substitute for democracy.

* * *

"I am for ideal homes, rather than ideal public houses."—Lady Astor. Why not have both?

* * *

Those for whom a victory is won seldom esteem it of much account.

* * *

"God will not love thee less because men love thee more."—Martin Tupper.

* * *

It is valueless to a woman to be young unless pretty, or to be pretty unless young.

* * *

Bold, cheerful leadership, not denunciation, is the need of the day.

* * *

Although men flatter themselves with their great action, they are not so often the result of a great design as of chance.

* * *

"Being a nation of noodles, we naturally select super-noodles to govern us."—Bernard Shaw.

* * *

Our friends are those who, whatever happens, believe in our best.

* * *

Behold the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth.

* * *

Mathematically and financially it costs more in money to be an average sinner than it does to be an average Christian.

* * *

The violences we put upon ourselves to escape love are often more cruel than the cruelty of those we love.

* * *

Young women who do not want to appear flirts, and old men who do not want to appear ridiculous, should not talk of love as a matter wherein they can have any interest.

* * *

"Indignation is froth except it lead to action. We have not done our duty when we have uttered a large quantity of verbal truth."—Gladstone.

* * *

"I am amazed at the extraordinary inefficiency with which the productive work of this country and every other country is conducted."—Sidney Webb.

* * *

"Our transport is sick," say the Bolsheviks, so they have appointed Dzerjinsky, the "hero" of their terror, to attempt the cure.

* * *

All the instruments of discipline under our civilization—home, school, workshop, have for their one transcendant object the production of the highest type of manhood.

* * *

There are two kinds of constancy in love, one arising from incessantly finding in the loved one fresh objects to love, the other from regarding it as a point of honor to be constant.

* * *

"Communists who believed we could completely alter the economic form of society in three years were visionaries. I say it will take at least a century."—Lenin. After all, he is only a Fabian.

* * *

I shall pass through this world but once, any good thing therefore I can do, or any kindness I can show to any human being, let me do it now, let me not defer it, or neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again.

* * *

Reform is not to be secured by noise and shouting, by complaints and denunciations, by the formation of parties, or the making of revolutions, but by the awakening of thought and the progress of ideas. Until there be correct thought there cannot be right action; and when there is correct thought right action will follow. Power is in the hands of the masses of men. What oppresses the masses is their ignorance, their shortsighted selfishness.

Labor Editorial

Trades and Labor Councils

OTTAWA

OTTAWA.—Some of the important questions to be dealt with at the Winnipeg Convention of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada were briefly referred to by President Tom Moore, at the last regular meeting of the Ottawa Allied Trades and Labor Association. These problems include unemployment, unemployment insurance, and immigration. President Moore told of his visit to Western Canada and stated that while he had met with opposition at Winnipeg and at the coast, the international trades union movement was now stronger and better in the West than at any time in its history. Unemployment was very severe in the West and more immigrants were arriving with each vessel from Europe to swell the ranks of the workless.

The president of the Trades Council gave a brief summary of the activity of the various political groups in the House of Commons during the past session insofar as labor and social legislation was concerned. He declared that none of the political groups had given thought to labor legislation and when the Government tabled its decisions on the draft conventions and recommendations of the International Labor Conferences there was not one word of protest from the Liberal benches, from the Agrarian benches, nor from the occupants of "No-man's-land."

The executive's report was adopted with little discussion. It warned the delegates to be on their guard against the hostile forces which were seeking to have the union label abolished from civic printing. The strike of the Building Trades was referred to and the hope was expressed that the negotiations would be successful in ending the dispute. The abrupt end of the strike at the Chateau Laurier was mentioned and the lesson of the strike should be studied by all. A united body can and will be successful. Delegate Levesque of the Cooks' and Waiters' Union, declared that the men who broke ranks on the eve of victory were not citizens of Canada. The union was not down-hearted and is more determined now than ever to better the conditions of its membership.

TORONTO

TORONTO. — Joint Industrial Councils and the Federal Government's activity in assisting in their formation engaged the attention of the Toronto District Trades and Labor Council at its last regular meeting. A reply from Senator Gideon Robertson to a communication for information regarding Industrial Councils now in existence caused the discussion.

James Clark explained that Senator Robertson had informed the Metal Trades Council that T. A. Stevenson, now in Western Canada, would take the question up with local Labor organizations when he returned from the West.

A committee of nine was named to meet Mr. Stevenson.

Hon. F. B. McCurdy informed the council that public works for which appropriations had been made would be proceeded with at the earliest moment. His letter was a reply to a communication from the council asking for relief for unemployment.

During a discussion upon immigration John Beresford criticized the opinions of John Macdonald. He claimed that the country would not suffer any by the loss of Delegate Macdonald and his Socialistic comrades.

HAMILTON

HAMILTON.—Without dissent the Hamilton Trades and Labor Council at its last regular meeting endorsed the civic mountain driveway.

The use of the Labor Hall will be denied the unemployed unless they guard their remarks in the future. It came to the notice of the council that at a recent meeting some of the unemployed attacked the Labor movement and its officials.

The Hamilton Trades Council will continue its membership in the Chamber of Commerce for another two years. Although there was some opposition it was decided to continue in affiliation.

Delegate Riley informed the Council that the Ontario Government had reduced the wages of laborers on the Hamilton-Kitchener highway from $2 1-2c to 30c per hour and Secretary Foster was instructed to send a letter of protest to the Minister of Public Works.

Delegates E. MacKenzie, G. Kerslake and H. J. Halford were named a committee to investigate the feasibility of undertaking the opening of a civic golf links at Hamilton.

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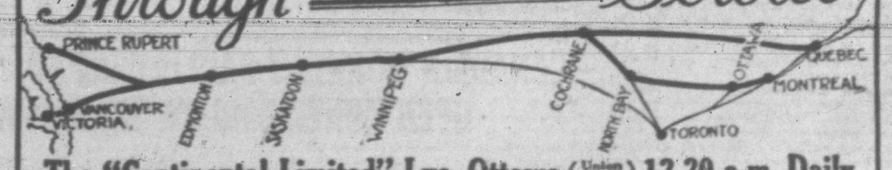

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