

CANADIAN LABOR PRESS

A National, Sane Labor Paper

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

VOL. VI. \$1.00 Per Year. National and Rational OTTAWA, ONT., TUESDAY, JUNE 30th, 1925. Live News and Views Single Copies 5c. No. 56.

REPLY TO HON. Mr. MURDOCK

DEADLOCK UNTIL AFTER THE ELECTIONS IN NOVA SCOTIA COAL MINE STRIKE

Wage Reduction or No Wage Reduction Is Where Both Parties to Dispute Are Standing Pat

Sydney, N. S.—Since the starting of the strike the miners have sacrificed in wages, on the basis of the total paid in 1924, no less than four and a half million dollars. Whatever they may hope for in the shape of a settlement, the company can see nothing but such a reduction in wages as will permit of mining coal at a cost to compete in the Montreal market with bituminous coal imported from Virginia.

There is no talk of earning anything for the shareholders, but bond interest must be met, and depreciation provided for.

Must Accept Cut

So the men must accept a cut or the mines remain idle, and, furthermore, it is not likely that the company will deal with the present leaders of the unions, who, in Cape Breton at least, are of the most extreme type, and in the eyes of the company officials, not open to argument. This proposed cut of 10 per cent on the wages of 1924 is equivalent only to a three per cent reduction from the rate paid prior to that date. It is pointed out that with enforced increase of seven per cent the miners in 1924 earned actually less than in 1923 under the lower rate, because increased cost resulted in a reduction of production of several hundred thousand tons.

Poor Outlook

No matter how soon the strike ends, the outlook for Besco's coal sales for the balance of the present year is not good. It is getting very late to close new contracts. The company has already been partially filling some orders with Virginia coal, hoping to complete them when their own mines resume working. The hope of the management is that if and when the miners return to work on terms that shall make economic production possible, there may ensue a period of, say, five years of steady development and improvement alike in the welfare of the miners and in the company's prosperity.

Abolish Old System

Just as important as an agreement on an economically satisfactory scale of wages is the abolition of the peculiar system of paternalism which has existed at the Cape Breton mines for almost a hundred years. The principal feature of this system is the check-off under which

a miner worker seldom sees the bulk of his week's wages, which are largely mortgaged for union dues, doctors' fees, goods bought at the company's stores and many other items. And yet this system is accepted and virtually insisted upon by the miners.

As the first step towards this reform the company has gone out of general trading and closed all its shops. This move has proved un- welcome to the buying public of the district, and there were many requests that the stores should be continued. The miners were never in- fluenced to trade at the company's stores and, in fact, not more than fifty per cent did.

It is not easy to discover any ground for the charges of inhuman treatment of the miners by the company. The houses which the men rent from the company, although of wood, are not hovels. A six-roomed house costs \$6 a month, and can be bought for \$900 on very easy terms. They are equipped with sanitary arrangements wherever the municipality has provided sewerage. And it must be remembered that Besco pay 60 per cent of the taxes in the mining districts, but their workmen constitute the governing bodies. Fuel is provided at less than cost and doctor and medicine for an entire family comes to only twenty dollars a year.

No Sympathetic Strike

The steel workers, after a bitter struggle rather more than a year ago, are on excellent terms with the company. They are making records in production. Methods have been improved until steel has recently been turned out at a cost lower by \$7 a ton than formerly. The steel workers turn a deaf ear to any proposal for a sympathetic strike.

Besco officials expect to show like progress in the mines when a satisfactory arrangement is reached with the mine workers.

The market is limited, it is true. Not a great deal is sold in the Maritime Provinces. Sales abroad may be described as accidental. The steel plant and Quebec Province must in the future, as in the past, be looked to to absorb the bulk of the production. Even in Quebec competition with United States coal is keen, and only the most careful study of that market can preserve it for the Cape Breton mines.

Dear Sir:

My attention has been drawn to a debate on the budget in the House of Commons on April 14th of this year as reported in Hansard and particularly to a portion of the Honorable the Minister of Labor, Mr. Murdock's speech on that date. I refer especially to Mr. Murdock's attack upon the publication of which I have the privilege of editing, wherein he accuses "The Canadian Labor Press" of being a mouthpiece for the Conservative party, propagating as he terms it: "Tory propaganda." The general objection I have to Mr. Murdock's assumptions is that they are incorrect.

For example, the Minister complains that "The Canadian Labor Press" has no standing with organized labor; that our offices in Montreal and Toronto are in the heart of the Tory district and our advertising is received from sources that have no interest in labor.

Let me deal with these three points. Whilst it is true that "The Canadian Labor Press" is privately owned in the sense that no official organization controls the publication, it is in this respect not any different from a dozen publications devoted to labor news and views throughout Canada and classified as labor publications by the Department of Labor of which the Minister is the head. Amongst the ones classified by the Department is "The Canadian Labor Press," so we have the curious spectacle of the Minister in one place, stating that our publication is not a labor one and the Minister's Department, presumably authorized by him, stating that it is. I would suggest therefore that the Minister seek to reconcile the views of his Department with his own public statements. May I add on this point that owing to our freedom from control by any one group, we have been able to adopt an independent position and express more fully, views we feel necessary for the welfare of Canada, than we might have been able to so express if group controlled. In addition, individual members of our staff are connected with the organized labor movement and have been for several years.

Mr. Murdock's second complaint is that "it can be shown, generally speaking, we have been pretty sane and reasonable because our offices are in the Tory districts of Montreal and Toronto." Whilst admittedly an editor likes to be complimented upon the moderation and sanity of his publication, yet I feel the Honorable gentleman is placing the two federal daily newspapers of Toronto in a peculiar position because they, like ourselves, have their offices in the "heart of the Tory district of Toronto" and one must therefore conclude that either they are sane and reasonable because of their close proximity to Toryism or like ourselves, in the Minister's view, there is some sinister purpose in having their offices in that district.

The final complaint of Mr. Murdock is that we secure advertising for our publication from organizations not interested in labor and amongst others he mentions Anglin-Norcross of Montreal and Cosgrave's Brewery of Toronto. Knowing that both of these firms employ union labor, one would naturally feel that they were interested in labor, but apart from their direct interest if a labor publication is to be prohibited from accepting advertising from business firms because they may hold opposite views to the Government of the day, then I suggest that the Minister point this out to the executive of the Dominion Trades Congress, whose official journal each month contains advertising from firms similar to those the Minister criticizes in our columns and in fact from many of the same firms specified by the Minister in his speech. Either the Trades Congress is doing a perfectly legitimate act in accepting such advertising, or it has some dire purpose in store for organized labor, if the Minister's reasoning be sound. I prefer to believe the former viewpoint.

One ought to feel flattered I suppose upon receiving the attention of the Minister in public debate upon a matter so vital concerning the welfare of Canada but apart from all personal predilections in connection with partisan matters, I should like to put these reflections upon the subject of the tariff for your readers' consideration. A Trade Union is organized to protect its members from unfair competition which, usually is the competition of those whose methods would break down the standards of living for Trade Unionists. Those who uphold the National Policy have been for many years organized to protect ALL the citizens of Canada from unfair competition by those whose methods would mean the breaking down of standards of living for ALL Canadian citizens. In essence then, the advocates of Trade Unionism and of protection are the same in principle. That this is so may be seen in the statements of prominent members of the Labor movement such as Mr. Tom Moore, President of the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress, who, in the January, 1925 issue of the "Canadian Congress Journal", the official magazine of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, stated that "labor accepts the policy of tariff protection for industry as a necessary corollary of the protection of their own means of earning a living." The President of the Confederation of Catholic Workmen of Canada takes the same view. The Canadian Federation of Labor is on record also favoring a National Policy. Apart from these official bodies, many of the officials of organized labor in the Dominion have particularly taken an active part in favor of protection. Can it be doubted then as to where labor stands upon this policy?

These facts, Sir, seem to me sufficient proof that the "Canadian Labor Press" is pursuing a policy in accord with the general policy of the Labor movement throughout Canada when it supports an adequate tariff for the maintenance, improvement and general development of Canadian industry. At the present time we are compelled to see Canada contributing to the prosperity of the United States and as Canadian citizens what we should like to see is the United States likewise contributing in the same measure to the prosperity and welfare of Canada. I have mentioned the United States because of their close proximity to ourselves, but it is just as well that Canadians remember that we are contributing to the prosperity of European countries as well as the United States—countries such as Germany, France, etc., by reason of our absurdly altruistic tariff policy.

May I ask the Minister, through you for the benefit of your readers, these questions as I am certain the Canadian public would be greatly interested in his answers.

1. As a member of organized labor, believing in the right of Trade Unions to protect their members against unfair competition, does he believe in the right of Canadian citizens to protect themselves against unfair competition?
2. As the Minister in charge of the Department of Labor, recognizing the Dominion Trades Congress as the official Labor body in Canada and knowing the attitude the Congress has taken toward the tariff question, can he correctly and truthfully say that Labor is anti-protectionist?
3. If the Official Labor movement in Canada is in favor of a protective tariff policy, as is evidenced by the quotations given above, is the "Canadian Labor Press" taking an attitude in opposition to the general labor policy by advocating an adequate tariff for Canadian industry?
4. As a member of the Liberal party, will the Minister use his influence to discourage Liberal publications from accepting advertising from business firms who may be sympathetic to a more adequate tariff policy on the part of the Canadian Government?

In conclusion, let me say that insofar as the "Canadian Labor Press" is concerned, not one cent has been received from the Conservative Party because of our advocacy of protection.

I am, Sir,

Yours faithfully,
THE CANADIAN LABOR PRESS, LIMITED.
JAMES T. GUNN.

THE CANADIAN GOVT. AT HOME AND ABROAD

What Is the Government Going to Do in Interest of Further Immigration Policy?

"To all intents and purposes the immigration policy of the Dominion today, or rather the carrying out thereof, is in the hands of W. J. Egan, the deputy minister and his staff. Mr. Egan is by no means an advocate of the "open door" policy and believes that anyone who enters the Dominion should be assured of a position when he comes here and able to fill it. The open door policy, he believes, will be disastrous to the Dominion and would result in the entry into Canada of a "devil's brood" which could never be assimilated.

It is probable that Mr. Egan is somewhat timid in this regard, but at the present time there is no minister in a position to give his time toward backing him up in an aggressive policy." ("Toronto Star, June 23rd, 1925.")

The far flung invitations to immigrants is emphasized to the full. There is still room and a welcome for millions of men and women of the right kind (official guide to Wembley), Page 55. Nothing could illustrate better the weak vacillating policy of the Canadian Government than the contrast presented by these two statements.

It is no wonder that the British people are confused as to prospects in Canada when the officials' statements of Canadian immigration authorities are quoted to them as a reason against immigration.

If the position taken by the Deputy Minister of Immigration in the "Star" interview is correctly reported, then it constitutes a direct slap in the face to every Canadian citizen who em-

grated from Britain.

It is apparently forgotten that the greatest period of Canadian prosperity existed during the years when there was an open door policy of immigration, and when hundreds of thousands of English, Irish, Scotch and Welsh came here to settle down in new homes and MADE GOOD.

The "Canadian Labor Press" takes the viewpoint that we need immigrants in order to develop our splendid resources and that the Canadian Government should place a minister in charge of colonization and immigration so that a vigorous policy can be pursued in furtherance of this very necessary work.

If this is not done our agricultural and commercial industries will stagnate as they have a tendency to do under the Government's present policy and the Dominion will keep slipping further back to the detriment of every interest in the community.

Outline of the Murdock Plan

Glace Bay, N. S.—In an effort to settle the prolonged strike of miners in the Cape Breton collieries, a proposition designed by James Murdock, Canadian minister of labor, was submitted to all the United Mine Workers' locals in the province.

The British Empire Steel Corporation objects to the Murdock proposal, because it provides for the abolition of the United Mine Workers "check-off."

This virtually means that some 600 men now on the company's "black list" never would be re-employed.

The military and police on duty in the mine strike area have been reinforced by the arrival of 300 members of the Royal Canadian Horse Artillery.

In the statement which he issued before leaving Cape Breton, James Murdock, minister of labor, said in part:

"At 2 p.m., June 17, the miners' district board authorized me to ad-

vice Mr. McLurg, vice-president of Besco, that if the company so desired, pending a settlement of the strike, all maintenance men would be instructed to report for duty. This offer wasn't accepted as the company claimed that on account of the conditions in effect in many mines, caused by lack of maintenance for a time, very many of the maintenance men couldn't be placed at work for some time. Late last evening Mr. McLurg handed me a statement outlining the basis upon which the company would agree to a settlement of the existing strike. That statement was presented to the miners' district board, and they find therein two or three proposals, which appear almost, if not entirely impossible of acceptance.

"The district board of the miners have asked for a few days to canvass certain questions contained in the company's proposals and to prepare the questions at issue for submission to a referendum vote of the miners."

ASK FOR MADE-IN-CANADA GOODS

When You Spend Your Made-in-Canada Dollar

Every time you pass a Made-in-Canada Dollar over the counter—ask for Made-in-Canada goods!

Then you will have more Made-in-Canada Dollars coming your way.

Every time you say "Made-in-Canada Goods, Mr. Merchant," you plant the idea in somebody's mind. It's a good idea to plant everywhere. It will grow. As fast as it grows Canada will grow.

The Made-in-Canada idea is good for everybody; it is a stimulant for Canadian raw materials, Canadian labor and Canadian capital. All sections of the Canadian working world reap the benefit: It keeps all the workers busy in the various manufacturing industries; the earnings of the industrial workers buy the produce of the workers on the land. It is good for all classes. It banishes or greatly reduces the unemployment problem.

Insist on Made-in-Canada products and you will bar out the competing wares of cheap, sweated, slavish labor of Europe and Asia. Low wages make low ideals. Union labor has been for years and is battling for high ideals. High ideals come only where the workers are paid and treated in a highly civilized manner.

For high ideals—for general Made-in-Canada prosperity—Don't forget to say that all may hear: "Made-in-Canada goods for me every time!"

King George's Navy



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Small tin! See how small and tough it is! That's what I call real chewing and no mistake about it! 25c.—the new low price for TWO plugs! Some buy! The finest in quality and value!



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