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**ABOUT "PURGING" THE LABOR MOVEMENT**

Can the reader remember of having ever heard of a strike which was not brought on by the "dangerous radicals" in the union? As a matter of fact it can be stated without fear of contradiction that every man who has had an active part to play in union affairs has, at one time or another, been referred to as "too radical." Usually coming from a disgruntled employer who has been made to realize that the workers are something more than mere machines, such an accusation against a union official is the stigma imposed because of duties well and faithfully performed, in the interests of the workers represented. When a man who is prominent in the affairs of a trade union is referred to as a "red," a "bolshhevik" or just plain "too radical," it is well to investigate very carefully as to who imposes the term, and why.

Organized Labor receives a great deal of advice about its "radicals." It is a blank day indeed when some good-hearted soul does not plead with trade unionism to "clean house"; to "purge" itself from the radical element. As a rule, however, it is not possible to believe wholly in the disinterestedness of those who so freely give the advice. In some cases there is too much evidence of a desire to make organized Labor a nice meek and mild movement that could at all times be counted upon to refrain from interfering with the beneficiaries of privilege. All the wisdom in the world is not in the Labor movement but we hesitate to think of what organized Labor might be today if its affairs had always been conducted according to the advice of those on the outside. Much advice to Labor to "purge" itself of the extremists, can safely be placed in the same category as the time-honored pun of the opponent of organized Labor who believes in unions providing they are "properly conducted."

**CIVIC UNIONS AND THEIR MEMBERS**

The Free Press must confess its inability to understand by what method of reasoning those who are responsible for the suggestion, arrived at the idea that the city's assistant department heads should be compelled to withdraw from their respective unions. Surely it is not the purpose of the commissioners to dictate as to who should be members of a union and who should not, and this paper would not be surprised if the civic unions combine to repudiate the suggestion that members of the organizations should be compelled to withdraw their membership.

If the unions were contemplating any changes in the rule as to who should compose their membership, we would think that such change would be of an inclusive rather than an exclusive nature. We cannot see why the commissioners should have any objection to the department heads themselves joining the unions if they so desired, and the organizations permitted their entrance. We certainly do see several strong objections to any present members being compelled to withdraw, and we miss our guess if the unions are prepared to be dictated to as to who shall or who shall not compose their membership. Furthermore, we can pretty well assure all and sundry that should the civic unions so decide they will have the unqualified support of their fellow trades unionists in this city.

**NOTHING UNREASONABLE HERE**

Shortly after the civic elections it was being freely predicted in some quarters that civic employees would make a "clean-up" on the city exchequer in the way of greatly increased salaries. At that time the Free Press ventured to prophesy that no such unreasonable demands would be made, and recent events would seem to bear out the correctness of our prediction.

In the adjustment of school teachers' salaries the reasonable demands of the teachers and the prompt and business-like manner in which the new Board disposed of the matter of salaries for the year is certainly refreshing after the dilly-dally policy that has been characteristic of past administrations. In fixing the minimum salary for male assistants in high schools the Board certainly did not err on the side of liberality. Two thousand per year for a man who has sufficient training to be a high school teacher could not by any stretch of imagination be referred to as exorbitant. The same can be said of the maximum of \$2900 after seven years' service.

The demands of city employees are equally as reasonable as those of the teachers. When all salaries and working conditions are adjusted between the School Board and the City Council and the employees coming under the jurisdiction of those bodies, the Free Press has no hesitancy in predicting that taxpayers and all concerned will feel that the interests of all have been properly considered and protected.

**HEADS I WIN, TAILS YOU LOSE**

There is considerable of an agitation at the present time to provide for the "personal covenant" in connection with mortgages. The idea of course is all in favor of those who are conducting the agitation, namely, the financial men who would benefit thereby.

The personal covenant, in effect means that the mortgagor practically pledges all he owns or expects to own as security for money that is supposed to be advanced on a particular piece of property. In other words the mortgagor must be protected from any contingency, and at the expense of the mortgagor. Loan companies are not in the habit of loaning money on property that, at the time the loan is advanced, is not of sufficient value to secure the mortgages from loss in case of default on the part of the mortgagor. The personal covenant would provide that in the case of a slump in the value of property, and the mortgagor not being able to meet payment of the loan, the loan company could attach other of the mortgagor's property than that on which the loan was advanced, providing the latter had lost value to such an extent that its sale would not produce sufficient to cover the loan. In other words it would seem to be a case of heads I win, tails you lose insofar as the loan company is concerned. The farmers have recorded their opposition to the personal covenant and in their decision they have the unqualified support of organized Labor.

**STUDY OF LABOR INSPIRES ENTHUSIASM**

One of the most remarkable attributes of the Labor movement is its enthusiasm inspiring quality. The underlying principles of the movement are so sound, the aspirations of Labor are so unselfish and just, that any person who studies the movement with an unbiased mind becomes a Labor enthusiast. This has been particularly noticeable in the past few years when preachers, educationalists and men of like callings have been flocking to Labor's ranks. In Britain especially has this trend been apparent. The Labor movement invites study of its purposes. It has nothing to lose and all to gain from careful investigation of its aspirations by those who can be influenced by humanitarian principles. When the subject of unionism is approached with an honest desire to ascertain what it is and what it represents the student becomes impressed with the fact that humanity is the first consideration of the movement. Organized Labor cries out for better education, better housing, better food, better working conditions, more leisure and all other advantages for the betterment of its members only but for every human creature. Labor's aim is to change "the scheme of things whereby one man is engaged through life in grinding Labor to win a bare and precarious subsistence for himself, and another man who does not toil receives every hour of the day, every hour of the night whilst he slumbers, more than his poor neighbor receives in a whole year of toil." (The quotation is from Lloyd George). When the underlying motive of the Labor movement is understood and appreciated, the fact that its adherents become enthusiastic is not surprising.

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**EDITOR'S NOTES.**

The Teachers' Alliance has only one step to take to complete its effectiveness as a trade union. There should be no delay in becoming affiliated with the central bodies of organized Labor.

On Tuesday evening February 10th, at the regular meeting, will be a good place to join the Labor Party. Are you a member?

Patriotism has been said to be the last resort of scoundrels and the folks who can and do shout the loudest about democracy are those who would resort to any means to keep democracy from functioning.

President McCreath and the other Labor members of the Factories Act Commissions do not intend to be sidetracked from performing the duties which devolve upon them, and they will have the enthusiastic support of Alberta organized Labor if they persist in ignoring any attempt to deal with other than the vital questions of wages and hours, until those have been fully considered.

Organized Labor was born of the necessity for the common expression of common aspirations and desires. The same ground for organization still exists in a larger degree. Hence the ever-increasing growth of the Labor movement.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

(The Free Press takes no responsibility for any opinions expressed in letters to the editor. No letters can be accepted for publication, and will not be printed unless accompanied by name and address of writer.)

February 4th, 1920.

Editor, Free Press:

Dear Sir,—The controversy between Dr. Crang and the Mayor is very interesting from Labor's point of view. Dr. Crang is a self-made man, having been for several years an active member of the Bricklayers' Union in Toronto, therefore knows the base of Labor. What stands out as a remarkable fact is: Dr. Crang, as soon as he got the power, acted for those he represented; instead of referring orders back to committee. What Labor requires is such men; actors, not referees.

To boost a city, the first thing to do is to have a satisfied citizenship. Weather is no object if opportunities are equivalent, yet it is a known fact, married men, in the city's employ several years, and with families to support, are getting \$82 a month. Therefore in my opinion the first duty of Labor representatives is to revise the wage schedule, let all new men be married, and those already in the employ given the hint to get married. Make the job worth while and guarantee no discharges on account of age. All other improvements come secondary. Take my case, I am not a member of the city's staff, yet I have relations in England, Toronto and Vancouver, and know that I will wind up where I get the best reports from. It means I will go to the best place, or they come here; once the pack is here you have citizens. Now take 500 cases of such, it ultimately means at least 2,000 steady newcomers each with further connections, not transients; that is the base of power, satisfied citizens. Then once you have that, debts, etc. will vanish of their own free will; therefore Dr. Crang's view, I uphold, and say the council ought to come through with the money, and instead of fighting, do likewise and copy his example.

Respectfully,  
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