

STARTLING AUDACITY OF FOLLOWERS OF SOVIET RUSSIA

INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION OF THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

By TOM MOORE
President, Trades and Labor Congress of Canada

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Who was re-elected President of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, at the convention held in Vancouver, B.C.

Whereas conditions of labor involving such injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people as to produce unrest so great that the peace and harmony of the world are imperilled and an improvement of these conditions is urgently required. So runs the preamble to Part XIII of the Peace Treaty which set up the International Labor Organizations of the League of Nations.

To carry out the ideals of the above declaration the International Labor Conferences are held once each year and are composed of four delegates from each of the fifty-four states which are members of the organization. Though Germany is not a member of the League of Nations, she was admitted to membership in the International Labor Organization at the first annual conference held at Washington, October-November, 1919. Of the four delegates from each country two represent the Government, one the employers and one the workers.

Decisions of the Conference are divided into three classes—

- (a) Draft conventions which require a two-third majority to be adopted and which must be accepted by the League without alteration.
- (b) Recommendations which merely lay down the broad lines which the states in each country should follow and are adopted at the annual conferences on a clear majority vote.
- (c) Resolutions which are adopted simply as suggestions to each country and are also adopted by majority vote of the conference.

Four annual conferences have been held—first Washington, 1919; second, Geneva, 1920; the latter two Geneva, 1921 and 1922, while the fifth annual conference is convened on October 22nd this year at Geneva.

The first conference adopted six resolutions dealing with—

- (1) The application of the principle of an eight hour day and a 48 hour week;
- (2) The question of preventing providing against unemployment;
- (3) The employment of women before and after childbirth;
- (4) The employment of women during the night;
- (5) The minimum age of employment of children in industry;
- (6) The night work of young persons employed in industry.

Six recommendations were adopted along with—

- (1) Public employment exchanges;
- (2) Reciprocity of treatment of migrant workers;
- (3) The prevention of anthrax;
- (4) The protection of women and children against lead poisoning;
- (5) Establishment of Government health services;
- (6) The application of the Berne Convention of 1906 on the prohibition of the use of white phosphorus in the manufacture of matches.

The Second Conference adopted two Draft Conventions concerning—

- (1) The age for admission of children to employment at sea;
- (2) Unemployment indemnity in case of loss or foundering of ship;
- (3) Facilities for finding employment for seamen;
- (4) Four recommendations were adopted concerning—

- (1) The limitation of hours of work in the fishing industry;
- (2) The limitation of hours of work in inland navigation;
- (3) The establishment of national women's codes;
- (4) Unemployment insurance for the reduction of hours of labor.

The Third Conference adopted two Draft Conventions concerning—

- (1) The right of association of agricultural workers;
- (2) Workmen's compensation in agriculture;
- (3) The minimum age of employment of children in agriculture;
- (4) The use of white lead in painting;
- (5) The minimum age of employment as trimmers and stokers at sea;
- (6) The medical examination of children and young persons employed at sea;
- (7) The weekly rest in industry.

Eight recommendations were adopted concerning—

- (1) The development of technical agricultural education;
- (2) The prevention of unemployment in agriculture;
- (3) Social insurance in agriculture;
- (4) Night work of children and young persons in agriculture;

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF WORKERS' PARTY OF CANADA PRINTED IN TORONTO BUT MOSTLY EDITED IN RUSSIA.

We are fed up and disgusted with the reading matter and articles to be found in "The Worker," a paper printed in Toronto by "The Workers Party of Canada," and supposed to espouse the cause of the Canadian workman, but in reality promoting the welfare of Soviet Russia, and they are bent upon spreading their Russian propaganda among Canadian workers. Why they should be so intent in their object to discredit Great Britain and Canada in the eyes of the citizens of the country, is more than we can fathom out. While we realize that the so called Workers' Party of Canada is comprised of nothing but a bunch of chronic agitators who are in ill-repute in Canadian labor circles, we think it is time a halt was called to their decidedly anti-Canadian tactics. "Don't bite the hand that is feeding you," would be a good motto for these gentry, and if they do not like Canada and Canadian ways, why waste their time and energy in endeavouring to show Canada in the light of an all-devouring beast oppressing her people.

The following is a sample editorial taken from the columns of "The Worker," issued on September 12th:

HANDS OFF WRANGLER ISLAND.

The Kept Press has fairly been revelling in the opportunity Alan Crawford's fate has afforded for the sob stuff that makes old ladies weep, send a lump to the throats of strong men, and causes the bosom of the profiteer to heave with pride. Another Britisher Dies for Far-Flung British Empire Upon Which Sun Never Sets. "Young Empire-Builders' Supreme Sacrifice in Selfless Service to British Ideals." And much more bunk and junk of the same order has filled the headlines when everybody but a crazy jingo of brainless knitter-of-socks-for-the-dear-boys-overseas knows that the onset of Steffanson and Crawford on Wrangler Island was one of the rawest grab stunts of recent British Imperialism. Take a look at the map and be convinced that Wrangler Island is a natural part of Russian Siberia to which it has also belonged politically since the expedition of Lieutenant Wrangel. Quite properly then Condrade Chicherin, People's Commissar of Foreign Affairs protested against the Steffanson-Crawford violation of Russian sovereignty to the British Foreign Office in the following terms:

"The Government of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics being wholly unable to understand the absence of the requested explanation, and having in the meantime learned that a new expedition is being planned by British subjects to the Isle of Wrangel, finds it necessary again to state that it regards the Isle of Wrangel as an integral part of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics."

The Soviet note reviews Lieutenant Wrangel's expedition and declares: "Russia's sovereign rights to the island have never been questioned by any other government, and it has been generally looked upon as Russian territory. Therefore the Federal Government is compelled to notify the British Government that it regards the raising of the British flag on the Isle of Wrangel as a violation of Russian sovereign rights."

The Wrangel Island incident is not yet closed. Steffanson, who acts as a British agent, will continue to beat the tom-tom of annexation. The only interest Canadian workers have in the crooked schemes of aggrandisement of the British Foreign Office is to protest against them with all their might.

The attempt to annex Wrangler Island is a sheer piece of piracy. An attack on Wrangler Island is an attack on the Russian Workers' Republic. Hands off Soviet Russia.

Nothing is too "rotten" for these radicals to say against Canada and Canadian employers, but we find in this same issue an editorial with respect to Sir Donald Mann's recent tour of Russia and the editorial commences with the words "Our own Donald has returned," and follows with an outline of the favorable impression that Sir Donald gained of Russia as it is today. No doubt Russia is everything they say it is, but why flaunt the cause of Russia here at the expense of Canada? And it is most peculiar that they denounce Canadian capitalists and Canadian employers all and sundry until one comes along who states that he has gained a favorable impression, and then the Workers' Party immediately call him "their own Donald." If Sir Donald Mann had not stated that he found conditions in Russia fairly satisfactory the Workers' Party would have been the first to condemn him along with all other Canadians.

LABOR AND INDUSTRY IN CHINA

Recent developments in China have focussed attention on labor and industrial conditions in that country. It is extremely difficult to obtain reliable information with regard to the facts of the situation, and the International Labor Office is fortunate in being able to publish in the July number of the International Labor Review, an authoritative article on labor and industry in China, by Mr. J. B. Taylor, the acting President of the Pekin University, and Miss W. T. Zung, a Y.W.C.A. worker in China who was a fraternal delegate to the Third International Labor Conference.

China is still in the early stages of her Industrial Revolution, but the changes associated with the introduction of modern methods of industry are taking place with rapidly growing momentum and some social problems connected with the transition are appearing in an acute form. Should her progressive industrialization continue, the number and character of her people and the extent and variety of her resources appear to make it inevitable that China will become one of the dominant factors in the world's industry. The world cannot afford to be indifferent to the course of her industrial development.

The industrial development of China has been much slower than that of Japan and has run on different lines. The Japan Government has encouraged, even initiated new enterprises, freely using foreign experts until their Japanese assistants had learned sufficient to carry on the business themselves, and then dispensing with the foreign help no longer needed. In China the Government has been reluctant to give the foreign expert a free hand and has consequently hampered the technical progress of his Chinese associates.

The premier Chinese industry—cotton spinning—has undergone a spectacular expansion in the last few years. Rapid progress is also being made in various branches of engineering, in electric installations, in flour mills, in the preparation of egg products, in printing works, oil pressing mills, cement works, match factories and other industrial enterprises.

According to the article referred to above, labor conditions in both the old and the new forms of industry are much below Western standards. Women and children are extensively employed and the hours of labor are long. In the textile industry a very large proportion of the operatives are women and children. Children of 8 years of age are employed in the textile mills and work equal hours with the adults. In the match factories very young boys are largely employed. In the textile mills twelve hour shifts are usual, but in the silk factories in Shanghai a working day of 14½ hours is stated to be quite common. In machine industries the hours are stated to be still frequently as much as 14 to 17 per day.

There were 70,000 fewer children born in France this year than last. The best and strongest young men who might have been the fathers of today, were slaughtered in the war.

OUR OVERSEAS COLUMN

USEFUL WORK VERSUS DEGRADING IDLENESS

Labour's Proposals for Dealing with the Immediate Needs of the unemployed now regarded as Efficient, Practical and Productive

By FRED BRAMLEY
(Assistant Secretary of the Trades Union Congress General Council).

For over three years, from one-and-a-half to two million men and women have been denied the right to work. The official records show that on May 27, 1921, the number registered at Labor Exchanges was 2,109,654, and a month later, June 24, 2,171,288. The level of about two million was again reached in January and February, 1922, and at other periods up to the present month has been consistently maintained at approximately one million and a half.

These figures do not include thousands of unemployed men and women who are not registered. The Unemployment Insurance Act covers less than 12,000,000, as compared with a total of nearly 115,000,000 wage-earners liable to be affected by unemployment.

During the three years of chronic unemployment the Labor forces have been actively engaged in an effort to rouse the public conscience and galvanize Governments into action. Special conferences, record demonstrations, manifestoes, elaborate reports, deputations to Prime Ministers and House of Commons debates—all these and other methods have been tried.

Labour's Proposals Endorsed.

It is not without interest to note that Sir Allan Smith and his colleagues accuse the Government of being "lacking in foresight and imagination." We endorse the impeachment but express no surprise that those who remained indifferent when unemployment reached the level of over 2,000,000, should become especially active when the number is reduced by over 600,000, and forthwith proceed to accuse others of being devoid of the necessary "foresight and imagination." It almost appears like the audacity of the new enthusiast.

We can, however, appreciate the mental attitude of Sir Allan Smith's Industrial Group, for they have evidently arrived at their conclusions subsequent to investigation and adoption of Labour's proposals for dealing with unemployment, over two years and a half after their publication.

These proposals, as contained in a special report submitted to, and adopted by a National Conference, called by the Labor Party and the Trades Union Congress Parliamentary Committee on January 27, 1921, constitute the most reliable and practical palliatives for dealing immediately with the unemployed problem.

Useful Work for All.

They are now being supported by supplementary information prepared by the Emergency Committee on Unemployment, appointed by the Parliamentary Labor Party. If adopted, they would provide work for skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled of both sexes, and in addition to substituting useful work for degrading idleness, would produce other results of immense social value.

The general adoption of Labour's proposals by the Industrial Group is due to their irresistible value as practical measures and not to a desire to assist the political or industrial ob-

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THE MOVER AND SECONDER AGREED TO THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE RESOLUTION.

A proposal from Leicester to reduce membership contributions was defeated.

Further resolutions from Middlesbrough to reduce the fees to Head Office to 1s. per head met with strong disapproval from the general secretary, who said "that the resolution should never have been brought."

The resolution was defeated.

Bargoed had a resolution asking the Executive to appoint a national organizer, but Conference preferred the amendment by the Executive, which empowered it to engage Mr. J. Hines, who has been an official of the union for 12 months, to do organizing work.

The Conference also turned down a motion by Manchester Women's Branch, urging that a woman national organizer should be appointed.

It was argued, in support of the motion, that if night work were abolished the employers would seek to reimburse themselves for expenditure on machinery by employing women at cheap rates.

Bath had a resolution declaring that no full-time official of the union should hold public office.

Mr. Wrencham (London) said a more tyrannical motion could not be put forward.

Only the mover voted for the resolution.

Mr. Marriott (Newport) moved a resolution viewing with alarm the number of cases of dermatitis, demanding an enquiry into the milling trade, and calling on the Ministry of Health to make inquiry with a view to getting a guarantee from the miller to the purchaser of purity.

Even now, he said, some members of Parliament thought the disease was due to cleanliness of labor, which was a libel on a respectable calling.

The matter was left to the Executive.

The Conference unanimously decided to adhere to the principle of endeavouring to obtain Parliamentary representation, and empowered the Executive to take the necessary steps.

It was decided to affiliate to the Baking Trades International, and the Conference appointed Messrs. W. Banfield and P. H. Brown to attend the Conference at Hamburg.

RAILWAY SHOPS CONTROVERSY

SEEKING CAUSE OF UNION DIVISIONS

N. U. R. REPLY TO A. E. U. LINES COMMITTEE'S NEW STATEMENT

The points which have arisen in connection with the wages and conditions of railway shopmen are the subject of a communication to us from the Lines Committee of the N. U. R.

Last week we published a statement from a member of the Executive Council of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, in which charges were made that the National Union of Railwaymen had been the cause of the division in the negotiations.

The N.U.R. Lines Committee, in its letter, controverts the A. E. U. statement that "the basis laid down by the N.U.R. for joint negotiations in effect means that the N.U.R. shall negotiate and control railway craftsmen."

Attention is drawn to the meetings held between the representatives of the N.U.R. and A.E.U. on January 25 and 26, and February 3, 1921.

At those meetings, it is observed, the president of the A.E.U. explained that the meeting was being held at the request of the N.U.R., owing to the refusal of the A.E.U. to take part along with the N.U.R. in the negotiations for railway shopworkers.

Where Unions Disagree.

At these meetings a general discussion took place on the policy and claims of the two organizations in regard to the skilled men in the railway shops, when the following proposal was submitted by the N.U.R.—

"That the N.U.R. is prepared to cooperate in the setting-up of a joint committee to consider the whole question of membership as between the N.U.R. and the A.E.U. immediately. Pending the decision of such committee, joint negotiations shall be commenced, and in view of the fact that the N.U.R. has a considerable number of craftsmen employed in the railway shops, the N.U.R. shall continue to represent all who are its members without prejudice to any future arrangements."

Continued on page 4.

WOMEN AND THE GERMAN TRADE UNIONS

Trade unionism among women in Germany has undergone a very marked development since the war. Whereas in 1914 the number of women organized in the German "free" trade unions was only 210,314 or 10 per cent of the total membership, in 1922 it had grown to 1,753,576, or over 21 per cent of the total membership of the "free" trade unions. Women form a similar proportion of the other trade union organizations.

Women workers in Germany generally receive lower wages than men—in most cases about two-thirds of the men's wages. A few collective agreements lay down that women's wages must not be less than 80 per cent of the men's. It is only in the small minority of cases that men and women receive equal pay. These cases are to be found almost exclusively in the textile and tailoring trades.

In theory, according to an article by Madame Gertrud Hanauer, member considers that this view is erroneous.

BAKERS DISCUSS WAGE OUTLOOK

Annual Conference Withholds Action on Agreement: Conditions Inquiry?

After discussion a resolution calling for the termination of the present wage agreement was withdrawn at the resumed conference of the Amalgamated Union of Operative Bakers, Confectioners and Allied Workers, at Worcester, yesterday.

The resolution put forward by a London delegate was to the effect that notice should be given to determine all present agreements as to wages, hours and working conditions as from September 1, and that a new national programme should be drawn up, laying down minimum rates for England and Wales, with a differentiation between bread bakers, etc.

Mr. H. Keen (London) said no one was satisfied with the present position, or could be expected to be, but the agreement was not obtained because they wanted it. It was all they were able to get. The one thing that had damned the Labor movement more than any other was the desire to use the last weapon first.

May Be Stabilized.

Mr. W. Banfield, general secretary, suggested that the resolution should be withdrawn, owing to the impossibility of its being put into operation, even if carried.

During the next 12 months, he said, there might be a stabilization of conditions, and it might be possible for the Executive to present a report to the next conference in which might very well be laid down certain conditions which could be applied nationally.