

WESTERN CANADIAN LABOR CONDITIONS

International Trade Union Movement Unmoved Despite Cold Blooded Attacks.

(By A. Farmilo.)

The labor movement on the American continent is in the position today to face clearly and without bias the results of the activities of those who arrived at their conclusions through processes of emotion.

It is now general knowledge in the trade union movement of Western Canada that the first thing that had to be done was to scuttle the local treasuries of the international unions, and so we find the minutes of some local unions reading as follows: \$500.00 donated to this person, \$500.00 to another trusted member of the local, and still another \$500

The members of the International Trades Union movement who reach their conclusions through processes of reason, are asserting themselves, with the result that the labor movement of Western Canada is quickly righting itself.

The position of the O.B.U. Council of Vancouver, has a membership of less than 2,000, 1,000 of whom are loggers, who are located in different parts of British Columbia.

The work now being done by the International Brotherhood of United Mine Workers in District 15 warrants favorable comment.

Let us remember that there is no short cut to anything save trouble. There is no easy road for trade unionism to travel, save the road to destruction.

The Trades Unionists of this continent have established their own institutions to deal with the facts and conditions which make the struggle and will not be swayed from the right road by any catchy slogan or formula.

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FIRST NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL CONFERENCE.

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port of the committee on the question of a minimum wage law.

"Whereas the committee is of the opinion that minimum rates of wages should be fixed throughout Canada for women and children, whether employed at night or during the day, and by any other method of remuneration."

"Whereas minimum wage laws for women and children have been enacted in five and are now in operation in four of the provinces;

"Therefore be it resolved that this industrial conference recommends that the government of the Dominion adopt a uniform law and method of application, but that in all cases the minimum of wages for women and children is to be determined, from time to time, due regard being given to local living conditions."

"It is the opinion of this conference that the Dominion Government should appoint a Royal Commission, composed equally of representatives of labor, employers, and the public to investigate wages of unskilled workers and issue a report."

"Representation has been made to the committee that the remuneration paid female school teachers in one of the larger provinces of the Dominion is so low as to discourage the employment of the talent necessary to the proper education of its citizens. Your committee recommends that the various provincial governments be asked to investigate such conditions in the respective provinces, to the end that the children of all provinces of the Dominion may have equal educational opportunities."

Miss Gutteridge said that E. M. Trower, of the Retail Dealers' Association, had appeared before the committee and asked to be recorded as opposed to the inclusion in this law of part time workers in any trade or commercial enterprise.

F. G. Daniels, Montreal, of the Dominion Textile Company, seconded the resolution for the adoption of the committee's recommendation.

Mr. Daniels said that the feeling of the employers was that locality and environment, differing so widely in different parts of the country, should be considered in fixing any amounts that no country should be settled upon for the Dominion.

There was no hesitation on the part of anyone to claim a higher salary for school teachers as mentioned in the report.

This announcement was applauded by all three groups.

The report was adopted unanimously by the conference.

A resolution urging upon the Dominion and Provincial Governments increasing efforts and aid to reorganize the International Brotherhood of Workers in Canada, was moved by G. B. Fraser, Montreal.

John A. Flett, Hamilton, seconded the resolution and declared that the need for better housing was undoubtedly reacting very seriously on the mind of the workman of small means.

Major W. A. McInnes, Saskatoon, reported for the miscellaneous committee three resolutions. The first was as follows:

"That this conference endorses the recommendation of the Royal Commission on industrial relations, as to the necessity of the extension of equal opportunities in education, and in view of bringing about this reform:

"That the Government of each province in Canada be asked to establish compulsory education full time at least up to and including the fourteenth year, and for two ensuing years, and in towns for the two ensuing years."

"That in all provinces, education in all grades should be made free, so that the child of the poorest paid worker be afforded the opportunity of reaching the highest educational institution."

This was seconded by E. G. Henderson, Windsor.

Mayne Bouchard, of St. Hyacinthe, as a representative of the Union of Canadian Municipalities and member of the third group, endorsed this as a measure that would develop the distinctive Canadian mind and bring peace and prosperity to the country.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The second resolution presented by Major McInnes was as follows: "That we unanimously endorse Paragraph 7 of the report of the Royal Commission, as follows:

"The restrictions placed upon the freedom of speech and the liberty of the press, and the denial of the right to read such literature as any portion of the public demanded, was given as one of the principle causes of the present industrial unrest. We have no comment to make upon the policy of the Government in this respect. During the war it was necessary in the interests of the whole country and of the Empire that individual liberty should in many directions be restrained, but we believe that restrictions should not be imposed upon either the freedom of speech or the freedom of the press unless such restrictions are urgently demanded in the interest of the peace of the whole community. We recognize that no person has a right to do anything that is liable to incite the people to commit unlawful acts. A line must be drawn between liberty and license, but care must be taken to avoid creating the impression that the restraints imposed upon the freedom of speech or the liberty of the press are intended to prevent criticism of legislative or Governmental action."



VANGIE VALENTINE. The charming young lady pictured above is Vangie Valentine—known to millions of movie fans as one of the clearest film actresses in America.

ed for aid from the employers to the Government offices in absorbing returned men, including those with disabilities, into industries.

F. Welsh, Vancouver marine trades, stated that the Coughlan and Wallace ship yards were not allowed by the Government to take contracts that would have kept them busy this winter.

E. S. Woodward, Victoria, said he wished to go on record as thinking such talk as that of unemployment unnecessary in a country with Canada's resources.

The resolution was then adopted. The question of proportional representation was settled by the passing of a resolution in which the conference unanimously agreed that there are defects in the present system of electoral representation.

"Believing that there are defects in the system of electoral representation in Canada, which defects are stated by the Royal Commission on Industrial Relations to be a contributory cause of social and political unrest."

"This conference welcomes the declaration of the Prime Minister, on behalf of the Government, that a speaker's conference will be called to investigate the merits of the proportional system, and urges that such action be taken without delay."

Fred Welsh, Vancouver, reported for the committee on joint councils and the advisability of establishing a Government bureau to gather and distribute data respecting them that another unanimous recommendation was reached. It was as follows:

"Your committee is of the opinion that there is urgent necessity for greater co-operation between employer and employee. We believe that this co-operation can be furthered by

the establishment of joint industrial councils. Your committee does not believe it is wise or expedient to recommend any set plan for such councils."

"We therefore recommend that a bureau should be established by the Department of Labor to gather data and furnish information whenever requested by employers and employees or organizations of employees or employers; that whenever it is desired to voluntarily establish such councils the fullest assistance should be given by the bureau."

F. P. Jones, Montreal, seconded the adoption of the report and it was carried unanimously.

The following article is from the September issue of International Brotherhood of Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Workers' Journal:

"The members of Dominion Local No. 73, employed by the J. R. Booth Co. of Hull, Que., went on strike last November for an increase in wages. They succeeded in completely closing the plant, as far as production of paper was concerned; but the repair crew, consisting of millwrights, machinists, etc., did not respond to the strike call and remained at work. The company took advantage of this and had much needed repair work done, which resulted in prolonging the strike several weeks. We succeeded in winning the strike; but, had the repair section gone out with us, it would have been accomplished in a much shorter time."

During the past winter the machinists employed by the J. R. Booth Co. joined the local of the International Association of Machinists in the city of Ottawa, (which is just across the river from Hull). This spring the machinists started a campaign for an 8 1/2 per cent minimum and a four-hour work week. To enforce these demands they called a general strike of all machinists employed in the plants of Ottawa and Hull. The machinists in the J. R. Booth mill responded to this strike call. We saw a reversal of what took place last fall. Then the Pulp, Sulphite and Paper Mill Workers were on strike and the machinists remained at

work, this spring the machinists were on strike and the Pulp, Sulphite, and Paper Mill Workers at work.

When I was at Hull early in June our members were discussing the taking up of a 2 1/2 a week addition to help the machinists who were on strike. Commenting on this situation (while addressing the local meeting) the writer said:

"Suppose the Allies, when fighting the Germans, had adopted the same tactics that the union men employed by the J. R. Booth Co. are using. How long would it take them to beat Germany? Suppose that when England attacked the German lines, the French and the American troops remained inactive, but voted to give the English the moral and financial support and took up a collection of 2 1/2 a week each. Then, when the English became tired of fighting the United States troops attacked the German lines, and the French and English invited to give their moral and financial support to assist the United States army. Had such an absurdity occurred it would have been an exact parallel of what has actually been done by the men employed in the mill of the J. R. Booth Co."

If this were an isolated incident it would not be worth mentioning, but just such things happen right along the lines. The fewer craft unions there are the better, but where there are a number of craft unions the various organizations should have a working agreement, and an understanding and all should work together and support each other.

I have just been informed that the machinists of the J. R. Booth Co. have returned to work and they do not win the 8 1/2 a hour, or the 44-hour week. We hope that the strike has at least taught all the workers in every industry must stand shoulder to shoulder. When it becomes necessary to strike in an industry, all the workers of that particular industry should strike together.

Advertisement for Ontario Brewers' Association featuring a \$5,000.00 challenge to the Referendum Committee. Includes a receipt form, a ballot paper, and a distortion of the referendum question. The challenge is to prove that beer containing 2.51% alcohol by weight is intoxicating.

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