

Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press

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A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER.

NATIONAL RAILWAYS AND LABOR COSTS.

THROUGH the Minister of Railways and Canals the Canadian Government has endorsed the charges of the Canadian Lumbermen's Association, the Retail Lumbermen's Association, the Grain Growers' Company, the United Farmers of Alberta, and many other similar organizations, that the McAdoo award is responsible for the deficit of the Canadian National Railways. The Minister of Railways and Canals, for reasons best known to himself, makes the bald statement that the increase in operating costs of the national railways is due to increased wages. He says nothing of inefficient management, which, in our opinion, is more responsible than any other cause. The workers of this country have consistently and insistently demanded that the employees be given a voice in the management of the national railways. The present Prime Minister and his predecessor, made a solemn pledge to the workers that this would be the policy of the Government. Up to the present this has not been done. However, Dr. Reid says, not one word about management in his remarks, which follow:

"The cost of operation of railways, not only in Canada but in the United States, has increased so tremendously in the last two or three years that, in my judgment, it is hindering or preventing the future development of our country, and unless some means are taken to decrease the cost of operation of our railways, the development of our country will continue to be hindered. The development of this country and the United States has been hindered by what is called the McAdoo award in fixing the wages of railway employees. Some action must be taken, and I think the railway employees themselves should look into this matter and endeavor to adjust matters in such a way that development in this country will not be hindered on account of the enormous cost operation of railways as is the case at the present time."

Mr. L. L. Peltier, Canadian legislative representative of the Order of Railway Conductors, in discussing the utterances of the Minister of Railways and Canals, said:

"We should take our own medicine and not blame the McAdoo award at all. Wages in Canada on the railways had to be raised when they were. If they are too high now then a special committee should be appointed by the Government to go fully into the matter. At any rate let us cut out this loose talk. There is altogether too much of it. No reason exists why any one should work for the Government for less money than for outside concerns. Then consider the railway employee. If rates are boosted on account of wages, does not the railway employe pay his part every time he buys anything shipped in by freight? As I said before, if the rates are too high let the Government appoint a commission and go into the matter. But do not let us blame the McAdoo award for the state of affairs. Wages were raised in Canada for railway employes on a purely voluntary pronouncement from the Government. Whatever we do, let us cut out this loose talk."

When speaking in the House of Commons, recently, the Hon. T. A. Crear offered the suggestion to the Government that there should be a new valuation and a reorganization of the Canadian National Railways. The statements of the Minister of Railways and Canals prove conclusively that something must be done in regard to this important question. Certainly railroad employes are entitled to the same consideration as workers on privately owned roads. This being so, just so soon as Canada considers this question from a national standpoint, instead of a political one, will the question be settled to the satisfaction of Canada.

BRITISH BYELECTION RESULTS.

IN three recent byelections in Great Britain, results of which were announced during the past week, the British Labor Party were successful in two of the constituencies. The Dudley byelection is of particular interest to Canada. The British Government has placed an embargo on Canadian cattle, against which the Canadian farmers protested. The Minister of Agriculture, Sir Arthur Griffith Boscawen, stood by the embargo and the Labor candidate advocated its suspension. The electors supported the Labor candidate, and the result is taken by the British press as a true expression of opinion on this question. While the embargo on Canadian cattle was one of the issues before the people, the Government's unemployment proposals were kept in the forefront by the Labor supporters, and just before the election the Times said: "If the Labor Party should defeat the Minister of Agriculture in Dudley it would be because of its candidate's insistence on the need of the Government taking more vigorous measures to deal with the unemployed problem."

The Labor Party scored a signal victory in the Kirkcaldy byelection. In this campaign the unemployment proposals of the Government were condemned, and the question was made the one of paramount importance by the Labor Party.

No doubt the success of the Labor Party in securing the electors' support on its unemployment proposals will have some effect on the Government. More consideration will be given to the workers' policy. The Labor Party unsuccessfully attempted, during the early days of the present session, to have its proposals embodied in a Government measure on the question. A private bill has since been introduced by one of the Labor members to meet the workers' wishes. Just

POLITICS AND PEOPLE THROUGH THE TELESCOPE OF LABOR

By J. A. P. Haydon.

In the first division of the present session of the House of Commons, the Government came out even more successfully than was anticipated. A majority of 25 was obtained on the adoption of the speech from the throne. Debate on this subject went on uninterrupted since the opening of Parliament on February 14 until early Friday morning. It took 591 pages of Hansard to record the speeches of the various members. During the past week three speeches worthy of note were delivered. Dr. Michael Clark, Red Deer, made a passionate appeal for free trade. Hon. Hugh Guthrie, Minister of Militia, sang the song of protection, and Mr. Maharg, Manitoba, preached the "farmers' interests."

Dr. Michael Clark's address, whether one believes in his doctrine or not, was one of the best ever delivered and interesting of all the addresses delivered. He has a grasp of economic unknown to most of the present members of the House of Commons. He is sincere in his declarations and his policy is one of advancement. He read extracts from a report of Mr. Ernest Hodder Williams, a publicist in Britain, who visits the United States each year, in which conditions in the steel industry of the United States were revealed. He challenged any man to go to Britain and find conditions of labor that will far exceed those existing in the great Steel Corporation of the United States. Speaking of the tendency of the political times, in which more than the two old parties were contending the constituency, he said:

"If elections are going to take place in this country under conditions such as have prevailed recently, we are going to be faced with conditions under which consequences will be very generally represented by minority members. We are living in times when changes are very rapid, and may easily become too rapid, and one great advantage of proportional representation is that it would give you some guarantee of having in each succeeding Parliament a fair proportion of men who have attained their political knowledge and political position by constant service, year after year, in the House of Commons. I think it

is desirable that men of a certain size in our public life should be retained for the public service, whether they call themselves Liberals, Tories or Progressives."

Hon. Hugh Guthrie defended the administration and paid his respects to the free trade policy of the Agrarian Party. He stated that in all the machinery catalogues in the publications of the United Grain Growers' Company there was not a single implement or article of Canadian manufacture. He stated that the only way to correct the adverse balance of trade and keep our exchange from going lower and lower was to increase the duties on the United States more goods and cease buying so much from the republic to the south. Mr. Crear, in his address, pointed out that we should trade more and more with the United States, and with this policy the Government was entirely disagreed. Mr. Guthrie chided the Liberals for having no tariff policy and the Farmers for "talking in the language of a trade union minute and not of free trade."

Very serious allegations were made against Canadian manufacturers by Mr. John A. Maharg. He said: "The prime reason why farmers' companies are dealing in American implements is that the Canadian manufacturers absolutely refuse to sell any kind of implement to the Farmers' co-operative companies." Mr. Maharg claimed extensively of the opinion that wages and wages alone, are responsible for increased freight and express rates. Mr. Maharg's speech was for the farmers, first, last and all the time. Like the leader of the Agrarian party, he desired more and more trade with the United States.

After Hon. Hugh Guthrie had concluded his address, the Government was anxious to have a division on the amendment of Mr. Klag and the sub-amendment of Mr. Campbell. The official Opposition (the National Liberal party) was not ready and the debate continued until Friday morning. The Government did not put up speakers and the debate was continued by the Liberals and the Farmers. Just before the vote was taken, Mr. Donald Nicholson,

what action the British Government will take in the matter remains to be seen, but the Labor Party has been successful in securing popular opinion. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, one of the best known of British Labor men, was unsuccessful in Will Crooks' constituency. The British press states that "the seat would probably have been won by an average trade unionist, but MacDonald's pacifist record during the war largely damaged his chances." His opponent was the recipient of the much-coveted Victoria Cross during the late war. Unlike the byelections of Dudley and Kirkcaldy the unemployment question was not an issue. The problems of war and peace were the chief topics, and as the Supreme Council was in conference at the time with the delegates of the Central Powers at the Savoy Hotel, many of the electors were of the opinion that a defeat of the Government candidate might be interpreted by the German delegates as a lack of confidence in the administration. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald would be an asset to the British Labor Party in the House of Commons, and it is quite probable that a seat will be found for him in the near future.

The three byelections are indeed encouraging to the workers and the recent declarations of such men as Thomas, Clynes and Barnes that "the British workers can secure through constitutional means that which they fail to secure through direct action" are receiving the support of all classes.

ONE MAN ONE VOTE.

THE Labor group in the Ontario Legislature were unsuccessful in its efforts to have legislation enacted to limit electors to one vote in municipality, despite property holdings. The bill was introduced by Mr. K. K. Homuth, South Waterloo, and was defeated by a vote of 34 to 13. The count found the House split all ways on the issue. Labor members voted for the bill almost in a body. C. F. Swayze, Niagara Falls, alone of the Labor group voted against. Premier Drury, Attorney-General Raney, Hon. Walter Rollo, Hon. Harry Mills and Hon. H. C. Nixon voted with the "yeas," and Provincial Treasurer Smith and Hon. F. C. Biggs voted with the "nays." Of the Liberals, J. W. Curry, Southeast Toronto, and N. Asmusen, North Waterloo, voted with the "nays," while the Conservatives voted unanimously against the proposed measure. U.F.O. members split into two camps.

No valid reason was advanced against the proposal. We well remember when the late Allan Studholme sat in the Ontario Legislature and was unable to secure a seconder to the workers' proposals, yet today much of the legislative reform for which he struggled has found its way onto the statute books of Ontario.

One man one vote is true democracy, and the workers of Ontario will continue the demand for this reform.

THE OPTIONAL PLAN AGAIN.

READERS of the Canadian Labor Press are well acquainted with the "Optional Plan of Employment," the cloak under which the Canadian "open-shoppers" are hiding. The annual convention of the Ontario Builders' and Supply Association at Stratford, recently, adopted a resolution providing for this "plan" in all trade agreements. Workers will tolerate no "plan" or scheme which has for its object the destruction of the trade union movement. Labor insists on true industrial democracy.

Queen's, P. E. I. spoke from the Government benches.

The Government undertook on Friday afternoon to answer many of the questions on the order paper. The private bill of Mr. McMaster was read.

During the week a deputation of representatives of the employees of the Toronto shipyards visited Hon. T. A. Crear and Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King relative to the dispute between the employees of the shipyards and the Dominion Government. The whole question was laid before the leader of the Opposition and Mr. William Duff, Lunenburg, has asked an order of the House: "For a copy of all agreements, contracts, correspondence, both letters and telegrams, and all other documents, which have passed between the Government of Canada, especially between the Prime Minister, the Minister of Labor, and Minister of Marine and the president of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, secretary of Toronto Trades and Labor Council, and the Labor organizations connected with the shipbuilding industry, with regard to the dispute between the employees of the men previously or at present employed by the Dominion Shipbuilding Company; also all tenders, contracts, correspondence, both letters and telegrams, in connection with the building of certain ships at present under construction in the yards of the Dominion Shipbuilding Company at Toronto."

Many other questions relative to the work at the Dominion Shipbuilding Company, also all tenders, contracts, correspondence, both letters and telegrams, in connection with the building of certain ships at present under construction in the yards of the Dominion Shipbuilding Company at Toronto.

Mr. P. J. A. Cardin, Richelieu, is asking "why were a number of workmen in the Sorel shipyards recently discharged? He also asks when will operations at the Sorel shipyards be resumed?" It will be remembered that this question came before the Windsor Convention of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada.

Other questions being asked in which the workers of Canada are interested include the following: By Mr. Michael Steele, South Perth, who asks "how many strikes occurred in 1913, 1914, 1919, and 1920? What was the total number of working days lost through strikes in each of these years? What was the estimated loss in wages in each year on account of strikes?" Mr. Chas. G. Power, South Que-

bec, seeks information concerning "the amount of money expended by the Federal Government on unemployment relief in the Cities of Toronto, Montreal, and Quebec, and through what agency were these amounts distributed, and what was the cost of distribution?" The same questions were asked in the Senate and the Minister of Labor replied that up to the present no money had been expended as none of the cities mentioned had submitted to the Government a statement as to the amount of relief granted in the respective localities.

Information concerning a practice, against which the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada protested, is being sought by Mr. Frank S. Carlin, Pontiac. The member for Pontiac asks eight questions in all, dealing with a recent visit of Commissioner Perry of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, to England, and asks "were recruits for the R.C.M.P. brought from England and if so how many?" He asks also "if efforts were made to secure these recruits in Canada, and what is the difference between the Mounted Police and a standing army?" On Friday afternoon the Minister of Justice stated that 78 Mounted Police were sent to Toronto, Ont., on the request of the Attorney-General of the Province of Ontario.

Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, Maisonneuve, on Thursday afternoon asked that "in view of the release of three prisoners from Stony Mountain Penitentiary, would the Minister of Justice lay on the table of the House at the earliest moment the papers in connection with that release? I refer to the gentlemen who were sent to jail in connection with the Winnipeg strike."

Mr. Hon. C. J. Doherty, Minister of Justice, replied: "I am not aware that any gentlemen were released; I shall make inquiry. I understand that they served their time. I may say that the immediate dealings with those matters is at present in the hands of the acting Solicitor-General, Mr. Guthrie. I may also add that it is a well established practice of the House that papers with regard to releases under the Ticket-of-Leave Act should not be brought down to the House except, perhaps, in some exceptional cases. I do not think it is necessary to go into the reasons for that practice—reasons which Parliament has accepted on numerous occasions. However, if there be any papers relating to these cases, I will examine them and see whether there are any which should be brought down."

MRS. PHILIP SNOWDEN BELIEVES RUSSIA WILL EMERGE FROM BOLSHIEVISM

After Spending Six Weeks in Russia on a Tour of Investigation Mrs. Snowden Found no Good in the Soviet System of Government—Let Russia Clean up Situation.

MANCHESTER, England.—The handful of Communists who attended Mrs. Philip Snowden's lecture on Russia at the Whitworth Hall of the Manchester University, showed very distinct signs of annoyance as the lecturer proceeded to outline, in clear and unmistakable language, the effects of the Communist regime in Russia. The lecture, which was arranged by the university authorities and the Manchester branch of the League of Nations Union, was very well attended, and amongst the audience could be seen men and women prominent in business, religious, political and educational circles. During her six weeks' visit to Russia as a member of the Labor and Trades Union mission, Mrs. Snowden had no good to say of the Soviet system. She said that she began her lecture by dealing with the stories of the "nationalization of women" and the "hordes of Chinese coolies," two stories which she made a special effort to investigate. Of the first she found not one scrap of evidence to support it; the women in Russia, she said, are at least equal to men in strength, and she said anyone with any judgment at all, imagine you could indict a whole nation of women in that way? As to the second story, she said that although she visited all the big cities in the Volga basin as far east as Astrakhan, she never saw a single Chinaman.

These "stories" out of the way, Mrs. Snowden proceeded to outline the condition of Russia as she found it; a state of affairs which was damaging enough, she said, with her being told about it. Atrocities there undoubtedly were, but these were not confined to one side. She had met people who trembled at the name of Koltchak. Atrocities always had accompanied revolution, and that was why she was unflinchingly opposed to revolution. She had come to the conclusion that Russia was cheap in Russia and neighboring countries; cheaper than it had been until recent times in this country.

Appalling Conditions. The condition of the people in the big towns which Mrs. Snowden visited was appalling. She had conversed with an eminent professor whose toes were sticking through his boots, while at one big reception she saw a woman wrapped up in a sable coat, but with bare feet. An opera singer sang to them with his knees showing through his trousers. Everywhere the people seemed to be miserably hungry, and the Soviet Government, with all its rationing affects, was only able to provide the people with one-third of the necessary bread. "I don't know how bread, too, black, which could be found in bits of straw and clay. In the country the peasants had food, perhaps more than they needed under the Tsarist regime, but they were not producing enough for their own immediate wants, for they did not see why they should supply food to a government which paid in an almost worthless currency.

In Russia, as in a great part of Europe, the social problem was therefore, shaping itself into a chasm between the town and country, between light and darkness; between ideals and the negation of ideals. "If the country exceeded the needs of progress would be hindered and anarchy would spread over Europe. The Communist leaders had destroyed capitalism in one sense; but they had created it in another, for they had been compelled to give the land to the peasants in accordance with their promises, and today there were 25,000,000 capitalists in Russia who were determined to hold the land they had got.

Mrs. Snowden next proceeded to

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