



# Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press



Entered at Ottawa Post Office as Second Class Postage.  
**The Canadian Labor Press**  
PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE CANADIAN LABOR PRESS, LIMITED  
389 COOPER ST., OTTAWA

A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

## MOTHERS' ALLOWANCE ACT

Every province where the Mothers' Allowance Act is in operation has proof positive of its utility and necessity. Each city has its own story and the one from the Capital as given by the "Ottawa Citizen" is applicable to all sections, given in the following words:

"It will probably come as a not unpleasant surprise to a number of citizens to learn that there are in Ottawa more than two hundred women receiving mothers' allowances under the law placed on the statute books by the Drury government last year. Eight thousand dollars is being paid to these mothers, the city and the province dividing equally the cost. Just what this means in these times of hardship and economic depression will be readily appreciated by the more fortunate taxpayers who contribute a share towards the public funds used for paying the allowances. It means that two hundred widows or deserted wives are able to keep a home together in which they and their children may find a modicum of comfort and happiness that would otherwise be unavailable or procurable only at the cost of anxiety and prolonged labor away from home.

Apparently new cases are being dealt with frequently, but trouble has arisen because so many women who have been deserted by their husbands making application for recognition. According to the report of the Mothers' Allowance Board, a woman has to provide evidence that her husband has not been heard of for from five to seven years. Doubtless there is sound reason for this rule, but on the face of it it would seem a little hard. An innocent wife whose husband has abandoned her is often in a more trying position than the widow whose experience may have taught her how to manage under pressing circumstances. A case was reported where a mother of nine children was deserted.

Probably the view is taken that to pay deserted wives before the elapse of a considerable period would increase the number of deserting husbands. It would certainly lessen a husband's compunction, presuming he possessed any, to have the knowledge that a pension would be paid to his wife soon after he had reached the border or distant city, for it would relieve him of responsibilities he alone ought to face. Yet it seems that some arrangement might be made for the mother and children who are left penniless by a heartless husband and father. In Ottawa the Mothers' Allowance Board seems to be doing highly creditable work, and certainly citizens generally will begrudge least of all that portion of their taxes, which is devoted to the paying of the allowances to be unsupported mothers of the city.

## POINTERS FOR NEWLY ELECTED OFFICIALS

This is the time of the year when most of our local unions either have elected, or are electing new officers to take hold of the reins for a safe conduct and proper administration of affairs. It may not be amiss to advise the newly elected officers, newcomers as well as old timers, to carefully acquaint themselves with all of the provisions of our International constitution, by diligently studying the same. By following this well-meant advice their tenure of office will certainly be made a more pleasant and successful one.

Knowledge of the constitution will lighten the burden and ease the responsibility of any official and much misunderstanding and confusion in the past has been due to lack of knowledge of the laws of our organization.

Officers, and members, too, will do well to thoroughly acquaint themselves with our international and local laws, thereby learning the foundation upon which the organization is built, respecting its precepts, and seeing that others do likewise.

Let every one live up to the requirements of the constitution and we cannot go wrong!

### OTTAWA CARPENTERS AND CONTRACTORS AGREE TO A BOARD

A request was made to the Department of Labor to allow a board of arbitration to settle the 1922 wage dispute between the Ottawa District Council of Carpenters and the Ottawa Branch of the Association of Canadian Building and Construction Industries. This is the first definite move made locally between the labor unions and employers to reach an agreement prior to May 1. Contractors seek to effect a 10-cent an hour reduction in wages.

Both parties have agreed to abide by the decision of the board. The contractors have named Mr. J. S. C. May 1, 1921 to obtain the same rate. At the end of the two months' strike the board and Mr. P. J. McCaffrey they accepted the contractors' offer.

will look after the interest of the unions. Both will meet within a few days to select an independent chairman and, if they are unable to agree, he will be appointed by the Department of Labor.

The contractors and carpenters have been negotiating for several weeks but have been unable to arrive at any agreement on the question of wages. The contractors are seeking to put a substantial cut into effect. They offer 65 cents an hour to carpenters for 1922. This is 10 cents an hour lower than the prevailing rate last year.

Two years ago carpenters were receiving 85 cents an hour, and went on strike for two months beginning with the decision of the board. The contractors have named Mr. J. S. C. May 1, 1921 to obtain the same rate. At the end of the two months' strike the board and Mr. P. J. McCaffrey they accepted the contractors' offer.

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## LETTER TO EDITOR

AN INTERNATIONAL WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION

To the Editor of Canadian Labor Press:  
In 1917, in the City of Seattle, Washington, U.S.A., two men, one an Imperial Canadian war veteran, and the other a non-Imperial American war veteran, (the former being the writer) made efforts to obtain a charter for what the first thought proper to term, an International War Veterans Association. Owing to lack of financial means, and the idea not having been first submitted to a veteran's association in Canada, nor to the United States of America, for approval and support, the charter could not then be obtained. It was through the "John O'Tanner Camp" of War Veterans at Seattle, the idea was eagerly taken up and Mr. Van Rupp, an attorney, was invited by the commandant to sketch an outline of the proposed charter, which he did.

In 1921 a proposition was put forth by I. L. H. the Great War Veteran, to inaugurate a long series of debates upon the subject, namely, for the amalgamation of all veteran's associations in Canada; but the subject did not bring as eagerly as some veterans might anticipate, take up, it led to a series of four forth of likely benefit to veterans at large. Hence it is that veteran's affairs through lack of proper co-ordination, and the nature of wounds received in the field of war, are far from being in a flourishing condition. I will not say that this is entirely due to the lack of organization, but the comparatively small number of veterans that form each veteran's association, whereas every army and navy veteran should have an associate of one or the other of them for reasons many and various, the chief of which should be for acquiring by joint action adequate recognition or recognition from the country the veteran served, whether in the field or upon sea, based upon the nature and scope of their duties, length of service, the nature of wounds received in the field of war, and the nature of wounds received in the field of war, or at home if attached to an expeditionary force for not less a length of time than one year.

The defenders of a country are really its rightful owners, and have a just right to more than recognition in the form of land grants, medals, or pensions, which if they deem insufficient rewards, in addition they could be granted a superior franchise entailing privileges of various sorts, for instance, from direct taxation and control, exemption from educational courses in superior schools. They could be allowed to claim direct representation in Parliament, a veteran's tax could be imposed upon all citizens, and upon other public places of amusement, which tax a whole might be applied to the creation of a whole number of parks, and other institutions for the benefit of the people. Other veterans no longer able to work for a living by reason of age, infirmities, or wounds and mutilations received in the line of a former service, could be allowed to found businesses for ex-servicemen, and women, willing to adopt a system of labor and control, and other co-operative lines for the good of their comrades. It could act as an insurance in favor of ex-servicemen, and women, of married responsibilities to cover losses in household effects by fire, or as an unemployment insurance would prove invaluable. These with many other reasons should urge the adoption of an amalgamation scheme, consistent with the spirit of international character for joint action in view of definite and lasting re-establishment operations, including solicitations for recognition as exemplified in former passages, which in the concrete implies the basic principle for the founding and governing of an International War Veterans Association.

Thus in a few sufficiently comprehensive and illuminative for the ex-serviceman or woman, I have endeavored to detail the most important points demanding consideration at the hands of interested parties who might be induced to give the scheme dominion wide publicity.

Viewing widely and broadly in a sympathetic and generous spirit present results in military and naval propaganda in Canada, are we justified in believing it to be successful and eminently capable of failure? Is it of such distinguished originality as to merit recognition and credit as to its true ends and purposes? These questions, I answer in the negative because I believe by doing so I enter the opinion of the majority of ex-servicemen and women in Canada. Things too hurriedly done are only half done, and where military and naval service involve such tremendous consequences to human life, a military-naval association should be of a faultless symmetry, and of unfailing consequence. And not many, but one association only should be the banner to the four winds of Canada, and militarily solicit and plead for all benefits, readjustments, and rewards, its country may lawfully accord.

The lack of concentrated interest in the affairs of ex-servicemen and women, is to be sincerely regretted. Very large numbers have never been invited by mail or verbally in order to their names upon the books of an association, which lack of propagandic activity widens the scope of misunderstanding, and is part in the cause of the present unfavorable aspect of affairs in general in connection with military naval associations.

Concerning the present government of Liberal practice, it is conceded by quite two thirds of veterans that it is sincere in its resolves to acknowledge all proportionate claims of veterans who as Canadian citizens served during the great war, the war history of Canada at home and abroad, and no government should be blamed for withholding financial action in the favor pending the amalgamation of all veterans' associations under one title, when an international board of arbitration could present to the government a prospectus or abstract of their claims and list of the names of all non-veterans entitled to its consideration. Charges levied at the heads of men comprising a government are very often unjust owing to their character and the manner of their presentation. Insularly as pertaining to present association propaganda, contains a threat of ever-abiding antagonism towards any government, which for re-establishment liberty to be formulated, whereas an international war veterans' association, in conjunction with

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the Veterans' Re-establishment Association, of which Mr. Howe is president pro tem, would contain all desirable elements for a complete and enduring government administration in their favor, and perhaps to their entire satisfaction. Both would assume the importance of eminent value to all allied countries, the reciprocal character of the former would draw more closely the bonds of a veteran brotherhood, and incidentally become a means for the raising of a concrete form of government to decide for or against the making of war. No more would a veteran vainly seek relief at the doors of associations, as a member of an international war veterans' association welcome and assistance would be granted him wherever he might venture in search of employment, or means to recuperate his health; a massive form of greeting would be in his aid in his business and cause it to replace in the new experience born of true and devoted veteran fellowship. As long as he conformed to the laws and rules of his association and adhered to the code of honor and self-respect maintained and insisted upon by it, he would never want for a friend, and be heard. The very best thought proper to inaugurate the elections of those promoted to fill official positions in the association, its democratic spirit would offer ample opportunity to the veterans of all countries, and of official excludence. No "inner circles" tolerating class preference for personal gain could for a moment become grouped beneath the roof of an association, nor in the street. A perfect system of espionage to cover every department would be established to fully protect the interests of veterans at large so that bribery, corruption and betrayal could never seek to accomplish their evil ends unchecked.

Hopeless indeed is the outlook to many veterans, without pension, in falling health, and approaching middle-age, the most they may hope for in the future is admittance to a charitable institution and afterwards the gift of a coffin to conceal their bodies from the eyes of a hard trying world the body they offered in the braving of health and strength to the weapons of a foreign foe, or sacrificed in a noble cause in the defense of country and the weak and helpless therein. Employment is denied many, weeks and months pass by leaving them in a state of mind, body and soul, and those with children are distressed by their impotence to provide them with more proper necessities of life, and means to make their little life happier. They look for assistance from the state of their country, but find it taken for granted that the respectable appearance of some and the ragged indigent appearance of others are due to two causes, either the possession of private means, or of alms. 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