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Industrial Disturbances and Present Situation

Present menacing aspects of strike call for business co-operation and unity—High-price level a contributing cause not due primarily to profiteering but to world shortages.

The present strike situation in Canada is but an indication of the incipient strike and chronic labor unrest that industry and business has been suffering under for the past three years or since the nation got on a war basis. Each strike or each renewal of strike assumes an uglier aspect and partakes more of a revolutionary character. From small beginnings in a local industrial plant in Winnipeg involving one employer and a small number of employees, the strike has spread in such a way as to convulse the city of Winnipeg and the labor leaders have sought to create a sympathetic strike condition in every industry in Canada. The march of the strike west has been comparatively rapid. Starting on May 18th it moved westward. In Vancouver on Monday, June 2nd, the labor leaders sought to call a general strike of all those workmen affiliated with the Trades and Labor Council and other labor bodies associated with international associations. The present strike situation has uncovered definite designs for the overturning of government and the substitution of a definite communistic order, which even the strike leaders have little definite opinion about, being more concerned with the overturning of the present order than the replacement of another. The labor unions and associations in Western Canada, at least, are frankly in the control of these revolutionaries.

At present there is sitting in convention at Calgary certain labor representatives who are seeking to control all labor in Canada through what is known as the "One Big Union." The success of a "One Big Union" under present leadership would spell anarchy for Canadian industry, and its progress will be watched with considerable anxiety and must be met with a counter movement of forceful character with a programme of stern treatment and wide public participation. The principle of collective bargaining has for the first time been advanced in labor circles in Canada. This is the principle that the labor leaders operating as a unit for the entire labor body should bargain with employer or employers

affecting a particular industry or factory. The present practice is for the labor union to deal with its employers apart from the consideration of other unions, and if no solution could be arrived at then the strike leaders of that particular union called a strike. It can be readily seen under the present conditions when labor is completely in the control of leaders, one of whom stated recently that the war on capital had commenced and would never cease until capitalism was destroyed, and all the leaders did not want a settlement of present labor unrest and disturbances, but seek through the unrest and labor disturbances the overturning of business and industry, that collective bargaining is a serious menace and but another tool in the hands of these revolutionaries.

Responsible labor leaders in control of the management of the large unions in Canada and those in affiliation with the international unions in the United States have lost control of labor activities in Western Canada completely and their orders are being disobeyed with recklessness and lack of consideration.

The rank and file of members in the unions are sober, industrious and want to work. Where this sober element puts in an appearance those that give expression to it are subject to intimidation and rough treatment from tools of these leaders in control. The leaders are in possession of this control and sway the more moderate element because of the success which they have received in their recent calls of strikes by the complete abdication of employers to their demands. The

success of recent strikes has emboldened these leaders to go for more and more and has resulted in them going beyond anything which the average member wishes for. These leaders are now less interested in co-operation with capital than they are in seeking first to control, and second, to destroy capital. If they are permitted to get out of hand they would produce a condition in Canada similar to that in Russia. Labor's best friend in Canada, Senator Robertson, Minister of Labor, has clearly pointed out the different character of this strike in comparison with the strikes which have previously occurred and which he has been so successful in amicably adjusting.

The need for personal and community thrift is as great now as in the black days of 1918 when it was realized that the most stringent self-denial was requisite to enable us to meet the demands of the Government for more and yet more money with which to carry on the war. The great dread which hung over all a year ago has happily been removed, but we still have a duty to perform, and it is essential that it should be faced. It is necessary to carry on public works that will aid production, such as roads and railways, on a considerable scale, in order to provide employment for the workers. We have also a heavy burden of interest imposed on us by the war, and we have great obligations to those who were maimed as well as to the dependents of those who laid down their lives for our security. These obligations can be met only by a continuance of self-denial on the part of every one in the Dominion. —May commercial letter of the Canadian Bank of Commerce.