

Dust

THE GOVERNMENT AND LAZARUS

Notorious Immigration Crook Was Joint Agent of the Interior Department -- Strike Breaker for Crow's Nest Coal Co.--How the Canadian Labor Market Was Glutted

One of the most remarkable episodes in the history of Canadian immigration matters is that connected with the individual recently known as Louis Leopold, whose right name is Leopold Lazarus.

While the declared policy of the government has always been to encourage no immigrants except those of the agricultural class, the chief commissioner of immigration was apparently for years associated with and giving assistance to Leopold in sending out mechanics and artisans to this country. Sometimes they were obtained by false representations, sometimes possibly by less fraudulent means, but generally there was close co-operation between Leopold's office and that of Mr. Preston and always the treasury of Canada contributed to Leopold's advertising and canvassing.

Standing Instructions to Preston. The policy of the government was announced by the Minister of the Interior in the House of Commons in the session of 1906. (See Hansard, July 3, 1906, page 6870.)

The standing of the instructions of the department to its agents canvassing for immigrants have since 1896, been to encourage none but persons of the agricultural classes and domestic servants to come to Canada, but until recently the department has made no objection to paying bonuses on immigrants who had been mechanics, provided they declared their intention of engaging in agricultural pursuits in this country.

On June 20, 1904, Mr. Sifton was asked if the government was not aware that certain individuals were making fraudulent representations to intending immigrants to Canada by holding themselves out as agents of the Canadian government, guaranteeing positions and committing other frauds. In reply Mr. Sifton stated that the government was aware that certain individuals were making such fraudulent representations, and had accordingly ordered the following advertisement to be inserted in leading newspapers of the United Kingdom. (See Hansard, June 20, 1904, page 5973.)

"The government of the Dominion of Canada having been informed that certain persons conducting labour agencies in London and elsewhere in the United Kingdom, have been promoting the immigration to Canada of mechanics and other skilled workmen, and have been giving false information respecting labor conditions in Canada, and have represented themselves as agents of or as having the sanction and endorsement of the Dominion government. Notice is hereby given that the Dominion government has no such agents in the United Kingdom, has not authorized, sanctioned or in any way given its approval to any agency in the United Kingdom for promoting immigration to Canada of mechanics or other skilled labor.

(Sgd. James A. Smart, deputy minister of the Interior of Canada.) That Leopold, so called, was one of the parties making such misrepresentation is shown by the following circular among others issued by him. (See Hansard, July 3, 1906, page 6900.)

Canadian Labor Bureau. I would draw attention to the fact that, owing to the rapid increase of population in Canada, and to the consequential development of the country, as also to the general commercial prosperity, there is almost unlimited demand for experienced, both male and female in all various towns of Canada.

Good hands are required for the iron and steel trade, the building trade, as well as for mills, factories and other industrial establishments. "Almost every mail from Canada brings fresh applications for help which is urgently needed, and the enclosed list deals with the actual vacancies that this bureau has to offer at the present time, for men who are strong and able and willing to work, and who are anxious to improve their position in a country which holds out such excellent prospects as does the Dominion of Canada.

Generally speaking wages are higher than they are in England, and the cost of living lower. Nobody booking through this office

need be afraid of being without work on arrival in Canada, and it is my principal never to send anyone out unless there is a direct opening for him to go to. An introduction from the bureau guarantees permanent work with a reliable firm to suitable men.

The intimate connection of Mr. Preston and the Canadian government office with Leopold began on the arrival of this gentleman in London. Mr. Preston testifies (page 124 and following pages, public accounts committee evidence, 1906.)

Question. When did you first have these relations with Leopold?

Answer. I became acquainted with Leopold I think in the spring of 1902.

Q. What was he then doing?

A. He came to London for the purpose of establishing a booking agency.

Q. Do you know his real name?

A. His real name is Leopold Lazarus.

Q. He is not Louis Leopold.

A. No. He is like a great many Hebrews who come there and adopt English names. There are hundreds of them in London.

Q. When he came to you in 1902 was he introduced to you as Leopold Lazarus?

A. No. The Lazarus end of it I only learned about two years ago.

Q. When did you first begin to have relations with Leopold with regard to immigration?

A. Very shortly after he came there. It was when my office was in Victoria street.

The Intimacy Grows. While the government office was on Victoria street that of Leopold was also there. Leopold called his office sometimes the Canadian Labor Bureau and sometimes a Farmers' Auxiliary. He began immediately to receive bonuses from the Canadian government on British immigrants sent to this country. It was discovered later that he was also receiving bonuses from the North Atlantic Trading Co. for continental immigrants whose passage he booked. Late in the investigation Mr. Preston admitted that his son-in-law, Mr. Alexander, solicitor for the North Atlantic trading Co., had also on Mr. Preston's recommendation been engaged to do Leopold's law business.

In 1903 the government immigration office was moved to Charing Cross. At the same time Leopold's headquarters were transferred to the same building as the new immigration office, and to the same flat as one of them. Soon afterwards direct telephone communication was established between Mr. Preston's office and Leopold's.

It was at this time that Leopold, in his capacity as the Canadian Labor Bureau, was causing trouble by sending out artisan laborers on representations said to be false, and by negotiating arrangements for breaking strikes in Canada.

The government was all the time insisting that no public encouragement was given to immigration other than agricultural or domestic and many complaints had been made by labor organizations and through the press as well as in parliament that the government offices were encouraging and assisting the agents accused of the fraudulent representations.

The Ennis Letters. It will be shown that there is good ground for these charges. The following letters from Mr. Preston to Mr. J. Ennis, manager of the Allan Line Co., have a direct bearing on this matter. (Pages 144-145.)

17 Victoria street, London, Feb. 17th, 1903.

Strictly private and confidential.

My Dear Mr. Ennis.—Now that the Elder Dempster line has gone into the hands of the Canadian Pacific railway, I can confer with you upon the subject, and also act with you in this matter in a way in which it was not in my power at an earlier date.

Of course you are aware that the Canadian Pacific Railway will open offices at Cocksport street in the course of a year. You are also aware that there are one or two agencies whose business is principally drawn through being able to assure those booking through them that positions in western Canada will be found them on arrival.

I was called on yesterday by a very responsible fellow who wanted to discuss with me a plan which he thinks he will be able to carry out with the aid of this office and the office at Winnipeg, and also the government offices in Toronto, through my influence so as to be assured of finding employment for all who book through him.

He has also considered the advisability, and with this object in view has had correspondence with a number of large employers of labor in Canada, to furnish them with the labor, and which of course, for very obvious reasons cannot be handled through this office.

He wanted to know if in the event of making arrangements with one of the steamship companies as a booking agent, whether I would be disposed to assist him in respect of finding employment through the government offices at Winnipeg, Toronto, Montreal or elsewhere as the case may be, by referring inquiries to him from time to time, provided his office could be situated conveniently to our new offices.

I told him that upon the latter point I had had a confidential conversation with you, suggesting the advisability of your company renting one of the small offices, immediately over the new offices of the government on Charing Cross. As the outcome of my conversation with him, at any rate, I thought I would write you to see whether your company would be willing to share with him the rent of one of the small offices in that building, appointing him as your licensed agent, giving him the usual commission. I think if this can be done it will open an avenue for considerable business being created there for which otherwise there is either a general hunt, or a general scramble now.

Now that the Elder-Dempster people are out of the running, my hands are free to act in a manner that will give evidence of a more sympathetic operation with you than formerly.

I would like to have a chat with you on this subject, but it is impossible for me to get away from home a day at present, but I would like very much to have your view on this.

I have very strong reasons for wishing anything of this kind that might be done shall be through the gentlemen to whom I have referred. After his conversation with me I would rather feel as though I was breaking faith with him if he was to give place to anyone else.

Yours very truly, (Sgd.) W. PRESTON.

J. Ennis, Esq., Liverpool. The Plot Develops. June 10, 1903.

Private and confidential.

Dear Mr. Ennis—I have yours of the 9th with enclosures from the Plymouth agents. For reasons which you can understand, i.e., in view of the oppositions of THE LABOR UNIONS in Canada—and you have had some experience in connection with dock laborers at Montreal—against any propaganda among prospective emigrants who are likely to engage in any other calling in Canada; and also incident to the fact that they have demanded from the government my recall or dismissal, alleging encouragement on my part respecting immigration other than agriculturalists, the department is debarred from furnishing any specific information respecting the possibilities of labor in Canada by mechanics, artisans and others. This has, therefore led to the establishment of a labor bureau by large employers of various kinds of skilled labor which has taken shape in the Canadian Labor Bureau.

Although I am not supposed to know anything about the workings of the company, I necessarily made enquiries as to its bona fides, and also the financial standing of those who are interested in its inception. Having satisfied myself on these points, I have not regarded the subject as of any further concern in so far as its work respecting Canada is concerned.

I am well aware, however, that applications have been received by the bureau for thousands of skilled and trained artisans, not only general but specific requests for particular numbers required in various kinds of manufacturing industries.

It is not necessary that I should say whether I welcome this adjunct to the Canadian work or not, but in view of the ACTION OF THE LABOR PARTY IN CANADA; I am free to admit that I am not surprised that an institution of this kind has commenced operations.

Where the labor bureau advertises for any particular trade or calling, I am satisfied that its manager is in a position to place the stated number of these particular trades required, giving them letters of introduction to employers of labor in Canada, who will furnish them with immediate employment at stated wages on arrival.

I do not see how a steamship company is going to prevent an employer of labor from advertising his wants and guaranteeing the requirements and securing the labor he requires, and I am free to admit that I do not see any greater cause for complaint in this particular than, for instance, Cook's, Gaze's or Lunn's offices advertising in towns or localities where they have no stated agencies. Of course I am writing you this fully and frankly on the question, but I do not wish that my letter shall be made public.

Yours very truly, (Sgd.) W. PRESTON.

Hutchinson-MacGlashen Co. Architects Masonic Temple Regina. P.O. Box 1176 Phone 696.

G. E. Hutchinson, R. A. A., I. A. C., Chief Designer. E. MacGlashen, Supervising Architect.

These letters, which were read before the public accounts committee, had a remarkable history. As they showed duplicity on the part of Mr. Preston, who, in assisting Leopold's Labor Bureau, was acting contrary to the declared policy of the government and the country the writer was anxious that they should be kept secret. But, Mr. Jury, the government agent at Liverpool, who before his appointment had been an active worker with labor organizations suspected Mr. Preston's connection with Leopold and his work. Having seen the Preston letters in the possession of Mr. Ennis, he endeavored to procure them. Following is Mr. Jury's story of what happened. (Page 318 Evidence.)

"When Ennis gave the steamship license to the labor bureau at Preston's request he stipulated that they should not advertise outside of London to encroach upon the territory of their other agency. Agents wrote to Ennis complaining of the conduct of this bureau. I said, 'not only has he done these things, but he has interfered with your business and their business, and I think on all these grounds you should let me have the letters.' Mr. Ennis put the letters in an envelope, swung around on his chair looked up at the cellar grated window, I took the letters and put them in my pocket.

Question. He turned aside after after putting the letters in a compartment near him.

Answer. After it was understood that I was to have them.

Q. Have you since you came here any communication with Mr. Ennis?

A. Yes, I had a cable from him to say that I might use the letters.

Mr. Preston has charged that the letters were stolen and Mr. Jury swears that he allowed himself to rest under that imputation for a long time in order to protect Mr. Ennis, whose business might be very greatly injured by the commissioner.

There was a good deal of discussion, and many abusive epithets were exchanged between Mr. Jury and Mr. Preston concerning this correspondence. The original letters were subsequently handed over by Mr. Ennis to the secretary of the high commissioner. There is therefore no doubt of their authenticity.

(To be continued.)

Minard's Liniment cures Diphtheria.

St. Chad's Concert. The concert given under the auspices of St. Chad's Hostel for the purpose of securing funds for that institution was held in the city hall last Thursday evening and was a gratifying success. The program was an excellent one and was greatly appreciated by those present.

All those who took part in the musical and vocal parts of the program were well received, but special mention must be given to Mr. A. W. R. Dunstan whose singing of "Nelson" and a Coaster song showed to advantage his versatility. Mr. Porter also received enthusiastic applause.

The program concluded with a one act farce "Ice on Parle Francaise," which in its production the audience owe the thanks to those who took part who were: Miss Spencer Page, Miss Gordon, Miss Thomas, Miss Little, Mr. A. C. Hackman, Mr. A. C. Tappin and Mr. A. W. R. Dunstan.

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