

CANADIAN LABOR PRESS

A National, Sane Labor Paper

True Confidence and Understanding Between Employer and Employee Absolutely Necessary to Industrial Peace.

VOL. V. \$1.00 Per Year. National and Rational TORONTO, ONT., MONDAY, JUNE 16th, 1924. Live News and Views Single Copies 5c. No. 31.

Canada's Woollen Industry is Seriously Threatened

Ruinous Competition of Foreign Wools Under Decreased Customs Tariff and Depreciated Exchange Rates Has Caused Serious Situation

By E. Stanley Bates

Another feature of competition from the imported articles is the merchandising value of the word "imported." It seems that this word has a tantalizing effect on buyers. Moreover, the trip to England and the Continent for buyers of merchandise at the expense of their firms is a very pleasant one. Purchases have to be made to justify these trips. Prior to sailing these buyers have usually investigated the offerings of domestic lines, obtaining prices and samples. Over these, they scour the markets. The orders look mighty good to the British mills to-day. It is a buyer's market. They obtain exclusive rights for Canada of certain lines from smaller manufacturers, substitute fabrics are obtained, novelties of styles and qualities are purchased, and in the great merchandising game at home they put these goods over, using the imported flavor for all it is worth.

These are serious considerations for the domestic manufacturer. He is compelled by the limitations of his market to concentrate on staple lines. Heretofore, that market has been pretty much his own. But this past few years the British goods have gotten into it as well.

Interesting Figures

The extent of the increased importations of these wools from the United Kingdom since the lowering of the tariff is shown clearly by the figures taken from the Government returns. Customs duties were reduced in June, 1922, and again in May, 1923, on the following items when imported from the United Kingdom:—

Overcoatings: The quantity imported during the eight months ending November, 1923, was 25,119 yards, compared with 123,134 yards in the corresponding period in 1922, an increase of over 100 per cent. Imports from the United Kingdom increased by 126,688 yards during this period.

Tweeds: The 1923 importations amounted to 2,914,827 yards compared with 1,741,812 yards in 1922, an increase of over 67 per cent. British imports accounted for 1,210,942 yards of this increase.

Women's and Children's Dress Goods, imported in the grey: 1923, 2,102,228 yards; 1922, 2,312,546 yards.

Imports from France in 1923 amounted to 332,156 yards compared with 111,539 yards in 1922.

Blankets: 1923, 109,936 pairs; 1922, 48,492 pairs; an increase of over 112 per cent.

In the case of wool hosiery the total quantity imported during the calendar year 1921 amounted to 234,789 dozen pairs. During the first nine months of 1922 importations amounted to 343,150 dozen pairs, and during the same period last year they amounted to 530,351 dozen pairs. Cheap woollen hosiery made in Great Britain from cheap Continental spun yarn has flooded this market during the past year. On the basis of actual poundage offerings of this hosiery have been noted here at prices below the cost of the yarn based on English quotations. Surely that is dumping, yet thousands of dozens have been imported without restriction.

The foregoing facts in regard to existing conditions in the woollen industry give some idea of the difficulties confronting our woollen manufacturers. Several large mills have been forced out of business. Few are operating profitably. The situation is steadily growing worse. As already stated, consumption of woollen goods in Canada shows no decline. The increased importations are altogether responsible. Tariff reductions and our failure to protect domestic producers against the competition from countries whose currency is depreciated in outside markets are the cause of these increases. There might be some reason for our present policy if Canadian consumers were receiving any benefit in lower prices. But such is not the case. Any advantage there might be is being absorbed by importers. It is causing a very direct national loss in production and wages.

\$70,000,000 Capital Involved

The woollen and knit goods manufacturing industries in Canada have a combined capital investment of \$70,619,580. The industry is capable of employing some 17,833 workers on salary and wages. Total salaries and wages paid in 1920 amounted to \$15,410,836. The value of production in 1920 amounted to \$77,378,001. The industry is most conservatively capital-

Anxious to Earn the Union Label

Markets in England and Australia Demand It, Employers Find

An interesting situation in the lumbering industry was made known at a recent meeting of the Vancouver Trades and Labor Council, when it was stated that some of the Vancouver woodworker employers had approached the council to learn how their plants could use the union label. It was said that the markets in England and the Antipodes for sashes and doors insisted on the goods bearing the union label.

The Carpenters' Union will endeavor to solve the matter in cases where the interested shops are not unionized. One delegate suggested that to properly earn the union label there should be a straight union connection from the felling of the tree right through the loggers, the mills, the towboats and on to the purchasers. This, it was held by others, was impractical. Another urged that Chinese, Japanese and Hindus be admitted in the unions.

The Dominion fair-wage officer notified the council of the recent federal order-in-council making more clear the powers of the minister of labor re-

We cannot give our money to foreign countries and have it too! Neither will foreign countries pay our taxes and immense overhead expenses. So why take chances? Protect Canadian industries and Canadian industries will protect Canada.

effective means for lightening this burden is the encouragement of national prosperity. Over 50 per cent. of the agricultural produce of Canada is consumed in Canada. This consumption in large part takes place in the urban centres. Prosperous cities and smaller industrial centres provide the most attractive markets for our agricultural produce. If domestic protection was being given an adequate protection and the increased importations only were being made in Canada, producers would be in a better position than they are to-day. This protection applies not only to the woollen and other industries, but to agriculture as well. Protection should be granted to the wool growers of this country. Millions of dollars worth of bacon, vegetables and fruits are imported into Canada annually that should be produced here. Such production in Canada would assist greatly in the prosperity of our farmers.

(The End)

garding the application of the fair-wage clause in agreements.

The council endorsed the Canada Labor Party and affiliated with it.

A committee composed of Delegates Scribblers, Pettipiece and Bengough was selected, with power to add to the number, to appear before the City Council and protest against the contracting of the service at comfort stations; also to endeavor to ascertain the attitude of the City Council toward day or contract labor in connection with the expenditures of moneys of proposed by-laws. Delegates voiced very strong opposition to the proposal to charge a fee for use of the wash basins in the comfort stations.

A delegate with a sense of humor said there was a lost owner on the waterfront. When endeavoring to settle the fair-wage conditions of work being done on the trestle at the Spiller job the representative of the Pacific Construction Company told the labor men the work was being done by Spillers. The representative of the latter company said this was not right, the work was being done by the Harbor Board. That board, when approached, denied that it was doing the work. Meantime the work has proceeded to completion.

"Who owns it?" asked the delegate.

"Harry Gale," replied a voice.

Two voices, long silent in Trades Council matters, were again heard in the discussions at the meeting. J. Kavanagh, once a prominent leader in the council, and active there when the break-up came some years ago, was admitted as a delegate from the Hodcarriers' Union. V. R. Midgely, once secretary of the council, was admitted as delegate of the Lathers' Union.

How to Safeguard Peace

If you want peace, prepare, not for war, but for peace. This seems to be the leading idea underlying the agreement which was recently concluded at Stockholm of the four northern states, Denmark, Norway, Sweden and Finland. The agreement provides that any cases of dispute arising between these countries which cannot be settled by diplomatic means, is to be submitted to arbitration.

Since war between the northern states seems to be out of the question, some might be inclined to doubt the importance of this agreement. But no one can deny that the northern states are pointing the way which must be trodden, if the idea of guaranteed international peace is ever to take practical shape. Recent experience has shown that the way chosen by the northern states, the way of limitation of armaments and of arbitration, is the one which must be adopted.

Labor Organization in Canada, 1923

Annual Report Issued by Department of Labor Shows a Slight Gain in Trade Union Membership—Decrease in Payments for Benefits by Trade Unions

The figures, published in the Thirtieth Annual Report on Labor Organization in Canada, covering the calendar year 1923 which has just been issued by the Department of Labor, indicate a check in the recession in trade union membership in the Dominion which has continued during the three-year period from 1920 to 1922. Although the year 1923 shows a loss of 25 in all classes of local branches, the combined membership increased by 1,471, the number of branches standing at 2,487 and the membership at 278,092. The trade union system in Canada is composed of (1) local branches of international organizations, (2) non-international bodies and their local branches, (3) independent units, and (4) national and Catholic unions. There are 94 international organizations with branches in Canada, and between them they represent 2,079 subordinate lodges, with a combined reported membership of 203,843. The figures indicate that there are two more international organizations operating in the Dominion than were recorded in 1922, and that the local branches have decreased by 29 and the membership by 2,207. There are eighteen of what are termed "non-international" organizations, the same number as recorded in 1922, with a total of 378 local branches and a reported membership of 34,315, a gain in branches of six and in members of 11,342. The independent units number 24, a loss of one, the reported total membership being 9,934, an increase of 871. The unions designated as "National and Catholic" number 106, the same as in 1922, but the membership, which was reported at 20,000, shows a decline of 8,335. Although the international organizations show a small loss, this group represents approximately 73 per cent. of the total trade union following in the Dominion. The membership of all classes of organized labor in Canada, as reported to the Department for the past thirteen years, has been as follows:

1911	133,132
1912	160,120
1913	175,799
1914	166,163
1915	143,343
1916	160,407
1917	204,630
1918	248,587
1919	378,047
1920	373,842
1921	313,230
1922	276,621
1923	278,092

The above figures speak for themselves. I have before me as I write the report of the proceedings of the Trades and Labor Congress, held in the city of Vancouver last year. Resolution No. 35 is the resolution on Canadian Autonomy, which was lumped together with the resolution on Amalgamation, by the resolution committee and made a thing of "shreds and patches."

This resolution stated in part that: "There has been, since the inception of trade unionism in Canada, an ever present demand, fluctuating between mild protest and open revolt, for a larger degree of Canadian Autonomy in the growing struggle between capital and labor in Canada; and, whereas, the friction inevitably arising from this unfortunate situation creates dissension, expulsions, secession and a progressive demoralization of our movement sapping its strength and leaving it a weak, impotent weapon for working class action."

Since the Congress, the supporters of Autonomy for our trade union movement, have been charged with an attempt to disrupt, destroy and weaken industrial organization in Canada.

These supporters have endeavored to get at the facts, analyze them and determine what steps should be taken to prevent further demoralization and division, and what additional steps are necessary to build up and strengthen the trade union movement.

There is the alternative of course, adopted by our staunch "internationalists" (?) of burying their heads in the sand, letting things go hang, and shouting "liar" and "disrupter" to any who endeavor to arouse the workers from their sleeping sickness.

The figures quoted above are about as reliable as can be had, and to those who know of the close connections between the international officers and the Federal administration, it can be taken for granted that the internationalists got their fair show.

In spite of the fact that two more international organizations are operating in Canada than in 1922, membership in the internationalists has decreased by over two thousand. This is a small number it is true, approximately one per cent. decrease. The fact of outstanding importance is, however, that the so-called "non-internationalists" have increased in membership by over eleven thousand, representing an increase of over forty-five per cent. These

unions do not include the church or Catholic unions, which report a loss of over eight thousand.

We have maintained that the craft unions are weak, impotent things, and that they are fast degenerating into sick and death benefit associations. We have maintained that to overcome this the unions must be transformed into industrial unions, through the process of amalgamation of the crafts, inside a given industry, so that the workers can cope with the development of industry and the power of capital, to the end that the unions will become fighting instruments of struggle.

Here again the Communist or the left-winger is charged with causing the workers to lose confidence in trade unionism and held responsible for the workers leaving the unions. We should treat the unions as we do a sick friend whom we know is on the road West; in order to cheer him up we tell him that he seems to be improving and is looking much better.

The following statistics prove conclusively that our case is built on facts, not fiction. Almost twice as much has been spent on death and sick benefits as has been spent on fighting the boss. If the report had only been supplemented with the figures for officers' salaries, the picture would have been complete.

Expenditures for Benefits by Trade Unions

The report also gives figures showing the disbursements made by labor organizations for benefit purposes. Of the 94 international organizations operating in Canada, 62 made payments for one or more benefits, the combined expenditure amounting to \$24,176,941, the disbursements for each class of benefit being as follows:

Death Benefits	\$11,833,222
Unemployed and travelling benefits	\$1,291
Strike Benefits	\$3,542,000
Sick and Accident benefits	1,326,633
Old age pensions and other benefits	2,338,795

Five of the non-international organizations reported having disbursed \$42,235 for benefit purposes, a larger sum by 1,665 than that previously disbursed for benefits in any one year by the head offices of the non-international organizations, however, is \$2,201,788 less than the disbursements made in 1922.

Labor Conflicts in Belgium in 1923

The new Government has learnt something from the fall of its predecessor, for the new Prime Minister has recently announced through the press that no change will be made in the existing legislation with regard either to the eight-hour day or to the laws against profiteering. But the reaction has not lost its claws, however. The very last act of Moyerseon, the minister of Labor and industry in the last cabinet, was to issue a decree, the sole object of which is to take the question of unemployment wholly out of the competence of the trade unions, and to transfer it to state officials. An unemployed person is under this decree compelled to accept work, whether or not he is paid trade union rates. The industrialists are also trying to make difficulties about the index figure. They declare that in many cases the workers consume cheap substitutes rather than good food (for instance, butter and meat) and therefore the index figure is really lower than the Government figures. This is the latest way of reducing the index figure, and therefore of lowering wages.

To Rid Labor of Unclean Element

Ways and means of ridding the labor movement of an element which Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, described as "unclean" were discussed at the recent executive session of the A. F. of L. executive. The matter came up in course of consideration of a dispute in New York City between hod carriers and building laborers and the Building Trades Council. The element Mr. Gompers described as

"prejudicial to the interests of the industry, the workmen and the contractors," but he refused in handing out the official report of the meeting after the morning session to specify as to the nature of this element.

William Green, secretary of the United Mine Workers of America, representing some 650,000 miners in North America, reported on the mining industry of the United States and Canada. The industrial situation both in the Dominion and in the United States, he reported, had improved somewhat, a greater degree of confidence being evidenced by reason of recently reached two-year agreements in the industry.

THE COMMUNIST "UNITED FRONT" IN GERMANY

There is little doubt that the conflicts within the unions between the adherents of the Socialist and Communist Parties will soon come to a head, and that the result will be an open rupture. Moscow gave the lead a month ago, and since then there has been much talk at Communist meetings and congresses of the need for "complete reconstruction" of the German trade unions under the leadership of the Communist Party. The Communist Party of Germany also has issued a manifesto pointing the same way. In this manifesto it is explicitly stated that "in the newly found organizations the good trade unionists, who often get the Communist Party into difficulties, must be kept out as much as possible. The chief thing is to have good Communist leaders, even if they are not skilled trade unionists." This is yet another example of Communist policy on the continent, that is to say, their conception of the "united front." Plans have already been made for an official congress to be held for this purpose this month.

Abitibi Wage Scale

The agreements between the Abitibi Power and Paper Company and the Labor unions for next year have been signed. With the exception of some minor points, the agreements are the same as last year, says the Brake Hustler.

This year's negotiations differ from former years in that the unions and the company dealt directly this year, and not, as in former years, simply as members of groups. International officers of the various unions sat in conference with the representatives.

The men feel satisfied with the agreement and the company as well.

Employers Liable for All Diseases

Quebec, Que.—Under the Quebec Workmen's Compensation Act, employers are not only liable for the death, in jury or lesions sustained by employees, but they are also liable under that law for diseases contracted in camps or lodgings used to accommodate their men.

Such was the decision rendered by Justice Gibson in the Superior Court, when he permitted Silva Perron and Edouard Gendron, two lumberjacks, to enter action for \$250 each against the Brown Corporation for damage said to result from typhoid fever, which they said they contracted while engaged in the camps of the company, in the northern section of Champlain County. Thirteen lumberjacks are alleged to have fallen ill this winter from typhoid and one of them died.

According to the two plaintiffs they contracted the disease from drinking water becoming polluted and they filed a petition to be permitted to take action under the Workmen's Compensation Act.