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**SUN LIFE ASSURANCE COMPANY OF CANADA - 72 Queen St. W., Toronto, Ont.**

To the Editor of The Tribune:

Dear Sir—In the last issue of The Tribune over a column of space was taken up by a letter from Mr. D. W. Kennedy, dealing briefly with the question of license reduction, and extensively with me and my attitude on that important question.

I have no desire to cultivate the use of personalities in replying to Mr. Kennedy, because they have no direct bearing upon the question at issue; but I am particularly anxious that organized labor at large should know where I stand on the question of license reduction. The gauntlet has been thrown down, and I gladly accept the challenge.

Organized labor is now being used as the tool of the Brewers' Association and the Licensed Victuallers' Association to assist them in continuing the exploitation of the workers from both ends. The miserable wages they pay have been forced from them at considerable cost to the Brewery Workers and Malsters, and in no branch of industry do the workers receive such wages as in the brewing industry. The brewers not only squeeze their profits from the labor power of their employees, but the workmen who consume their product pay more in proportion to the cost of production than they do for any other commodity, and when their hard-earned money has gone they have nothing to show for it but an empty pocket, a dissatisfied appetite, and a whole catalogue of evils in proportion to the moderate or extravagant indulgence in the brewers' beverages.

The third volume of the census returns of the Dominion, just published, shows that for every million dollars invested in the liquor making there are 168 persons employed, with a yearly wage bill of \$92,256.88. In other manufacturing industries there are 797 persons employed for every million dollars invested, and a yearly wage bill of \$265,000.74. Making the comparison for the Dominion the figures are as follows:

	Liquor Making	Other Mfg.
Capital	\$19,561,648	\$427,354,839
Hands	3,294	340,741
Wages	\$1,804,677	\$111,444,673
Materials	3,192,696	263,335,163

Another splendid comparison is afforded in the city of Rochester, where a careful census has been taken. In the brewing industry \$6,455,000 has been invested, giving employment to 434 men, and paying in wages \$381,000 annually. In the clothing industry \$6,150,000 has been invested, 3,132 persons employed, and \$1,561,000 paid in wages. In the boot and shoe industry \$3,281,000 has been invested, 4,863 men employed, and \$2,431,000 paid in wages. The investment in the clothing and boot and shoe industries is only one and a half times more than in the brewing industry, but gives employment to 7,561 more people and pays in wages \$3,211,000 more.

In the face of these figures what is there to fear if the reduction of licenses means a corresponding reduction in the consumption of liquors? Is it reasonable to suppose that the capital not invested in the liquor business will lie idle, or is it reasonable to expect that the money not spent over the bars will remain in the pockets of the working classes? The money which is now transferred from the pockets of the workers to the license holders will be spent in better furniture, houses, clothing, pianos, and many other things which they have to do without because of too much spent in the barroom. This will tend to stimulate legitimate industry and will afford employment for more men than would be thrown out of employment in the liquor industry.

War and the liquor traffic are two of the greatest evils resulting from the present capitalist system, and any curtailment of these evils is in the right direction. Organized labor is unanimous in its opposition to war, and yet is it not a fact that if war were abolished the standing armies of all the great powers would be dissipated and would have to turn to productive industry. All the gunsmiths and rifle makers, builders of men-of-war, and all the men employed in making death-dealing machinery, would have to look for new occupations. Would the men now employed in the liquor industry urge the continuance of war, simply to keep these millions of men employed?

The Brewers' Association and the Licensed Victuallers' Association, in their memorial to the city council, state that there will be no diminution in the consumption of liquor if there is a reduction in licenses. The men employed in the liquor industry tell us that their material welfare is in jeopardy because less liquor will be consumed. There is a con-

dition of opinion here, but I believe with the latter that there will be a reduction in the consumption, and that is why I favor license reduction. I admit that there would be a displacement of labor, and that the men now engaged in the liquor business would have to seek new positions. The same, however, can be said of the introduction of machinery into all lines of industry. Hand production has had to make way for machine production, and because of the increased productive power of the machine a great army of men have had to seek a new market in which to sell their labor power. Through the efforts of trades unions and working class political parties the labor market will gradually be adjusted and the workers will come to their own. The process will of necessity be painful, but we must face the situation as men and not as pignies.

I have no sympathy with the demagogue who advances the argument that to the extent the working class abstained from drink as a class so economically would they suffer by their wages being reduced by the proportion and to the extent of their abstinence from liquor. I submit to all workmen that it is a fallacious argument to contend that the more a man spends in liquor the greater chance he has to maintain a high standard of wages. The sober, saving, industrious workman maintains the highest standard of living, and he will fight harder to maintain that standard than the intemperate spendthrift. I believe with John Burns that the workmen who spend the least on drink have the best homes, are most regularly employed, and are better prepared to resist encroachments on their wages. The drunkard plunked invariably undersells his fellows in the labor market to the extent of the looseness of his tastes, which rarely rise above treachery to his trade, disloyalty to his home, and contempt for all the elementary virtues of thrift, sobriety, and civic decency.

A brief reference to New Zealand is quite pertinent to the question of license reduction. When labor leaders are speaking on government ownership or labor legislation they take special delight in referring to the advances made by the government of New Zealand, and I think I may be pardoned if I go so far for a splendid illustration to show what the working class of a sister British colony thinks of the question of license reduction and prohibition. It is the practice in New Zealand, to submit a referendum to the people every three years on the questions of continuing the licenses at the present number, license reduction, or prohibition. If a majority is not obtained in favor of license reduction or prohibition the number of licenses remain as they are. If a majority is obtained the licenses are reduced, and when a two-thirds majority is obtained a prohibitory law will be passed. Each time the question is submitted the working classes pile up a bigger vote in favor of license reduction and prohibition, and the last time the vote was taken prohibition was carried in six districts, licenses were reduced in nine districts, and while the population has increased the temperance vote has greatly outdistanced the liquor vote. From 1896 to 1902 the votes were as follows:

	For	For	For No
	Cont'nce	Reduct'n	License
1896	139,580	94,555	98,312
1899	143,962	109,449	120,542
1902	148,449	132,240	151,524

The votes show the steady growth of temperance sentiment among the workers in New Zealand, and the combined votes of the license reductionists and prohibitionists greatly outnumber the votes of the license continuance advocates. In the opinion of Mr. Kennedy and those who reason as he does, the workmen of New Zealand are fanatical agitators and narrow-minded.

Referring to the anxiety of the cigar-makers in this license reduction campaign, permit me to say that the cigar industry would be placed on a more respectable level if it was entirely dissociated from the barroom. The associations of the barrooms are not the most elevating, and the workmen who do not indulge in alcoholic beverages should not be compelled to go into the barroom of the hotel to get a cigar. Young men who innocently go into barrooms for cigars on the invitation of their friends are placed in the way of temptations to become drinkers. The barroom cigar stand is a detriment to the legitimate cigar and tobacco dealer, and when the Cigar-makers' Union joins hands with the Brewers' Association and Licensed Victuallers' Association in opposition to li-

quor reduction to protect the sale of cigars in the barrooms, they are giving the men who run cigar stores a slap in the face. I am strongly of the opinion that when men cease spending money for alcoholic beverages they will have a little more to spend on cigars, which are not so injurious, and instead of the cigar industry being injured it will be directly benefited. Just as the retail merchants dislike to see the expansion of the departmental store, the retail cigar dealer dislikes to see the cigar case in the barrooms. The hotelkeeper is enabled to undersell the man who conducts a cigar and tobacco store because of the profits he receives from the liquor sold. He runs his business on the principle that the cigar stand helps the bar business, and if he can draw a large custom to his cigar stand by selling cheaper than the outside cigar dealer, he runs a good chance of increasing his sale of liquor. The percentage of cigars bought, and wasted is very small, and can have very little effect upon the output from the factories.

I fail to see how the reduction of licenses can seriously affect the glass bottle blowers, when the greater part of liquor consumed over the bars comes from barrels. For arguments sake we'll admit that there is a large quantity of bottled beer drunk in the barrooms, but even if this trade was cut off entirely by the reduction of licenses the glass bottle blowers would have to make more bottles for soft drinks, which would be sold in greater quantities.

We are told that license reduction means the creating of a monopoly and therefore the workers should be opposed to license reduction on that ground. A monopoly or a number of separated industries that cannot be called a monopoly will always be detrimental to the best interests of the people so long as they are controlled by private individuals for the profit they can get out of them. This leads some labor leaders to suggest that the liquor monopoly be taken over by the people (or government), and conducted without any profit. By doing this the incentive to profit would be removed and there would be no reason for making men excessive drinkers and inebriates. This undoubtedly would be an improvement upon the present profit-making license system, but it would not remove an evil. The people have a right to take over legitimate industries and have the necessities of life produced and distributed for use and not for profit, but the liquor manufacturing for beverage purposes cannot be classified as a necessary industry. The ideal of life is to make men perfect—physically, mentally and morally—and medical science has given its emphatic verdict that alcohol in any quantity is of no benefit whatever to a healthy person. Observation teaches us that men's intellectual and moral faculties, the muscles of his body, and his respiratory nerves are affected injuriously by the action of alcohol upon the brain, and when we see men making fools of themselves, sometimes unable to walk, and in some cases found dead, as the result of a drunken debauch, we are impressed with the truth of the statements of medical science. For this reason I cannot classify the liquor industry as a legitimate productive industry, and therefore favor the reduction of licenses as preferable to either the present license system or government ownership without profit. Partnership in an industry that is detrimental to human progress has no attractions for me.

Speaking on this important phase of the liquor problem recently, John Burns, the well-known English labor leader, said that "the chief stepping stone is that of personal abstinence—the best as it is the most enduring of all remedies. Then follows in order of effectiveness the policy of reduction of licenses, of which Liverpool, Bourneville, Battersea, London and other places are examples. To this policy I attach great importance, as I believe that in proportion to facilities given to certain sections of people so are the opportunities for drinking and temptation increased."

After dealing with drink as a cause of sickness and death, Mr. Burns discussed the question whether poverty is the cause of drink, or drink the cause of poverty. The theory dogmatically asserted, that poverty causes drink is rudely shaken (he said) by the fact that the expenditure per middle and upper-class family who have the means is two and a half times greater than the working-class family, although the effect of such is less apparent to them through other causes. But the strongest answer is the statistical fact that as wages rise general drunkenness follows, insanity in-

creases, criminal disorder due to drink keeps pace with all three. The converse generally holds good in rural districts, where wages are low; drunkenness is lower, and insanity due to drink is scarcer.

I agree with John Burns on this important phase of the question, and direct the attention of the workmen to the fact that owing to the development of Canada during the past few years and the consequent available opportunities for employment there has been a marked increase in the consumption of liquor per capita in the Dominion. So serious has Labor Day dissipation become that a resolution was moved at the convention of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, held in Montreal last year, calling for the closing of the bars in Montreal on Labor Day, and the Congress adopted a resolution urging upon union men throughout Canada to abstain from drinking intoxicating liquor on that day. The police court records of Toronto show that on last Labor Day there were more arrests for drunkenness and disorder than on any preceding day in the history of the city. In view of these facts it seems strange that leading labor men should be traveling arm in arm with the liquor interests to prevent the passage of a by-law to reduce the number of licenses in Toronto. It seems to me that we are prostituting the grand and noble mission of organized labor and trampling under foot the aspirations and ideals of a movement consecrated to the emancipation of the working class.

We are impudently told by some blind leaders of that blind that the barrooms of Toronto are the workmen's clubs, and if the licenses are reduced the workmen will be deprived of their rendezvous for social intercourse and general good fellowship. No greater insult was ever hurled at union men in the house of their friends. The capitalists of Toronto have their National Club, Toronto Club, and other clubs where they meet, and the union men of Toronto have a Labor Temple, almost unsurpassed on this continent, for recreation, educational and organization advantages, and there is no excuse for the statements that the barrooms of the city are the workmen's clubs. If the money spent by workmen in the barrooms of the city were spent in paying off the debt of the Labor Temple and in acquiring more land to the south, which is so necessary, there would be erected to the memory of union men now living a monument that would stand throughout the future as a strong testimony to the solidarity of the labor movement and the wisdom and self-sacrifice of its leaders. Barroom discussions on labor union matters have been a reproach to our movement, and if there was less of it there would be less division and more unity.

Another argument against license reduction I wish to refer to is that which leads the unthinking to conclude that the number of dives will increase if the licenses are reduced. At the present time there are not half a dozen dive keepers in Toronto making a living from the illegal sale of liquor, while in the City of Montreal, with its 1,200 licenses, there are over 500 places where liquor is sold illegally. I am indebted to Mr. John H. Kennedy for a statement in the District Labor Council when he was speaking against license reduction, to the effect that during the past five years nearly all the dives had been cleaned out. It is only reasonable to conclude that where the number of licenses are low the Police Department have more time to look out for dives. In Montreal the police have all they can do to watch the 1,200 licensed places, and they have very little time to keep posted on the dive trade. It is argued by at least one labor leader that notwithstanding the large number of licensed places in Montreal there is less drinking than in Toronto. If that statement is true, it can be accounted for by the fact that wages on the average in Montreal are 25 per cent. lower than in Toronto, which only proves the previous contention that where wages are low there is not so much drinking. The brewers and hotelkeepers, in their memorial to the City Council, quoted a number of opinions expressed by prominent visitors to the city, to show what a law-abiding, Sabbath-observing, and temperate people the citizens of Toronto are, and I am of the opinion that our few licenses have been an important contributing factor to bring Toronto up to such a high standard. There are better things in store for us if we can only carry the by-law for license reduction.

JAMES SIMPSON.

Sir,—After reading the Tribune, I concluded that it was a very one-sided paper, on the license reduction question at least. Wherever you mention the subject, your attitude is distinctly unfair, and your arguments against such reduction are simply those of "the trade," and are entirely superficial.

In your report of the matter at the District Labor Council you can find space to print some tiresome twaddle as to why the reduction should be opposed, but no room for the "many good arguments" of Mr. Simpson "in favor" of reduction.

Again, "There surely cannot be any sentiment in a question that will seriously affect such a large portion of organized labor." There is no sentiment in the case at all. It is stern reality from first to last, and there won't be anything like 1,000 men thrown out of employment. But any section of "organized labor" whose operations tend to lower the moral life of our city and cause misery to those who cannot defend themselves, ought to be stamped out and rigorously kept out. The men who will lose their jobs at the coming reduction will doubtless find other jobs.

I also am a union man, but I am not a temperance man, that is, I belong to no temperance organization, and I've never signed any pledge, but I shall use all my influence to see that the reduction is carried. I can cheerfully contradict your blatant assertion that "on this question we have every organized labor man with us." You have not. I know a whole lot of "organized labor men" who will vote reduction; men who have no fear of "falling" because they are "divided" from "the trade," and who have no foolish sentiments about forcing a small number of the community to find something else to do. I remain,

CHAS. BAXTER.

42 Emerson Ave.  
864 Palmerston Ave., City.

To the Editor of The Tribune:

Sir,—In the issue of The Tribune for December 16th I notice a letter by D. W. Kennedy bearing upon a discussion in the District Labor Council "re the reduction of liquor licenses," and especially directed against a member of the Council who, it appears, expressed opinions somewhat differing from himself. Whilst I have particularly nothing in common with the temperance party, James Simpson or D. W. Kennedy, I do have some feeling of respect for common decency in participating in a newspaper controversy. In the letter referred to the writer either lacks this quality or has completely lost control of his better self when writing. Tolerance is becoming of all men, and more extreme the circumstances the greater this virtue when exercised. Arrogance and intolerance are practices only worthy of the mental degenerate or those temporarily affected; much less worthy of a man of the type of D. W. Kennedy. His letter is conspicuous by a lack of sensible, reasonable argument to support his contentions. Moreover, the arrogant intolerance and abuse displayed "whilst lacking any sensible argument," is unworthy to occupy valuable space in any paper. The contention of Mr. Kennedy "from this letter and a previous one," seems to be that there should be no efforts put forth to curtail the evils of the abnormal use of liquor and tobacco because such efforts would affect the interests of a number of workmen engaged in these industries. Has Mr. Kennedy nothing to say about the effect of the abuse of liquor and tobacco, "morally, mentally and physically," upon the human race. Let us carry out the arguments of Mr. Kennedy further. Let us say there shall be no efforts put forth to suppress crime and vice, for the police, the judges and the jailer will lose a job. Let us say there shall be no efforts put forth to build up the health and physique of mankind, for there will be less doctors and druggists needed. And let us say there shall be no laws to protect human life on the streets, on steam railways, on building construction, etc., for there may be less hospital attendants and undertakers needed. No, Mr. Kennedy, reasonable argument could be advanced in defence of the men concerned, but such as you have put forth will not do. If you desire to debate the reduction of liquor licenses through The Tribune, do so, and I have no doubt you will find many union men ready to debate with you. But let arrogance, intolerance and abuse remain in its proper sphere—"with the mental degenerate." Yours truly,  
John Fickles.