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Alberta Federation of Labor and Western Conference

On March the 18th Edmonton dailies gave great prominence to the meeting of the Trades and Labor Congress held the previous evening (Monday, March 17th) stating that by a large majority that august body had "repudiated the action of the Western Conference."

This statement is not true for anyone who knows anything about parliamentary procedure will uphold the fact that a vote called on "the previous question" is merely for the purpose of deciding if the motion has had sufficient discussion and is ready to be voted on but has nothing to do with the decision of the motion.

In the first place time had been extended to 11:00 p.m. after which hour the meeting should have automatically adjourned. When "previous question" was called it was three minutes after 11 o'clock and was therefore out of order. Next, half the delegates were on their feet asking for points of information and points of order. When Vice-president Perkins took the vote none of these had been recognized by the chair and the whole meeting was in uproar. Many delegates who did vote thought that they were voting for the adjournment, which had also been moved and seconded. After this the meeting broke up and Vice-president Perkins (who was acting President) was asked what we had voted for and his reply was "for the adoption of the delegates' report." Then delegate Farmilo was asked the same question and he said, "for the previous question," and later Perkins, and Roper, who was supplying reports for the Daily Bulletin, had a discussion as to what had transpired; the former maintaining his stand as stated above and E. E. Roper stating that the vote was "the repudiation of the action of the Western Conference." Such was the confusion and any vote taken was not a true expression of those present.

It will be interesting to note here the excitement that has been caused by the Western Conference. The lying mouth-piece of the Master Class—the Press—has waxed exceedingly wroth and every type of labor fakir has raised his voice to swell the volume of opposition and their chief wail being "it was not a truly representative gathering." Further "that it was dominated by British Columbia."

Now let us take the facts as they really are:—

The Alberta Federation of Labor met in Convention in Medicine Hat, January 6th to 11th, and endorsed the following resolutions, viz:—

Resolution 18 "Realizing that the present state of unionism with their craft autonomy is a menace to class solidarity and united action, Lodge 357 of the International Association of Machinists are absolutely in favor of every step being taken to eliminate class and craft factions so that one organization may be evolved which will operate industrially and politically towards freedom, industrial democracy, and the control of their own lives."

Resolution 20 "Being able to perceive and understand the extensive campaign of vilification and misrepresentation carried on about Soviet Government of Russia by the Capitalist Press, Lodge 357, International Association of Machinists are unanimously in accord with the aspirations and methods adopted by the Russian people to gain control of their own destiny."

Resolution 23, "Whereas, there are at present hundreds of men languishing in the jails for no other crime than that they had the courage of their convictions, be it therefore resolved that this Convention of the Alberta Federation of Labor demands the release of all political prisoners and be it further resolved that this convention approve the calling of a general strike within 60 days should other means fail to secure the ends sought and that a copy of this resolution be sent to the Minister of Justice at Ottawa; to the Trades and Labor Executive; to the Western Conference to be held in Calgary and to all Central Labor bodies in Canada."

Resolution 27 "Whereas, the most momentous issue to be decided by the working class of the world is the stand to be taken by them in regard to the Russian and German revolutions, it matters not in what quarter of the globe you may dwell, or to what form of Government you are subject, the mighty revolution which is gradually enveloping the whole of Europe will largely determine

your conditions of existence for the next generation. The war between opposed Imperial interests has ceased; the suddenness of its collapse being due to the Social Revolution which, starting in Russia gradually found its way into Austria and finally Germany. Those who were expecting at any moment to be called upon to don the khaki and face the ghastly horrors of twentieth century wholesale slaughter, owe a deep debt of gratitude to those splendid Russian revolutionists. Millions of soldiers on the battle fronts of Europe owe their lives to the glorious victory of the Russian working people. Are we prepared to repay that debt by extending to Russia the hand of fellowship in such a manner as will frustrate the nefarious designs of organized international capitalists? Throughout the long years of this brutal blood fest it has been unceasingly proclaimed from press, pulpit and platform "that we must crush German despotism and make the world safe for democracy." Millions of men heard and believed, and today are rotting under the battlefields of France and Flanders. Have they been betrayed? If not, why are those chiefly responsible for the overthrow of the German ruling class being vilified by our Government controlled Press? Why are the Allied nations supporting counter-revolutionary forces in Russia? Why do our Government agents mouth much of "Self-determination" while every means is taken to undermine and handicap the Soviet administration in Russia? The working class is bewildered by these contradictions and although instinctively inclined to support the social revolution which has developed so mightily, it nevertheless hesitates after reading the poisonous propaganda of the Allied Governments. Hesitation is fatal, as the unceasing campaign of calumny can have but one purpose, the working class endorsement of the Capitalistic Class design to throttle the Socialist Republics of Russia and Germany. The aspirations of organized labor as embodied in the preamble to the Alberta Federation of Labor Constitution, "the social ownership and control of the means of production, transportation and distribution" are now taking material shape under the Soviet administration, and we are challenged either to renounce our principles or take such action as will save them from becoming meaningless phrases. Therefore be it

RESOLVED, that this convention of the Alberta Federation of Labor places itself on record as being in full accord and sympathy with the aims and purposes of the Russian and German revolutions, and further be it

RESOLVED, that this convention give the incoming Executive full power to call a general strike should the Allies persist in their attempt to overthrow the Soviet administration in Russia or Germany or in any country in which it is or may be established, and further be it,

RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the Western Conference to be held in Calgary for their endorsement and co-operation and further be it,

RESOLVED, that copies of this resolution be sent to all central labor bodies throughout Canada.

Resolution 28, "Whereas, since the formation of the Alberta Federation of Labor, its legislative achievements are not sufficient to justify its existence, and

WHEREAS, the obtainment of demands depends upon our numerical strength and what is vastly more important, the cohesion of our forces, and

WHEREAS, the present form of labor organization is a serious obstacle to the united action that circumstances at any time or place dictate, be it therefore

RESOLVED, that this convention of the Alberta Federation of Labor endorse the principle of "Industrial Unionism" and instruct the Executive to initiate and put into operation a system of educational propaganda that will facilitate the early adoption of this principle by all Trade Unions within its jurisdiction.

Also in the officers report a resolution for industrial unionism was carried unanimously and every trade unionist there knew full well that if same was carried out, which by their endorsement they expected to be enforced, that meant the breaking away from their

Mr. Plant
from Mr. Ham