

# Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press

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**THE CANADIAN LABOR PRESS**

THE CANADIAN LABOR PRESS  
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Following in brief is an outline of our Policy:

1. The Canadian Labor Press supports the International Trade Union Movement, of which there are approximately three hundred thousand members in Canada.
2. The Canadian Labor Press supports the policy of the present Dominion Trades and Labor Congress of Canada.
3. In the interests of the Canadian Worker, The Canadian Labor Press believes that Canadian industry needs adequate tariff protection.
4. The Canadian Labor Press advocates fair play to employer and employee.
5. The Canadian Labor Press stands for the betterment of Trade Union conditions in Canada and the welfare of our country at large.
6. The Canadian Labor Press is independent in politics and free from any political influences.

## A Civic Crime

**D**R. C. A. RISK, who is an alderman of several years standing in the Toronto City Council, has stated through the daily press that he will ask the Council to engage in the distribution of milk through a municipal dairy.

In this matter it is reported, he is supported by Dr. Hastings, Medical Officer of Health for the City of Toronto.

Whilst both these gentlemen may be quite sincere in their views, yet their utterances show the vast amount of harm that can be done by men in public life, who adopt an idea and either willfully or not refuse to investigate all aspects of the situation their proposals may affect.

Let us look for a moment at the industrial situation in Toronto. Thousands of men are unemployed, business is subject to rigid economies forced on it by conditions over which Canadian business men have no control, hundreds of families have suffered through the past three years by reason of shortage of the necessary things of life, and in many cases where workers are employed, it is only for part of the working time due to business depression.

One necessary feature of any recovery from this state of affairs is to create an atmosphere of optimism, a feeling of confidence that things will improve and that certainly CANNOT be done if industry is to be subjected to continual petty attacks such as we have seen recently in the gasoline situation and as proposed now in the dairy business.

"The Canadian Labor Press" has stated through its columns repeatedly that it approves the principle of public ownership of public utilities, but we affirm unhesitatingly that the Toronto City Council is not likely to make a success of milk distribution, rather the reverse, and the only effects that will happen will be to discourage the men who are at present engaged in the dairy business, prevent the further investment of capital needed for expansion, and retard the employment of labor that would be needed if civic politicians would leave industry alone.

It is assuredly a gloomy outlook for an industry trying to expand from present conditions and carrying a heavy burden of taxation to be faced with the prospect of seeing a large portion of its taxes applied to the purpose of developing what can only be inefficient civic competition.

It may perhaps be urged that a municipal dairy is necessary in the interests of public health. There is no proof that the city could either improve on the care for health at present taken in milk distribution, or enable milk to be sold at a cheaper price, and "The Canadian Labor Press" would like to know from Dr. Risk, who is a dentist, what attitude he would adopt if it was urged that dentists drop their private practices, submerge their individuality and become servants of the state at a salary on the grounds that it was necessary for public health. Yet dentists have always placed the care of teeth as more important to health than the use of milk.

Labor must take the attitude if it wishes to see the unemployment situation get better, that these continual attacks on industry should cease and that we ought to get on with the job of improving our industrial situation as fast as we can.

## More Madness

**L**OOKING for other worlds to conquer, the Toronto City Council, after deciding to deal with the price and distribution of gasoline and milk, has also resolved to take up the questions of bread and coal.

Apart from the general bad effects that result from civic interference in industry and which is dealt with more fully in this issue, there are several points that must strike the citizens of Toronto, especially the working class section of the community, and cause them to consider thoughtfully the various proposals put forward.

Take the question of coal. If the city entered into the retail distribution of coal, it would mean the expenditure of sufficient funds from the city treasury to build and maintain between eight and ten coal yards at least, as well equipped as the yards that are at present doing the work of distribution.

It may be argued that coal could be stored for sale in the city work yards, but it is almost certain that this plan would result in confusion and would mean in practice, an inefficient method as compared with the present one. To secure proper results would mean the expenditure of a large sum of money and there is not the slightest likelihood of the citizens approving such a project.

Even if the city does not enter into the business of retailing coal, it is proposed to investigate the price of coal and bread, presumably with a view to securing legislation for the purpose of fixing prices in these commodities.

Now one lesson the world has learnt as a result of war experience is that it is impossible to fix prices. Again and again it has been demonstrated that state control of prices breaks down, partly because of popular resentment and partly from other causes. We have an example of the injudicious effects of fixation of prices in the new rates for Toronto consumers issued by the Hydro Electric Commission of Ontario, which the Council is protesting against at the present time.

There has not been the slightest proof that profiteering exists in bread and coal, and it is very probable that investigation would show a low margin of profit is the rule in both industries.

It is peculiar consistency to urge, as some of the advocates of civic distribution do, that there is considerable overlapping, especially of distribution in the cases of milk bread and gasoline, and then propose to cure this condition by adding to the number of distributive facilities through civic sale.

The workmen who are unemployed this winter will probably feel that even the few hundred dollars voted for investigation would have been put to a better use if it had been given for the relief of some of their number so that they could secure bread and coal for their families.

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## Retail Clerks Seek Saturday Holiday

Saskatoon, Sask.—The retail clerks of this city are demanding the continuance of the half holiday per week the year round. This mild demand has aroused the babbity to fury and they have declared war to the knife. All those who demand this weekly rest will be discharged at once, is their ultimatum.

"They don't think anything but play these days," states Robert McGowan, a leading merchant of the town. "While they play the overhead expenses go on just the same. We lose business because our stores are closed and it is no easier to get credit. Any of my employees who start anything like this will get out and get out quick."

## Commercial Telegraphers Is Ended

Toronto.—The strike of the commercial telegraphers employed by the Canadian Press, the chief news-gathering agency of the Canadian daily newspapers, has been called off. The men went on strike because they would not arbitrate a proposal of the company for a reduction in pay, although they were willing to arbitrate their own demand for an increase. They have now accepted the conciliation board appointed by minister of labor James Murdock which will investigate proposals for both raise and cut.

The strike lasted ten days, during which time the Canadian Press and newspapers generally carried a limited service by means of telephone, radio and telegraphic automatics.

## Shopmen's Chair- Man Reports Back

Says Canadian Pacific Will Comply  
With Ballot

Steve Lyons, vice-chairman of the Federation of Canadian Pacific Railway Shopmen, returned to Winnipeg from Montreal recently, where he had been attending the conference between the management of the company and the men's committee, regarding the recent ballot taken among the men on the principle of the 40-hour minimum week.

The ballot was overwhelmingly in favor of the 40-hour minimum week, and in conformity with the wishes of the men, the principle was upheld by Grant Hall, vice-president of the company.

## Wheat Pools Estab- lish Central Agency

Calgary, Alta.—The three wheat pools of Western Canada have established a central selling agency, and the various directors are travelling to Regina to discuss further details.

Reports to hand indicate that the three pools possess a combined membership of 25,000 farmers with a combined wheat acreage of more than ten millions. It is estimated that the central agency of the three pools will handle well over one hundred million bushels of wheat this year.

## F. Smeed Elected President Again

At a recent meeting of the Lethbridge Trades and Labor Council the election of officers was the chief business on the agenda and officers were elected as follows:

President, Fred Smeed; Secretary, Treasurer, A. Alford; Recording Secretary, J. Sloan.

The various committees were also named and the same night of meetings were also decided upon, the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month.

## Fed. L. P. Is Organ- ized in Cranbrook

Cranbrook, B.C.—A branch of the British Columbia Federated Labor Party has been formed in Cranbrook. An enthusiastic meeting was held in the Maple Hall with an excellent attendance of those interested. The following officers were elected:

President, W. Henderson; vice-president, H. Gammon; secretary, F. Bond; executive, R. Tiffin, F. Maidment, T. H. Bronson.

## Will Unions Agree?

Builders and contractors in all lines think that wages ought to be reduced. Those who are members of the Builders' Exchange say that competition among firms supplying contractors is very keen and is forcing prices of materials down to a very low level.

"For this reason," said one contractor recently, "labor should be willing to accept a cut in wages."

"This," he continued, "was our reason for asking the union to accept a cut." The leaders of the union connected with building trades declared that they will not stand for a reduction.

"Wages in Canada, are much lower than in the United States," was his argument.

George Gander, in answering this statement, said to-day that it might be right, but it should be remembered that money was flowing freely on the other side. "If we can get the union to agree to a cut we may induce some people to do some building," he said. "The unions, however, are not inclined to agree."

## Montreal St. Car Men Make Progress

Montreal, Que.—Great improvement in conditions among Montreal street railway workers in the last fifteen years, owing to the operations of the union, are called attention to by W. B. Fitzgerald, first vice-president of the Amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Railway employees. Fifteen years ago, he said wages were 12 to 15 cents an hour, as compared with 60 cents now. Nine hours is the average to-day with some men involving 14 or 15 hours, while 15 years ago the working day ran 17, 18 and 19 hours. Fitzgerald is here to prepare for the biennial convention of his organization next September. A thousand delegates are expected to represent the 125,000 members of the union.



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