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Canadian Textile Workers Need Protection

The Canadian Textile Industry is threatened with elimination if something is not done to keep out unfair competition.

The textile industry in this country has many special difficulties to contend with in meeting European competition. These difficulties render reasonable protection a matter of absolute necessity if our textile industry is to carry on and expand and do its proper share in the building up of our industrial centres which latter, in their turn, will provide the surest, the most remunerative and most satisfactory market for Canadian agricultural products.

First among these handicaps is the competition from Great Britain. In the year 1922, the British preference was increased in such a manner as to open the market in Canada much more widely to British made goods manufactured under conditions which cannot possibly be duplicated in this country—and some of which it would be very undesirable to duplicate, here, even were it possible to do so—and which, to a large extent, were goods cut in price below costs and held in stock as surplus and dumped in Canada rather than on the home market. Then, in 1923, the British preference was still further increased and the results are being reflected in the imports of textiles into Canada in a most marked and unmistakable way. Canadian textile factories are being closed in many instances. In many more they are working part-time. The industry has a recognized place to fill in the development of the industrial life of this country. It cannot fill it adequately unless and until it is given a reasonable amount of protection against goods entering Canada—goods which are manufactured under conditions and at costs with which the Canadian manufacturer cannot compete.

Great Britain is the chief competitor the Canadian textile manufacturer has to face in his home market. And in Great Britain the wage scale in textile factories is, on the average, not more than half that in Canada, and, in many instances, a good deal below half. For example, in a typical Canadian mill, grinders will receive \$21.05, and in a typical Old Country mill from \$10 to \$12; drawing frame tenders will receive here \$16 and in the Old Country about \$8; slubbing frame tenders will get \$21.30 here and about \$8.60 in the Old Country; intermediate frame tenders will get \$20 here and about \$8 in the Old Country; roving frame tenders will get \$18.28 here and about \$7.75 in the Old Country; the wages of spinners here are just about double what they are in Great Britain. And so it goes all along the line and in practically all branches of the industry—the wages here are twice what they are in Great Britain.

Not only wages but the cost of building and machinery are much higher in this country than in Great Britain. A cotton mill of 60,000 spindles, for example would cost \$1,710,000 in Lancashire and \$2,600,000 in Canada. The depreciation on machinery in such a plant would be \$1,308 a week in Lancashire and \$2,000 a week here. Then, again, it undoubtedly takes less money to finance in Great Britain than it does here, by reason of the fact that, in the former country, there is less money tied up in business. Then, again, still looking at the cotton branch of the industry—the mills in Manchester, the great centre of the manufacture of cotton goods in the Old Country, know that there is plenty of cotton for their needs only eighteen miles away in Liverpool, and so they do not need to stock up. Canadian cotton mills, on the other hand, have to stock up for months ahead, and, further, they pay for their cotton two months before they see it. Moreover a Lancashire mill, as a rule, will make only one class of goods, and, consequently, only has one or two classes of cotton, whereas, in Canada, a mill, owing to the wide range made in each mill, will require to carry between ten and twenty grades and staples. This, of course, entails great additional expense.

Then, too, the cost of distribution in Canada is enormous in comparison with that in the Old Country. The product of a Lancashire mill, for example, is sold right in Manchester. In Canada, mill representatives have to travel from the Atlantic to the Pacific selling to the wholesaler who, in their turn, are, very largely, the bankers of the country merchant, because they give him from three to six months credit, whereas everyone else from whom he buys only gives him thirty days credit. In this way and other ways the spread accounted for between the price paid by the consumer and that paid to the manufacturer. For example, a commodity has a factory price of \$1.00. A sales tax of 6 per cent, has to be paid thereon, and this, with an incidental expense of 1 per cent, to land it in the wholesaler's warehouse, brings its cost to \$1.07. It is reasonable to assume that the wholesaler adds 20 per cent, to this distribution cost, thus making it, at this stage, \$1.28. The incidental expenses of landing it to the retailer's store necessarily vary, but, putting them at 1½ per cent, we now get a landed cost to the retailer of \$1.30. The retailer, adds 50 per cent., to give him 33 1-3 his resale price. And so our \$1.00 article costs the consumer 85¢.

But to return to our main argument, building costs are approximately 65 per cent, higher here than in an Old Country mill. Heating expenses are vastly greater, and so is the cost of humidification. As a matter of fact, an Old Country mill generally has not got any humidification. We casually mentioned just now, the higher cost of machinery here. Cotton mills in Canada use English machinery at \$100, for the sake of argument, packing increases that cost by \$12.50. Another \$11.25 has to be added for duty, and this, with the addition, of a six per cent, tax brings the cost up to \$131.17. Freight adds another \$5.62 making it \$136.80. To this has to be added the cost of cartage, cleaning and erecting, \$13.68, making the total cost in the mill \$150.48.

It is thus apparent that such protection as is nominally given does not afford a Canadian manufacturer in such case any real protection at all, especially when it is considered that sterling is about four per cent, below its parity in Canadian dollars. On the other hand, in advocating an adequate protection against British textiles we believe that in building up Canadian industries we shall do a great service to the Empire. Great Britain must export her surplus population, and the policy of protection will make Canada a desirable country for Britons to emigrate to. The present policy turns these emigrants to the United States, with a consequent loss to the Empire while at the same time a foreign country is built up.

Boycott Canadians at Niagara Falls, N.Y.

Niagara Falls Men Barred From Factories Over River

Niagara Falls, Ont.—A boycott against Canadian workmen has been started across the river and the first victims were turned back when they arrived at various plants and construction works. They were curtly told by foremen and others that

henceforth there would be no Canadians employed, and that the policy of preference for Niagara Falls, N.Y., men would be carried out to the limit. It is believed the new policy is the result of a recent agitation, when it was claimed that Canadians were being preferred by many firms. Representations, it is said, will be made to local firms in an attempt to organize retaliation here. There are many more Americans employed in this city and at the power houses than there are Canadians working over the river.

BESCO OFFERS 1923 RATES AS AN EXPEDIENT, RATHER THAN JUSTIFIED BY COAL PRICES, SAYS WOLVIN

Montreal—(Special)—After the meeting of the Board of Directors of the British Empire Steel Corporation, the President R. M. Wolvin made the following statement with reference to the wage dispute and the present stoppage of coal production in Nova Scotia.

There is considerable misunderstanding in the public mind as to the earnings of the corporation. Newspapers as a rule, refer to the minimum wage instead of the average wage in the industry.

1923 Miners' Annual Wages:
Earnings of the mine employees of the British Steel Corporation during 1923 averaged as follows:

Day paid men on the surface—per day \$4.11; per month \$97.18.
Day paid men on underground—per day \$4.54; per month \$102.71.
Miners, and other workers, paid on tonnage rate per day \$6.81; per month \$165.55.

Average all classes of mine workers per day \$5.23; per month \$115.90. The monthly average is an actual average obtained by dividing the total wage disbursements by the number of individuals.

The number of days worked by the collieries which is the real measure of the opportunity for earnings by individuals was during 1923 as follows: Glace Bay mines—225 working days. Sydney Mines—217 working days. Stellarton Mines—257 working days. Springhill Mines—265 working days. The number of possible working days, during 1923, was reduced by the unauthorized and illegal strike during July, which not only laid the mines idle for a period exceeding three weeks during the busiest season of the year, but was the direct cause of loss of business that resulted in further loss of working time at the collieries during the last quarter of the year.

At the Springhill Mines, where no strike occurred and the earnings were not lessened by the cause, the annual earnings were in 1923 as follows:

The following figures show the very marked advance in "real" wages received by the mine workers of the Corporations:

Year	Peak of prices	Wages	Cost of living	Real wages
1914	100 p. c.	100 p. c.	100 p. c.	100 p. c.
1920	237 p. c.	215 p. c.	215 p. c.	119 p. c.
1923	293 p. c.	325 p. c.	325 p. c.	132 p. c.

From this comparison, the interesting fact is disclosed that the mine workers were better off financially in 1923, under a scale of wages reduced from the high level of wages of 1920, than was the case at that date.

(1920, because of the increased purchasing value of the dollar at this time.

At no time in the history of coal mining in Nova Scotia did the miner earn higher "real" wages than during

1917 wage per day. 1923 wage per day.
Day paid surface worker \$2.62 \$4.11
Day paid underground worker \$2.90 \$4.54
Contract miner \$4.21 \$6.84
Average \$3.25 \$5.23

This comparison is more favorable to the mine workers than would at first sight appear as throughout the whole period of fluctuating prices and money values, which has intervened between 1914 and this date, the rents of miners' houses have remained unchanged, and the price of domestic coal to the workers was advanced only 40 cents per ton, namely, from \$1.85 to \$2.25 per ton.

The rental of miners' houses varies from the nominal figures of \$1.50 to \$2.00 per month to a maximum of \$5.00.

The average is around \$6.00 per month. The working day of the mine workers was, in 1919, reduced from nine hours to eight hours, which fact must also be taken into consideration when comparing the wages of 1917 and this date.

The lowest rate paid to mine laborers, namely, \$3.25 per day of eight hours, is widely represented as typical and representative of the miner as a class.

The Dominion Coal Company at their Glace Bay, Cape Breton mines out of 3,990 day paid employees, has only 101 persons paid this at the minimum rate, chiefly boys and old men.

This statement should sufficiently show the misleading nature of arguments which quote Labor rates as typical.

Cape Breton Operations

The Dominion Coal Company operates a large number of mines in the Glace Bay district in Cape Breton, and the Nova Scotia Steel Company operates other mines in the Sydney Mines district of Cape Breton. The output of coal in the Glace Bay district, during 1923, was 2,348,185 gross tons. The present wage dispute centers particularly on the operations in the Glace Bay district and the necessary production of coal at lower prices. The original proposal made by the corporation in these negotiations for a new wage scale for 1924, asked for a reduction during the winter months of 20 per cent, from the 1923 scale, to permit larger produc-

tion and terminals at Montreal, Three Rivers, Quebec and other points, for the discharging of the vessels and furtherance of this coal. Over one-half of this coal is consumed in the province of Quebec, under highly competitive sale price conditions, and the wages in the coal mines must be governed by what the consumer will pay in competition with other coal. The cost of production of coal in the Glace Bay district, in the year 1923 was more than could be absorbed in profitable production of steel products at the steel plants in Sydney and New Glasgow.

The coal used in the mining of ore in Newfoundland, the fuel of the vessels transporting the ore to Sydney, the production of coke for the blast furnaces, the operation of the various steel mills, the Sydney and Louisburg railroad carrying coal to the steel plant, and the transportation of the finished steel products to the consumer, actually uses more than five tons of Cape Breton produced coal, for every ton of rails or other finished steel manufactured by the British Empire Steel Corporation in Canada.

The wage scale in the Glace Bay mines of Nova Scotia concerns the coal and steel users of Canada entirely. There have been committees in the Senate, in the House of Parliament, investigating means to increase the number of mines and the coal production of Canada and how to make the country more self-contained as to its coal supply. These investigations may very well include how to be self-contained as to its steel supply instead of being dependent upon the United States for coal with which to produce its steel.

Tariff Now Inadequate

The steel industry of Nova Scotia was fostered in its early life by government subsidies and a custom tariff on importations of steel. Long ago the subsidies were discontinued and the custom tariff which is supplied in steel and coal as a specific charge of so much per ton, instead of a percentage of its market value as on most commodities, has lost one-half of its protective value to the industry and its revenue value to the country.

Result of Recent Negotiations

Our recent negotiations have been carried on in a very friendly spirit. We realize that our miners are dissatisfied, but this is due to a long period of very radical teaching which has influenced the young men growing up. We are most anxious for a long period of peace and harmony so that our workmen can better understand the conditions governing the company's ability to pay. To gain this period in the hope of better understanding our vice-president offered to continue the 1923 scale of wages in all districts, for the proposed deduction during the winter in Cape Breton but this offer has been refused. This offer of wages is more a matter of expediency than a scale which the company is justified in making as an economical proposition.

Labor Unions Must Shape Policies

To Suit Canadian Problems

(By Tim Duck in Labor Herald)

The 25,000 miles of railway in Canada is embraced in two systems, each of which extends from coast to coast, and each of which centres in Montreal. While the whole of Canadian railroad workers make a small number compared with the railroad workers in the United States, yet they are the most important body of organized workers in Canada, and they have to deal with a highly centralized Canadian branch, centered in the government at Ottawa. And while an upheaval among the railroaders in Buffalo produces scarcely a ripple in Toronto, less than 100 miles away the repercussions of the slightest incident among railroad workers in Montreal extends to every part of Canada. But these workers have no organ for joint action, no central Canadian organization capable of acting on Canadian matters. International trade unionism can be a power in Canada, but to do so it must be capable to shape its policies and activities in accordance with Canadian problems. The 11,000 members of the Brotherhood Railway Carmen, the 10,000 members of the Maintenance-of-way organization, the tens of thousands of members of the other railroad unions, not to mention the carpenters, the needle workers, the plumbers and what-not,

As Union Man Sees It

By James M. Lynch
(Former President International Typographical Union, former New York State Industrial Commissioner.)

Organized labor has for a quarter of a century been passing through the turmoil and the agony of jurisdictional disputes, the effort to determine where the work of one artisan ends and the work of still another begins.

The struggle has, at times threatened the solidarity, if not the very life, of the organized labor movement. Unions have been expelled from the great family of trade unions, the American Federation of Labor, for violation of its decisions attempting to outline the work of a particular craft. Still other unions have been absorbed by a larger union party to a jurisdiction dispute, and it must be admitted that this method at least ends the contention.

Lengthy Dispute

With the general use of steel in building construction came new materials and new methods. Perhaps the best illustration is that of the introduction of metal trim and doors, and the subsequent bitter and lasting dispute between the carpenters and the sheet metal workers as to who should have the installation of the substitute for wooden trim and woodwork doors. That dispute lasted for years, and has not yet been entirely adjusted, notwithstanding that as a rule the carpenters were out of the building trades councils because of their insistence on jurisdiction over this work and their refusal to relinquish it.

Many Disagreements

These disputes as to jurisdiction over work have been before the conventions of the American Federation of Labor since the beginning of the century, and at the recent gathering in Portland, Ore., it was concerned with disagreements between the bricklayers and plasterers, the railway clerks and the maintenance of way employees, the teamsters and the bridge and structural iron workers, the fire fighters and the engineers, the blacksmiths and the tunnel and subway constructors, the bakers and the hotel and restaurant employees, the longshoremen and the railway clerks, the elevator constructors and the building service employees, the latter a new dispute that promises another battle between unions of wage earners which will have the merits of the dispute before them, and perhaps as in many other instances result in adjustment by absorption of the weaker by the stronger contender or by exhaustion of both parties and subsequent truce or agreement to preserve both from extinction.

Create Much Annoyance

If the jurisdiction disputes have been of great moment and also of great annoyance to organized labor they have also been a source of much trouble to industry and to the public generally. Work on a great building in the course of construction has been brought to a complete halt, not by any trouble between the contractors and the artisans, but by a dispute between two unions as to jurisdiction over certain work. The contractor cannot adjust the dispute for the reason that if he favors one union as against the other union, work will not be resumed. It is a matter for agreement between the unions that are at war, for it is war as bitter and as devastating as is possible, with the exception of the loss of human life.

The public faced with such a spectacle, cannot understand it. Indeed, it is often difficult for labor leaders to get at the merits and the rights of such a dispute, for the contenders will produce evidence that has the appearance at least of upholding the contention of each. The union cause suffers and suffers grievously, not only internally, but in public estimation.

could all be organized into Canadian departments of their international organizations, without disturbing the structure of international unionism. Such Canadian departments, co-ordinated for dominion-wide action through the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, would enormously revive the energy and activity of the Canadian movement, would repair the falling morale of the membership, and make unionism a power in the land—Vancouver Federationist.

tion, and if there is one cause on this continent that cannot afford to damn the public it is the cause of labor organized.

Some Adjustments Made

For all of the years that the jurisdiction disputes have been before the federation it has done its best level to adjust them, has succeeded in many instances, and has never failed to point out the damage in these battles to the general labor movement. As an example of its general attitude, the following from the report of the executive council to the Portland convention will serve: "During the late spring and early summer, a situation developed in the building industry which threatened great injury not only to the building trades unions but eventually to the entire labor movement. We refer to the controversy between the Bricklayers, Masons and Plasterers' International Union and the Operative Plasterers and Cement Finishers' International association. Letters and telegrams were received at federation headquarters in protest against such a situation having developed and being permitted to continue, and pointing out the grave effect would inevitably have not only upon the building trades unions, but in its reaction upon the organized labor movement in its entirety."

So that there may be an understanding of the conditions that cause these jurisdictional disputes, an outline of that between the structural iron workers and the teamsters may be helpful. It is taken from the report of the committee that considered the dispute at the Cincinnati convention of the federation in 1922. The chief factor in this controversy has to do with processes that are common to both organizations and which the committee found were being carried on by both unions as a part of their ordinary work. The loading and unloading of material around yards or buildings from case to trucks and from trucks to the ground or elsewhere is a process that involves a class of workers especially organized and skilled in the character of the work required of them.

The committee found from the facts presented that in some instances this work is done by structural iron workers and in other instances by teamsters. There appears no controversy over the handling of any building material except iron and steel. Claim is set up by the iron workers to the handling of heavy machinery and material for bank vaults and other similar construction. To this class of work the teamsters also lay claim.

This dispute is similar in essence to nearly all of the other quarrels over who shall do certain work that afflict the labor movement. On surface it appears to be a simple matter and entirely capable of quick adjustment. Yet the controversy between the two unions is of long duration. It began more than ten years ago and has continued during all the years since its inception. The recommendation for adjustment contained in the report of the federation council for 1922 was that where building material is hauled to buildings under construction and the foreman, contractor or person in charge of the erection of the building directs that it be hoisted from the vehicle the work shall be done by the structural iron workers, but where it is unloaded on the ground, street or sidewalk it be done by the teamsters. That recommendation was not accepted. The dispute is still on. It will finally be settled by agreement between the parties at interest or by federation intervention or adjust itself with the passage of time.

The Moral Effect

The public is justified, however, in asking why these quarrels should impede and in many instances prevent the carrying on of great enterprises. The question is a fair one. All of these contentions should be adjusted under truce, and by the unions involved. They should not be permitted to prejudice the cause of the wage earners or their opportunity to sell their labor under contracts embracing the best obtainable conditions.

Organized labor cannot afford to make itself appear ridiculous.