

CANADIAN LABOR PRESS

A National, Sane Labor Paper

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

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Loss to Toronto

THE printing and publishing trade of Toronto, is much concerned lately over the large amount of printing done outside Toronto, for use in Toronto. It is estimated that a hundred thousand dollars a month and upwards goes out of Toronto for printing by Toronto firms for use in Toronto. Most of this represents wages, which, if paid by Toronto printing houses, would add a large sum to circulation in the city and benefit Toronto, and Toronto firms correspondingly and hundreds of men who work for a wage.

Added to job printing losses to the city, is a great deal of retail advertising done in free weeklies printed in towns near Toronto for circulation in Toronto, a brisk business being done.

As it all means great loss to Toronto retail firms, printing house workmen and trades allied to the publishing business, it has been decided to commence an educational crusade to induce all citizens as far as possible to see that printing for use in Toronto is done in the city. The allied trades will appeal first to the labor homes—the largest buyers in the retail stores, but the appeal will become general, for much loyalty to Toronto's institutions and Toronto printing workmen, thousands of whom are taxpayers and many out of employment through the transfer of printing to other centres.

Among the towns where Toronto printing is done may be mentioned Brampton, Oakville, Whitby, Oshawa and Port Hope. Brampton and Whitby, have been boomed considerably at the expense of Toronto. Brampton, it is said, is printing a great deal of the West Toronto work, also weekly newspapers for West Toronto, Mount Dennis, Weston, Mimico, New Toronto and Port Credit. It is time the community spirit was aroused in West Toronto and East Toronto, as well as the towns mentioned. Every place should have its own paper printed in the municipality, giving employment to local men and keeping local money in local circulation as far as possible. In West Toronto there is a local newspaper "The West York Herald" which has been long before the people with a splendid record financially and as a strict union office. A paper of that calibre should be preferred by merchants for their own interest, instead of outside non-union shops.

West Toronto labor unions of the allied trades have passed resolutions to give "The West York Herald" the preference through buying in shops advertised in its columns.

The labor homes comprise over half West Toronto's population and they promise to make their power felt at once.

"Joe" Marks, Founder of the Labor Educational Association of Ontario Recalls Old Days in the Labor Movement

"Joe" T. Marks is one of the most popular and widely known labor leaders in this Province. Although Toronto is his present home town, "Joe," as he is familiarly called, spends much of his time in Hamilton. At present Mr. Marks is devoting the greater part of his time to promoting a Provincial Labor weekly newspaper.

Born in London, Ont., Joe Marks passed his 69th milestone last October. For upwards of 44 years he has been actively and continuously connected with the trade union and political labor movement in this province. When quite a young man, Mr. Marks migrated to Chicago where he joined an independent union and also the Knights of Labor. On his return to London he became a charter member of the Pilot Railway Asembly, honorary member of the Toronto Street Railway Employees' Union and many other labor organizations.

Recalls Old Days

"There were some strong trade unions, but not many, because organization was in a crude state, and organizers were few and far between," Joe remarked. "And sometimes on meeting nights the hat had to be passed around as a means of raising money to pay the rent of the hall."

"There were few spell-binders in the labor movement in those days, probably because there were no lucrative jobs to entice them. Some of the unions met secretly as a means of insuring protection to members against being discharged and black-listed by anti-union employers."

No Strike Benefits

"In the early seventies and eighties no strike benefits were paid, and paid officers and committees were as scarce as hen's teeth. Nevertheless, as a result of these sacrifices of these sturdy old pioneers was laid the foundation upon which the fast-growing labor movement of Canada to-day was built up."

Carpenters Allege Discrimination

The Managing Committee of the Amalgamated Society of Carpenters, in a written statement, charge the officials of the Street Railway Employers' Union with unfair discrimination towards their members, and allege that the contractors erecting the new clubhouse on Bond street for the street railway men, have been instructed to see that none but members of the Carpenters' Brotherhood are employed on the job. It is claimed that this is the only job in Toronto where such conditions of affairs exist. The amalgamated officers, in protesting against the alleged discrimination shown, said: "It seems rather peculiar, in a city like Toronto, with its pronounced British and Canadian viewpoint, that members of a British and Canadian organization should be debarred from obtaining employment on a building being erected in the city for the use of employees of a publicly-owned enterprise."

The main allegation is admitted to be correct by the Street Railway Union officials, but they decline to make any comment thereon except to say that they have been advised by the secretary of the Building Trades Council that the Brotherhood of Carpenters is the only organization recognized by that body as legitimate union.

The Brotherhood is an American organization which the Amalgamated Carpenters refused to recognize as having any lawful jurisdiction in Ontario, particularly in Toronto. It is not recognized by the Builders' Exchange.

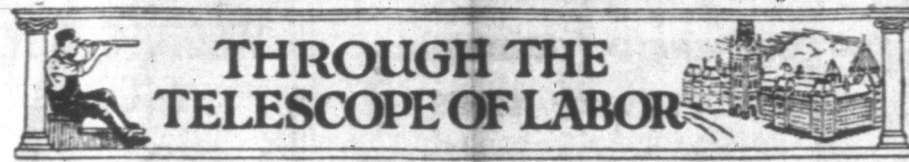
A Dangerous Experiment

Labour Unions of Canada are considering a plan to launch a new automobile company to provide jobs for machinists now unemployed. There is evidence to indicate that the initiative in the plan has come from the promoters of a new type of automobile.

The unions do not seem to have chosen wisely in their choice of product. About 85 per cent. of automobile production is concentrated in the hands of two companies in Canada or the United States are slight even under able management. The fact that companies formed to exploit the automobile design they have chosen have failed to make good in either Canada or the United States is an additional reason for caution.

No one will quarrel with practical socialism in the form of investment by workers of their savings in the shares of the corporations they work for. Such companies as Bell Telephone, Laurentide Company, Steel Company of Canada, etc., have many of their employees owning stock and are demonstrating the efficacy of this manner of applying socialistic theories. The more widespread this movement becomes the greater the solidity of the labor and industrial structure in Canada.

Selling workers' stock in a new and hazardous promotion, entering a field that is one of the most difficult in manufacturing, is a different proposition. With every desire to be fair, it can only be felt that the worker-investors are likely to lose their money.



Civic "Gas" and Gasoline

LABOR AND THE OIL INDUSTRY—HOW THEIR WELFARE IS AFFECTED BY RECENT PROPOSALS—ISSUE INVOLVES PRINCIPLE OF MADE-IN-CANADA PRODUCTS

"The Canadian Labor Press" holds no brief for the oil industry or any other industry, but it does assert that the welfare of the men and women employed in industry are extremely important to us and for that reason we refuse to be stampeded by industrial agitations that we believe to be promoted for the two-fold purpose of enabling United States concerns to obtain a foothold in Canada and to provide a stepping-stone for the ambitions of men in public life.

Looking at the gasoline agitation now going on in the City of Toronto from a Labor point of view, we have examined and present to our readers, some facts that are to be obtained from the reports of Canada Trade Imports and Export, issued by the Department of Trade and Commerce. During the six months ending July, 1924, there was imported into Ontario from the U.S., 1,925,437 barrels of crude oil, of which approximately 40%, or 770,174 barrels were converted into gasoline, by the refineries here. In addition, there were imported 276,182 barrels of finished gasoline, so that about 73% of the gasoline during that period was refined here and 27% was refined in the United States. A Toronto Alderman, in giving an interview to the daily press, stated that 75% of the gasoline used, came from the U.S. and as will be noted, the reverse is actually the case.

The refining here means employment to wage earners and wealth created in Canada, but it does not stop there, because the balance of the crude oil imported is converted into fuel oil, coal oil and lubricating oil, and the process of doing so means additional employment for Canadian workers. In addition, the transportation of oil products by the Canadian companies is of considerable importance to railway workers in Canada as millions of dollars are spent in railway freight, of which a large portion goes in wages, one company alone paying nearly seven million dollars a year in freight to Canadian railway companies.

It is estimated also, that there are approximately 8,500 employees in the industry with a payroll of \$12,500,000 per year, or an average salary per head of \$1,470 per year, or \$28.32 per week, an average which comes within a few cents of the wages paid to labor employed by the City of Toronto. This is exclusive of the wages paid to Canadian workers engaged in the building and construction of oil plant and equipment in Canada which represents an investment of \$100,000,000.

These are serious facts that ought to be given weighty consideration before anything is done that will damage an industry in which so many workers are interested and for the sake of wage earners' welfare it is to be hoped that deep consideration will be given them. The U.S. firms at present trying to obtain a foothold in Ontario, can afford to sell below cost for a year if necessary, in order to achieve their purpose, but it would be subjecting ourselves to a delusion if we expect them not to recoup themselves for the losses incurred in establishing themselves here.

For a great many years the fiscal policy of Canada has been so regulated that the principle of Made-in-Canada goods for home consumption, has been increasingly fostered. And while different governments have modified and amended Canadian trade regulations, no government of either party has dared to wholly repudiate that policy.

It has been left to members of the Toronto City Council to take up a position exactly the reverse of Canada's national policy.

Alderman Pearce, of the Toronto City Council, who is prominent in the agitation for the city to retail gasoline, has always been an advocate of abolishing all trade barriers between the U.S. and Canada, but it would look more straightforward if he was to conduct an open campaign against Canada's protective policy instead of trying to achieve the same effect by a round-about method.

The Results of False Prosperity

UNEMPLOYMENT insurance has its limits, according to the viewpoint of John R. Commons, of the University of Wisconsin, for unemployment is a state of society created by conditions which civilization has not yet been able to control. Professor Commons felt that the recent and vivid experience of unemployment has directed many of the leaders of labor and business to the importance, either of smoothing out the curve of employment, or of smoothing out the curve of daily wages. For these two problems, though different, are related. As an illustration of the extent to which the wage scale needs to be smoothed out, the speaker referred to the fact that in the Summer of 1919, he found clothing manufacturers in New York paying as high as \$125 a week for off-pressers when the union wage was \$50 a week, and the pre-war scale was \$25. In the same Summer, in one machinery establishment, money wages per hour increased three-fold, but the product per worker decreased two-thirds.

As another illustration, Professor Commons told of truck-drivers who, upon meeting with an accident on the street, abandoned their trucks and found other jobs rather than stop to repair their trucks.

"So," said Professor Commons, "during the peak of false prosperity, labor, organized and unorganized, acquired four things under the illusion of general security: high daily wages, short hours per day, reduction of output, and general irresponsibility."

A Necessary Reaction

Then came the downward jerk, where laborers lost, during months of idleness, as much as they gained by the previous high wages; and in commenting upon this, the speaker said, "Evidently the slump in prices and the class struggle over wages and employment were but the necessary reaction from the preceding illusion of prosperity and general scarcity."

"Assuming that the cycles, trends, jerks and seasons are to continue, then the smoothing of wages prescribes the remedy of setting aside reserves, during the period of apparent scarcity and false prosperity in order to pay wages during the period of apparent over-production. Whether these reserves shall come out of wages or out of profits, it is difficult to determine. If they are paid out of profits they reduce, by so much, the income taxes and consequently are not quite as heavy a burden on the employer as their aggregate amount might indicate. At the same time, it is well known, and was known before the time of Adam Smith, that laborers will accept lower wages per day if they have assurance of steady employment at steady wages than when they have no assurance of steady employment at steady wages than when they have no assurance of such. This principle was taken advantage of in the inauguration of the unemployment insurance system of the men's clothing industry of Chicago. The arbitrators granted a raise of ten per cent. in wages, but the two parties stipulated that only seven per cent. should be paid currently in wages, and that the other three per cent.—paid, nominally, half by the employers out the profits, and nominally, half of the workers out of wages—should be set aside for unemployment insurance. What actually happened was that the workers accepted a seven per cent. increase in current wages instead of a ten per cent. increase, on condition that an additional three per cent. should be taken in the form of deferred wages during unemployment."

Avoid Class Struggle

"I do not see how much progress can be made if the problem is stated in the form of a class struggle between the employer and employee. The proper way of stating it seems to be as follows:—Modern industry must bear two kinds of overhead—capital overhead and labor overhead. Each is equally entitled to consideration, and it is a matter of adjustment, or bargaining, or ingenuity, in each particular establishment or industry, at each particular time and place, to determine how much shall be declared currently in dividends and wages and how much shall be carried over for deferred dividends and deferred wages."

"This community of interest, instead of class struggle, will become more apparent if the attention of both parties can be directed away from the problem of smoothing out wages to our second problem of smoothing out employment. The former consists in paying workers while they are idle, the latter consists in reducing idleness. The former is class struggle, the latter is joint increase in the productivity of industry. The former is relief for the unemployed, the latter is prevention of unemployment."

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