



Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press



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A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER.

LABOR DAY, 1920

By Frank Morrison, Secretary, American Federation of Labor.
 On this Labor Day there are many issues confronting wage earners, but none are more fundamental than Labor's demand for collective bargaining. With this assured the worker has a voice in conditions affecting what he will think, read, eat and wear, how he will educate his children and clothe them, and what manner of home he may have.

Where collective bargaining is denied, the worker is powerless; his employer regulates his life. This power of the non-union employer is accepted by a commission representing the Interchurch World Movement that investigated the recent strike of steel workers for collective bargaining. The report says: "The arbitrary control of the steel corporation extended outside the plants, affecting the workers as citizens and the social institutions in the communities."
 In all ages workers have united. They have struggled for liberty and they have overthrown dynasties and kings. Despite these upheavals there was no change in their economic status. They remained inferiors, "hewers of wood and drawers of water." Their working conditions were set by employers, whose power automatically extended to every social phase of their lives.

The modern trade union, as typified by the American Federation of Labor, is the first effective challenge to the world-old theory of serfdom, maintained in various forms, and around this challenge centres all opposition to organized labor.
 To continue this status of inferiority and maintain control of their workers, employers talk of their so-called "open" shop and individual bargaining. These are but new names for a mastery over workers that is fought for just as stoutly today as when feudal barons held their serfs to the land.

The modern title that anti-trade union employers have applied to their serf theory fails to hide its purpose and effect.
 Men cannot be free when they are compelled to bargain single-handed with a feudal baron's successor on rates of pay and working conditions.
 Philanthropy can not affect the principle involved. There can be no equality between men when an employer is gentle with his power, for if an employer has power to give justice he has the power to withhold it. His employes are subject to his graciousness and his whims.

There can be no co-operation in industry where an employer is final judge of his workers' physical endurance, wages and the effect of bad working conditions.
 On this Labor Day the organized workers have set their stand of intelligence, solidarity and determination in an advanced position against this industrial serf theory that mocks every profession of Americanism by these employers.

LOST TO THE CAUSE.

It must be a matter of general regret to the organized movement of the Dominion to be given the information that the Labor Temple of Vancouver has passed to other hands, and incidentally the use of same lost to the cause for which it was originally erected. The ringing down of the final curtain was by no means in the nature of a surprise, as for some time past it was common knowledge that the task of carrying same was too heavy in a divided house, and the efforts to secure sufficient aid outside of Vancouver was in the failure class.
 It goes without saying that the organized worker of Canada had some interest in the Vancouver Temple, standing as the premier labor home in extent, with everything to make for a magnificent building in the heart of the city, it was in the nature of things for the extending of more than a sympathetic feeling towards it, and the lack of the necessary outside aid to its maintenance may be attributed to the rift in the lute right amongst its builders. As the divisions to be laid to the doors of the reactionaries are to be laid to the doors of the reactionaries are causes for any chaos that at present exists, so rightly may the building failure be attributed. Solidarity in Vancouver would not have removed the uphill fight so necessary to be waged, but with eventual success assured in the retention of the Temple and a practical sympathy from the outside would not have been sought in vain.

The finest temple dedicated to labor in the Dominion has been lost, there is a moral again repeated showing reactionary impetuosity in any direction comes a cropper when the impractical course is pursued. Building on air, preaching in the same way, success to the reactionary forces is due "when dreams come true." In the interval of bridging the present period of nerves, the International Trade Union movement of Vancouver can be relied upon to continue to build on its foundation

Across the Atlantic.

What Our Brothers in the Motherland Are Doing.

OUR WEEKLY BRITISH LETTER.
 LONDON, England (Saturday).—All other considerations in the Labor world are overshadowed by the threatened coal strike. Despite the results of the ballot, so far disclosed, showing an overwhelming majority for the strike, there is a distinct feeling of hopefulness that a disaster will be averted. The South Wales ballot shows to date over 26,000 in favor of the strike, above the requisite two-thirds majority. Latest figures for the entire country are given as 153,363 for the strike and 52,499 against.

The unions generally are against the proposed industrial chaos, and it is anticipated that the railwaymen and transport workers at the meeting with the miners on Tuesday will advocate a conference with the Government so that a compromise may be reached. In the event of a strike the Coal Association estimates that the total weekly loss will be, on the total output of coal, \$7,534,375.

The treasury loss on the surplus price on export coal will be \$119,900. Shipping freight for export coal will lose \$707,000. Railway freight will lose \$1,509,000, a total of \$1,111,375. Of this weekly loss it is calculated that the miners' wages would represent over \$5,000,000, in addition to which, through the closing down of industries, other labor would lose in wages some \$25,000,000 per week.
Big Losses Involved.
 The following figures show how the economic position of the mines has changed during the last few years. In 1912, the mine workers were 1,110,000, while in 1920 this number has been increased by 100,000. On the other hand, the output of coal in 1912 was 27,000,000 tons, while for 1920 the estimated output is 47,000,000 tons less. Meanwhile the workers' remuneration has been increased by two and a half times. The average annual earnings of all classes of mine workers, including boys, in 1912 was \$52, while for 1920 it is \$120. The average output per shift of the adult male colliery worker before the war for an eight-hour day was 72 lb, while for 1920 for a seven-hour day, it is 138 lb. The effect of these increases in wages, accompanied by the decrease of output, has resulted in the average price of coal for home use rising to 12 1/2 cents per ton, while 2 1/2 is paid in wages to the miners.
 Considerable criticism is directed at the method of taking the miners' ballot. For one thing the ballot is taken in groups, and young boys are permitted to vote. It is also stated that it is possible for men to vote more than once, as no particular check is made. The memory of the attendant at the ballot box.

Moderation Urged.
 William Holman, former president of the Notts Miners' Association, has stated that he is convinced that, if the miners were not allowed to vote at this ballot, there would be no coal for the country. He does not expect that these boys would see the seriousness of a strike which, if it succeeded, would mean that the strike of 1914 would be repeated. J. R. Clynes, M.P., has sent the following message to the press: "It is in the national interest that the ballot should be taken, and that the arrangements should be made to arrange between the miners' leaders and the Government. The peril which confronts us requires the taking of every step towards a settlement—just both to the miners and to the country." At time of the previous meeting of the miners' president, Mr. Robert Horne, he stated that, if an increased output could be obtained, a new situation would be presented and the miners' claims would receive consideration. In this way it is thought that there is room for compromise.

Ballot returns will be completed on Monday, and the strike notices "blown" on September 18.
 The Trade Union Congress, which assembled at Portsmouth on September 5, before these notices expired, is expected to have considerable influence in averting a strike. Six and a half million trade unionists will be represented by some 350 delegates, and it is thought that this meeting last year.

During the last 12 months, the membership of the trade unions has increased to over 1,000,000, an increase of more than 100 per cent. During the last eight years the membership of the Trade Union Congress has increased threefold.
 The wireless dispute was settled on August 28 in regard to salary conditions of service, between the Association of Wireless Telegraphists and the wireless companies. The latter demanded 17 per cent. increase over and above pre-war rates and the settlement has resulted in giving them 15 per cent. A war bonus has been merged into the salary, as from May 1, at the rate of \$60 per annum, and increases in salary are retrospective to May 17, 1919. In the future, a risk allowance of 10 per cent. on the salary is to be paid during service on all tankers. Shore allowances will now be paid from the day after signing off until the day before re-employment. Seamen's pay in three grades now range from \$25 down to \$11 per month and a higher class, composed of sailing operator inspectors, with salaries as high as \$30 a month, are to be instituted for service on large liners.

The Engineering Employers' Federation posted lock-out notices on Saturday in regard to the dispute with the electrical trade union. The notice "put the clock in the hands of the reactionaries" and the action of the employers will, it is said, indirectly involve thousands of employees, many of whom are not concerned in this specific dispute. The trouble has been caused by a strike at the works

of Cammell, Laird & Company at Penistone, near Sheffield, owing to the employment of a non-union foreman. The executives of the electrical trade union and the district secretary of that organization met in Manchester on Tuesday to discuss the matter. On the same day a special conference of the other unions affected was held in London, at which a negotiations committee was appointed to endeavor to pave the way for a settlement, but their efforts have so far proved unsuccessful. The delegates strongly protested against any union taking upon itself, without consultation with other unions, to discuss upon fundamental matters affecting the whole trade union movement, and it was decided to submit to the electrical trade union the attitude of the general workers. The negotiating committee consists of two representatives from each of the eight unions involved in the lock-out, who have instructions to get in touch with the parties interested. The Ministry of Labor has been advised of the position.

REASON ENOUGH.
 "Why did you strike the telegraph operator?" asked the magistrate of the man who was summoned for assault. "Well, sir, I gave him a telegram to send to my girl and he starts readin' it. So, of course, I ups and gives him one."

of permanency with the side-stepping of the causes which have made for past failures not only in the matter of Labor Temple venture, but in the various directions that the reactionaries have followed and ended with disaster.
 A writer, presumably an outsider to the organized ranks of labor, presents some meat for digestion in publishing a letter to a city paper when he said "the sale of the Vancouver Labor Temple means that the labor men there have squabbled amongst themselves so long and so effectively that their house—a very fine one—has been lost over their heads."

The Associated Federal Employes of Ottawa.

Federal Union No. 66.

Important resolutions for presentation before the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada to meet shortly at Hamilton, were under consideration Monday night at the third general meeting of the Associated Federal Employes of Ottawa, Union 66, held in St. George's Hall, Metcalfe Street. The attendance was large and very representative and the keen interest in the discussions illustrated clearly the strength of the union and the solidarity and cohesion which exist. Whitley Councils, re-organization of the service, superannuation, and a higher scale of remuneration commensurate with the depreciated value of the dollar, were the chief matters dealt with in the resolutions submitted in the report of the executive. Amendments to the constitution, the effect of the resolutions, the principles involved had general support.

Consideration of the above resolutions took up considerable time and as new business was the first on the agenda and various routine matters took up considerable time, adjournment was made at 11:20 o'clock until Friday evening.

The report of the executive, which was being read at the time of adjournment, amply proved that unstinted effort is being exercised to speedily organize the entire service. Satisfactory offices have been furnished at the Carleton Chambers, and a reception room has been even where members may meet and discuss matters. The recommendation was made to the meeting that various committees be appointed to investigate several matters of special interest to the servants, such as superannuation, group insurance, etc., and this business will be concluded at the adjourned session Friday night.

HULL ELECTRIC WORKERS VOTE AGAINST STRIKE

Stormy Meeting Results in Majority Award Being Accepted By the Men.

The threatened strike of employees of the Hull Electric Railway, because of dissatisfaction with the majority award of the Board of Conciliation, will not take place. After a prolonged meeting, featured by much tumultuous discussion, held at St. Jean Baptiste hall, after midnight on Saturday, the members of Local 281 of the amalgamated Association of Street and Electric Employes of America, which includes practically all the employes of the Hull Electric Company, voted to accept the majority award, under protest, after the men's committee, composed of Messrs. Jos. Noel, chairman, and J. J. Gault and W. A. Sutherland, had reported the result of a conference with Mr. G. Gordon Gale, vice-president and general manager of the company. While the conference was productive of some changes in the majority award, the company could not see its way clear to the ballot, and the men's committee wage increases in excess of those mentioned.

The majority award gives the motormen an increase of 11 cents per hour, conductors, effective from July 1, 1920, follows: First six months, 41 cents; second six months, 44 cents; third six months, 47 cents; and thereafter, 48 cents. Under the award made by a conciliation board last year, and effective from July 1, 1919, to July 1, 1920, the rate was 34, 37, 39, and 41 cents per hour. The men originally demanded a maximum grade of 65 cents per hour, graduated downwards, according to duration of service, as follows: 45 cents for 12 months, 50 cents for 24 months, 55 cents for 36 months, 60 cents for 48 months, and 65 cents for 60 months. The men originally demanded a maximum grade of 65 cents per hour, graduated downwards, according to duration of service, as follows: 45 cents for 12 months, 50 cents for 24 months, 55 cents for 36 months, 60 cents for 48 months, and 65 cents for 60 months.

Power House Employes.
 The real beneficiaries under the majority award are the motormen and conductors engaged in the power house and on repair work. They receive a very substantial increase, which averages about 25 per cent. The advantages accruing to these employes under the award were stressed by several speakers at the meeting, the only book for a settlement was dismal.

The following shows the wage per hour which these men get under the majority award: 45c for motormen, 36c, 42c; trolley men, 34c, 40c; power plant operators, 38c, 46c; oilers, 32c, 42c; trackmen, 36c, 44c; car battery machinists, 36c, 44c; second class cleaners, 32c, 40c; pitmen, 40c, 48c; cleaners, 38c, 42c; linemen, 41c, 52c.

Not Unanimously Accepted.
 As a matter of fact, the decision to accept the majority award was anything but unanimous. Several employes were outspoken in their opposition to the award, and requested adjournment for a vote on the matter. Mr. W. P. Jennings, international organizer of the Association of Street and Electric Railway Employes of America, attended the meeting, and addressed the men.

Get Big Back Pay.
 As the award has retroactive effect, the motormen and conductors will receive between \$25 and \$50 each in back pay. In the case of the other employes, the back pay will amount in some cases to almost \$65.

The men's committee will confer with the company officials this week to adjust certain money details previous to signing the agreement based on the award.

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Keep the Machinery Going

The factory would stand still if the belts that turn the wheels were to fall. Belts that are the longest run with the least repair and adjustment, are the workman's best friend. No lost time. Machinery in every factory should be driven well.

Jack Hayden is doing excellent work in carrying the message to all quarters. He is one who speaks from experience, and he has a most convincing way of presenting his impressions. With the assistance and the aid of volunteer speakers, volunteer organizers and canvassers, expansion should be secured up.

Whatever doubt may have prevailed in the inception of the new union as to its ultimate success is now absolutely dispelled. The momentum with which the membership has been expanding has fairly taken the organizers off their feet and the only trouble now is to keep pace with it. And, considering the organization on its merits, there is no logical reason why it should not have the hundred per cent. support of its own members. The standard principles which every civil servant has advocated in years gone by and it is pledged to elevate conditions above the status quo, which maintains. Enough said. Each one individually realizes just what conditions are referred to and through the union lies the only route to adjustment. One by one we may protest vigorously against unfairness but

without avail. In union there is strength.
 Each and every member of the new union should consider himself or herself an organizer and should pledge himself or herself to secure one other member. If you meet with silly objections which do not concern the union and its advantages let your prospective member alone for a time. He is hedging and the reason he advances is not likely the true one. He will come later. If someone questions the fees, point out to them that the lowest union fees prevailing in Ottawa apply to the common laborers who must pay an initiation fee of \$10. To do things properly requires money. And, moreover, where one pays a worth-while fee he is more apt to pay closer attention to what is being done. He will not be indifferent, and indifference is one of the things in organization which may be ruinous.

Real Democracy.
 Every member of the Associated Federal Employes will get the Civilian monthly and the Canadian Labor Press weekly. This is paid for by the association, out of the members' dues. In this way, every member will be kept thoroughly posted at all times as to what the association has done, is doing, and proposes doing. Keep in touch! A permanent office will be maintained where any member can at any time bring suggestions or recommendations, or discuss problems of interest to the Civil Service. Get together!
 The officers must always obey the Concluded on Page Four.

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