

## Western Clarion

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VANCOUVER, B. C., DECEMBER 1, 1923.

### DOPE.

**D**URING the past few years in British Columbia the purity people, the church crusaders and the moral leaguers have all been engaged in the chase against the wicked dope peddler, the fellow who is so loose morally as to traffic in drugs—to the undoing of all sorts of innocents, male and female, of all ages and races.

Well, while the search has been going high and low for years past it has at length reached the point where it can no longer avoid noticing the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the activities of its secret agents. From the nature of the evidence given in court against the officers of that organization it would appear that the reputation gained by them in the Winnipeg strike trials as stool pigeon agent is well sustained, with the additional factor as a money making concern thrown in for good measure. The business of the narcotic squad of the heroic mounties we have on hand—not those of story book and movie fame of course—seems to be to smuggle drugs into the country, sell them to drug addicts and agents, then to arrest and send to jail the latter for having drugs in their possession. One of their secret agents, now under examination at the court of enquiry on charges of dealing in drugs, has been successively a first aid man in an industrial plant, a diamond merchant, and a would-be stool pigeon in various working class organisations throughout Vancouver, including the S. P. of C.

This is the work of the romantic mounted police, and it should not go unnoticed.

### HERE AND NOW.

**T**HIS issue's totals, Here and Now, bring us back again to the miseries of finance problems. Last issue and the one before our finances appeared to present almost decent totals, but here we are again back to the threadbare normal. The figures have just about enough strength to stand alone:

Following \$1 each: W. Scott, Sam Buch, G. D. McKenzie, W. Lyall, J. Cameron, P. Brown, A. M. Neelands, R. Brown, G. Alley, W. R. Lewin, J. MacKenzie, W. Mitchell, Wm. Morrison, G. F. Ritchie, R. Gill, J. Connacher, J. A. Untinen, C. R. Morrison, E. J. Miller, B. D. Smith.

M. Milliken \$2; J. M. Brown, \$2; San Francisco Labor College, \$9.60.

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# Unemployment—Cause and Cure

**T**HERE are now upwards of 1¼ million workers registered as unemployed in Great Britain. How many there are not registered, and how many are working short time, it is impossible to say, but we may safely assume that there will be, before this winter is out, more than 1½ million men and women, boys and girls, able and willing to work, but prevented from doing so. The present depression began at the end of 1920, and shows no signs of lifting, and it is no longer sufficient for Ministers to prophecy improvement; even the most credulous workers are now unwilling to believe in the early coming of the long deferred revival.

There is no lack of freaks, frauds and cranks anxious to gain attention for their fallacious diagnoses and quack remedies—free traders and protectionists, and advocates of imperial preference; deflationists and inflationists, Christians preaching Brotherhood, and others who want another war, bare headed Daily Mailites, and their ridiculous Liberal Labour opponents, who weep for the wrongs inflicted on the poor German capitalists, emigrationists, and last and most futile of all, the motley crowd of "Socialists," who have time for these and every vain scheme, but no time for Socialism. We, on the other hand, urge now, as we have always urged, that there is a solution—Socialism; that it is the only solution; and that it is a solution for the present and not for the distant future.

The attempted explanations of unemployment are as varied as the suggested remedies, and it is necessary therefore to make clear a few important points. First, do not be misled by those who have tried to saddle Poincare with the responsibility. The widespread unemployment began in 1920 and had reached a point in 1922 higher than at any other time since; yet the French occupation of the Ruhr did not take place until January, 1923.

Do not believe that it is an "abnormal" after-war development. Apart from earlier times of special distress due to political and economic disturbances, unemployment has been a constant feature of our system since the industrial revolution at the end of the 18th century. There has during that period always been a mass of employable but unemployed workers; the number increasing enormously during trade depressions and decreasing with trade prosperity. It never wholly disappeared, in spite of the big drain of emigration to America and the Colonies. Dr. Macnamara, M.P., speaks of a normal prewar unemployed army of 200,000 persons ("Times," 11th September, 1924). Unemployment is a normal feature of capitalist production. And what of the future? Macnamara promises that:

"That even if the unsettlement of Europe were ended and normal trade returned, the permanent unemployment in this country would be three or four times as big as in pre-war times."

While Sir John Norton Griffiths, M.P., a Tory, tells us ("Daily Herald," 11th April, 1923):

"We have now got, and always, apparently will have . . . trade boom or no trade boom . . . a million or more unemployed men who cannot be absorbed in industry."

Neither Macnamara nor Norton Griffiths seems greatly perturbed, but it may be worth your while to consider carefully the prospect before you.

Refuse to be drawn by the Labour leaders into the free trade-protectionist controversy, for it does not concern you. It is no question of principle, but one of capitalist interests, and will be readily scrapped by those who teach you to worship it, when profit-making demands a new policy. The sudden conversion of the traditionally free-trade Bradford woolen industry illustrates this. Moreover free trade is

an illusion in the modern world. What does free trade mean to a cotton or soap combine which has a practical monopoly of raw material and the home market? What does free trade mean to an international meat or steel combine, which allocates to its members certain geographical areas and a certain percentage of the sales in the total markets? And remember that the inquiries instituted by the Government immediately after war brought to light the fact that there is now hardly any important industry which is not controlled in some direction by a federation or central organization.

Protection is in effect the state support of one industry at the expense of those who pay for the whole cost of administration, that is the capitalist class. Protection or direct subsidies cannot in the long run overcome the world conditions governing the whole mass of a country's trade, or better the position of the working class. A subsidy for agriculture, or a bar on the import of agricultural produce (advocated by a section of the Labor Party) will, it is true, stimulate the agricultural industry, and lead to the employment of more workers there. But that is only one of the results. The production of more food at home means a decrease of the import of food products from abroad, and a corresponding decrease in coal or manufactured goods which would ordinarily have gone to pay for those imports. A mere transfer of some miners or cotton operatives to the ranks of the unemployed and the corresponding employment of a number of out-of-work agricultural laborers does not solve the problem of unemployment.

It resembles the emigration schemes which appear to rest on the notion that one can remove unemployment by migrating the unemployed from one country to another. It takes no account of the fact that the problem is a world problem, because this is obscured by certain temporary factors and local peculiarities.

Protectionist U.S.A., which two years ago had six million unemployed, strictly limits immigration, but this has not been the means of fulfilling the late President's fatuous wish that the boom of last year should be an era of "permanent prosperity." Depression is beginning there once more, and during 1922 alone no less than two million farmers and hands had to leave the land and resort to the industrial towns, to swell the unemployed army. Their chief immediate trouble was that there is too much wheat in the world for the capitalist system to dispose of, and yet some of our Labor men still believe that the panacea for agricultural stagnation at home is to grow more wheat!

Canada has its own problem to face, and cannot even find work for all of a few thousand men who were enticed out there for the harvesting. Unemployment is acute and growing in South Africa, where it is also complicated by the racial hostility between the relatively highly paid (and out-of-work) whites, and the low paid blacks. The South African unemployed actually asked to be migrated to Australia to join the ranks of the unemployed there, many of them want to come "home" to England. South Africa is also asking for immigrants—"with £2,000 capital!"

France has but little unemployment, because she has remained largely an agricultural country, with a land system of peasant proprietorship. There are relatively few wage-earners, the only ones liable to suffer unemployment, and for some time past French industry, especially textiles, has been doing big trade abroad at the expense of English exporters, owing to the depreciation of the franc. This has led to an amusing clash between one brand of currency-mongers, who want to save us by raising the £ sterling to par, and another brand who can see the