

"Double Cross" Arguments of the Liquor Interests

1. **Prohibition is a Capitalistic and Church Propaganda.** It is true that both capital and church are increasingly supporting Prohibition. But the first temperance movements in England were among the trade unions who recognized booze as a foe of efficient organization. Capital and church are following our lead. Also remember that we do not oppose schools, hospitals, sewer and sanitary improvements, etc., etc. Because capitalists are in favor of them. Some things are common foes to all, and liquor is one of them. And don't forget that the question before us is not the record of the church in regard to Labor, but the record of the liquor traffic. Shall we turn down a reform greatly to our benefit because some of our supposed enemies are for it also?

2. **Prohibition Increases Taxation.** Whether we believe workers pay all the taxes or none of the taxes, the argument is the same. The liquor trade in Canada costs us directly or indirectly about \$20 per head and pays in taxes \$2.50 per head. It takes \$8 for its useless product and returns \$1 in revenue. When we save the \$8 we can easily pay the \$1 in cash if necessary. But it won't be necessary. For law administration will be cut in two. In Winnipeg the police force and office staff are already being reduced by not replacing those who resign. And further, when we cease buying wet goods we will buy dry goods. The merchants of Seattle report large increases during six months of dry regime in the sales of clothing and shoes for women and children. Under our tariff system there is a duty on all these goods. Thus what is lost in liquor revenue will be made up in revenue on dry stuff. In Winnipeg, after one month of Prohibition (the same kind as the British Columbia Act provides) workmen's homes are already showing signs of improvement. That means revenue from paint sales. And if those other lines do not replace entirely the revenue, the merchants won't mind paying \$1 in taxes if \$8 in business comes along with it. The government of Manitoba is not levying one cent extra in taxes on any kind because of the advent of dry weather.

3. **This Act Interferes with Personal Liberty.** Here the liquor trade tries to swing our increasing jealousy of our liberty to their advantage. It is not personal liberty, but liberty with our purses they want. But we are too wise to fall for it. We know by experience that a man must surrender his personal liberty to work for low wages in order to secure the higher wages secured in the formation of a trade union. And so we must take away the personal liberty of greedy men to sell liquor and of selfish men to drink it in order that we may gain the higher liberty for our children of a sober country. This law is not the foe of liberty, but the defender of it. In May, Winnipeg police imprisoned 264 people for drunkenness, but in June under dry rule only 24. Was the act a foe of liberty? And it is the same act that you are asked to support on September 14.

4. **This Act Means Unemployment.** Usually in Winnipeg on Monday morning some 120 people were "unemployed" because they were in the lockup for drunkenness. But on the third Monday of Prohibition there was not a single prisoner there. They were all at work. The chief had to hire scrubbers to clean out. That made a few more jobs, didn't it? Capital turned from making booze will employ eight times as many men. An hotel in Brandon, Manitoba, surrendered its licence and the bar was replaced by a store employing seven times as many clerks as there had been bar-tenders. Soft drinks will replace hard drinks; bottle-makers will still be needed; breweries become pickle factories (that is, under Prohibition, they will pickle cabbage instead of cabbage heads). It takes more hands per capital invested to "can" tomatoes than to "can" humans. I personally offered to help the agent of the bar-tenders union in Winnipeg to find employment after we went dry, but he told us they were all fixed. He himself went back to his old