

Labor News From Coast to Coast

Meeting of Edmonton C.L.P.

Edmonton, Alta.—The last meeting of the Central Council of the Canadian Labor Party found a goodly number in attendance.

The question of unemployment took up a greater part of the evening. It was decided to support the formation of a Council of Unemployed representative of the whole of the labor movement; to present a lengthy resolution demanding that the Federal Government honor the Ottawa pact and assist with the 25% of relief appropriation.

The Labor Aldermen reported that they had moved for an appropriation of \$100,000 for unemployment relief in the City Council and had succeeded; that the Provincial Government had promised twenty-five per cent; that the City Council was pressing for the use of the Armories for the unemployed. The relief work was to be on a contract basis. The Labor representatives stated that they had opposed the contract system but had been outvoted.

A delegation of the unemployed workers addressed the meeting and entered a strong protest against the contract system.

Alderman Gibbs brought forward a strongly worded resolution condemning the action of the Federal Government in granting nearly seven million acres of land to the Hudsons Bay Company.

A resolution was introduced expressing thanks to the Provincial Government for the twenty-five per cent. appropriation for the workless.

United Farmers' Annual Meeting

Calgary, Alta.—The annual convention of the East and West Calgary U.F.A. constituency associations recently concluded its sessions. Many of the delegates were in a belligerent mood and passed several resolutions condemning the Greenfield Government in no uncertain manner. This criticism was the more important by virtue of the fact that last year the convention was distinctly harmonious.

Mr. Wood, then resident of the U.F.A. was present. He admitted that "there is not a shadow of doubt in my mind that we are facing a very serious situation, if not a crisis. But mind you, I am not saying that it is hopeless."

C. H. McFarquhar, the chairman, created a mild sensation among the delegates by his strong criticism of the U.F. of A. and the Greenfield Government. "I have every respect for H. W. Wood," he said, "but I have a greater respect for this organization. What is wrong with our organization is that we have a narrow-gauge outlook." He insisted that the farmers were afraid of criticism, and that this fear was going to put their organization on the scrap-heap. The question of the "ginger group" in the Ottawa House was the subject of a full dress debate between two farmer members—E. J. Gartland, M.P., and Alfred Speakman, M.P. William Irvine, the labor member for Calgary was also present and took a hand in the general discussion.

U.S. Tractors Sent to Russia

New York.—The second great shipment of American tractors to Russia went last month, according to arrangements made by Amtorg Trading Corporation, agents for the Russian state export and import bureau. The shipment was worth \$1,500,000. The first 600 tractors went to Odessa and the second 1,483 went to Novorossiok.

The New A.F. of L. President

New York.—William Green, secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers of America, was chosen president of the American Federation of Labor by the executive council of that body meeting here recently. The miners and carpenters were the leading supporters of Green in the council decision.

Green is 51 years old and resides at Coshocton, Ohio, and has been a member of the Democratic Party for years, having served two terms as state senator.

"The choosing by the executive council of the American Federation of Labor of William Green, to succeed Gompers as president of the A.F. of L. is highly significant of the future direction of the American labor movement," says Wm. Z. Foster, chairman of the Workers Party and secretary of the Trade Union Educational League, in a statement to the press recently.

"The council could have elected John L. Lewis if it had wished to do so. That it elected a miner indicates clearly that the machine of the United Mine Workers' Union has control. This being the case, Lewis would naturally and traditionally have been

first choice. He could, indeed, have claimed the honor for himself or prevented Green from getting it," said Foster.

Filipinos Denounce U.S. Syndicate

Washington.—Syndicated stories appearing in various parts of the country picturing the Filipinos as a semi-barbarous people are denounced as untrue and intended to delay the promise the United States has made to give the Filipinos their independence, in a statement by the Philippine press bureau.

In additional statements to be made public the next few days, it is announced, the interests that are exploiting the Filipinos and obstructing independence will be revealed, it is declared.

Russian Newspaper Statistics

Moscow.—There are 531 newspapers in the Russian Soviet Union, according to the press department, Central Committee of the Communist party. Of these 160 are dailies with a total circulation of nearly 3,000,000 copies. One hundred and fifteen are in non-Russian languages.

Of Russian editors, 20 p. c. are former newspapermen, 49 p. c. are revolutionary journalists and 40 p. c. are new men. There are also 25,000 worker correspondents writing for the Russian press while also working in factory or village.

British Bankers Give Soviet Loan

Moscow.—At the moment when English-Russian relations on the political field are strained the London banks, including some London branches of large American banks, have come to agreement with the State Bank of Russia for loans totaling tens of millions of rubles.

These are short term credits to finance Russian imports. The amounts are sufficient to play a significant role in the state budget for the year. These credits are not the long term loans which have been under discussion in the Anglo-Russian treaty for rebuilding Russian industry and agriculture. They are purely short term credits for financing trade.

R. R. Dispute Reaches Courts

Winnipeg, Man.—A dispute between a railway brakeman on the Canadian National Railway and the grievance committee of his union has reached the courts here. The brakeman, who belonged to Beaver Lodge No. 691, R. R. T., was suspended by the railway on a charge of having been drunk while on duty. The grievance committee of his lodge sustained the action of the railways. Later the brakeman persuaded the company to reinstate him, but the grievance committee refused to consent to his return. He then brought action against the committee, and the committee asked that the brakeman's claim should be struck out. The court, however, held that the brakeman had been "very harshly dealt with" and sent the case on for trial. "The strangest part of this controversy," said the judge, "consists in the fact that the railway company were quite willing to overlook the occurrence and take the plaintiff back, but for the active intervention and opposition raised by the defendants, whose duty it was under their own constitution, to assist a fellow-member in his effort to secure reinstatement."

Reduction in Wages Probable in U.K.

Reduction of British labor costs to capture foreign markets in the face of cheap foreign competition is about to produce a struggle which may make or break the independent Labor movements as a power in that country. The employing class, faced with a continued upward tendency of wages, insists that trade union conditions, including present wage levels, have become a serious handicap since the continent has gone over to longer hours and lower wages.

Wage changes in Great Britain in 1924, were predominantly upward. Increases affected 2,664,000 workers, the nine months ended September 30, bringing a rise of over \$2,500,000 a week in the country's total payroll. Decreases during the same period affected only 625,000 workers, cutting approximately \$350,000 from the weekly wage bill.

During the same period in 1923 there were net reductions totalling approximately \$2,350,000 in the weekly wages of 3,160,000 workers and net increases of somewhat more than \$1,400,000 in the weekly wages of 1,130,000 workers.

But with the temporary regularizing of the European situation, by the

Dunes Reparations plan and the number of unemployed workers not diminishing, there are signs that union demands and standards will meet stiffer opposition. There were 94,000 unemployed metal trades workers in September among those pressing for wage increases and 25,900 emigrated last year in search of a job. Altogether the number of unemployed in the insured trades September 22, 1924, was 1,240,045; or 10.8 p. c. of the total.

Included in this grand total of unemployed were 199,976 coal miners, 122,367 in the metal trades and iron foundries, 77,799 shipbuilders, 80,501 cotton-mill workers, 20,053 woollenmill workers, 21,508 tailors, 12,250 shoe workers, 70,412 building trades workers, 66,711 in the iron and steel industry and 85,805 in distributive trades.

Bad Year for U.S. Farmers

Washington.—Purchasing power of farm products in the United States is 18 p. c. below pre-war level, says the annual report of the department of agriculture. It is 10 p. c. higher now than in May, 1921, which was the lowest point in the deflation period. The gross income of agriculture dropped from \$15,800,000,000 in 1919 to \$9,500,000,000 in 1920. Since then the recovery has been slow. "In the main," says the report, "it may be said that the year 1925 will bring increased income to surplus grain-producing regions, to the corn belt, and possibly to the cotton states. The tobacco, fruit, vegetable and dairy producing states probably will not contribute much to the estimated increase in the gross agricultural income of the year.

"Income from agriculture has not in any year since the price decline of 1920 sufficed to allow both a commercial return on capital and adequate rewards for the farmers' labor, risk and management. Actual farm operators, after paying interest on borrowed capital and rent on rented farms, may earn approximately 2 p. c. on their own capital investment in the crop year 1924. This compares with a loss of 3.1 p. c. on capital investment in 1920 a loss of 1.4 p. c. in 1921, and a profit of 1.5 p. c. and 1.4 p. c. in 1922 and 1923.

"Farm purchasing power, as measured by the quantity of things for which a definite amount of agricultural commodities can be exchanged, has improved somewhat in the last 12 months. Although the index number of prices paid to producers for 30 farm products was the same in September, 1924, as in September, 1923, the price level of non-agricultural goods had declined. There was consequently an increase in purchasing power of farm products in terms of non-agricultural products. "Wheat crop returns show that the returns have been greater, for a less acreage, than last year, and the average price has been about \$1.15. Yet this does not give a bushel of wheat its pre-war purchasing power. A suit of clothes which cost a North Dakota farmer 21 bushels of wheat in July, 1913, would cost him 24 bushels in August, 1924. To equal the pre-war purchasing power, wheat should bring the farmer this year an average of \$1.40 a bushel.


"This report points out that reduced acreage, for both wheat and cotton, has been followed by better prices and more prosperity, although the reduction of cotton acreage has driven much of the labor supply out of the cotton belt. Warning is given the wheat farmers that Canada will continue to expand her grain production, and that Russia is bound to become again a factor in the export trade.

An Australian Mussolini?

Sydney, Australia.—A veiled threat to introduce a fascist dictatorship in Australia is made by the prime minister of Australia, S. M. Bruce, who says:

"The idea of a dictatorship of the six best brains in the land has occurred to me. Their task would be to evolve the lines on which the country could be developed to the best interests of the people."

While the law forbids the use of automobiles in Bermuda, there are now two motor vehicles, a light truck and a street sprinkler, both the property of the city of Hamilton.



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