



# Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press



Entered at Ottawa Post Office as Second Class Postage.

## The Canadian Labor Press

THE CANADIAN LABOR PRESS  
PUBLISHED BY THE CANADIAN LABOR PRESS, LIMITED  
A NATIONAL SANE LABOR PAPER.  
Ottawa Office: 134 Queen Street. Phone: Queen 751.  
Toronto Office: 79 Adelaide St. East. Phone: Main 4122.  
Montreal Office: Room 26, 223 St. James Street.

### CHILD LABOR

The Canadian Labor Press is reproducing stirring articles from time to time on this momentous question of the day. In manner. Co-operative methods of arbitration are productive of and much publicity is being given to the situation.

Child labor in Canada has perhaps not developed in the same ratio and to as great a degree as it has in the United States, but at the same time steps should be taken now to see that the evil does not grow here. Child Labor is most undesirable from every standpoint. It is not only manifestly unfair to the child but is a serious economic waste of potential assets to the country. It reminds us of the fairy tale of "killing the goose that lays the golden eggs." Industry and Society should combine to stamp out this growing menace to our country.

### THE STRIKE IS OFF

And the Cape Breton miners have returned to work totally unsuccessful in their attempt to hold up the mining industry. Not but what the miners have certain grievances that should be adjusted, but because they had the wrong kind of leaders.

Cape Breton coal strike was a matter to be deplored from every angle and instead of doing any good, has only served to lower the dignity of Trade Unionism in Canada. We wish we could impress upon the mind of every Canadian workman, that strikes are the last resort in the gaining of an objective and if a strike cannot be avoided it should be conducted in an orderly manner. Co-operative methods of arbitration are productive of far more good. When you deal with your employer through arbitration and can back up your arguments with sound facts as to why certain concessions should be made—then it is that the victory of the worker is practically assured and you also have public sympathy with you which is a fact worth considering. As soon as you start the "mob" stuff, all sympathy is gone and the employer knows that he has the advantage, for he realizes that you have no sound facts to back up your contention. The moral of the foregoing is that "the pen is mightier than the sword."

### SUMMER CARE OF POULTRY

There is a tendency among some people to believe that poultry do not require any special care during the summer months, and may be allowed practically to shift for themselves. While it is true that conditions are more favorable for growing stock, and for egg production in adult stock yet at no time of the year is more care necessary to prevent disease and vermin than during the warm summer months. Poultry kept in close, stuffy sleeping quarters cannot be kept in the best condition of health, and are fit subjects for the ravages of lice and mites. It would be much better to have wire netting put in place of the glass windows in order that more fresh air might circulate in the house.

A very strict watch must be kept for any evidence of lice or mites as soon as warm weather commences. If lice are present on the birds, treat each bird individually with some Blue Mercury ointment, or some reliable dusting powder, and if red mites are present on the perches or walls, the birds should be removed from the house for a day or two, and the building thoroughly fumigated, followed by really good cleaning of every part of the interior. A thorough occasional white washing of the whole interior of the house will make the place more sanitary. Poultry confined to yards where there is no natural shade from the hot rays of the sun, should be provided with shelter of some sort; sunflowers or artichokes planted in the yards and protected until they get a start, will provide a most excellent shelter from the sun. Colony houses scattered through an orchard or cornfield make a very desirable place for the growing stock.

Filthy drinking vessels are the cause of a great many troubles in the poultry yards. Plenty of pure drinking water, which is kept in clean vessels in a sheltered place will benefit the stock to a large extent. Be sure that the young growing stock are well fed to promote growth, and that they are given liberal range where there is abundant of green feed and also animal feed in the form of insects, worms, etc.

Call out the old stock that you do not intend to keep over for another year, and sell them early while the price is higher and while they are in good condition before they commence to moult.

#### INDIA.

About 48,000 workers are now involved in the Ahmedabad mill strike. Out of the 61 mills in Ahmedabad, 56 have been completely closed by the strike, which promises to be the longest in the history of the Ahmedabad mill industry.

More than 10,000 Burman and Indian laborers are involved in strikes in the Burma oil fields and Ahmedabad mines. The strikers are demanding increased wages and the recognition of wage equality between American and Burman skilled workmen.

#### IRELAND.

Railway shopmen of Northern Ireland, who had been on strike for nearly six weeks, returning to work June 13, following their acceptance of the terms agreed upon between representatives of the railway companies and the trade unions concerned.

At the close of April 1923, there were 45,032 persons totally unemployed in Northern Ireland, and the Minister of Labor submitted to Parliament a supplementary estimate of \$45,000 for the purpose of carrying out approved schemes for the relief of unemployment.

### IS THIS TRUE DEMOCRACY?

Using as my motto, Mr. Baker's three essentials, fairness, honor, and good faith, I want to reply to some of his views on employee representation or the "Atterbury Plan" as applied to the shopmen on the Pennsylvania Railroad.

Mr. Baker says this "is the case of the second largest employer in America . . . establishing in co-operation with these employees an industrial democracy," etc., as an alternative to the plan of putting the "interests of the shopmen, in negotiating with the railroad, into the hands of the officers of System Federation No. 90, who act under orders from the national officers of the Railway Employees Department of the American Federation of Labor."

What is "Industrial Democracy?" Is it a condition where the employer permits organization of his employees within the confines of their constitutional, legal, and moral obligations to society, granting to them the same liberties, locally and nationally, as he reserves for himself? Or is it a condition where the employer realizing that he can no longer prevent organization among his employees, comes to them in the guise of a benefactor and says: "We have decided to permit you to organize and select representatives, but we are going to draw up the plan telling you how they shall be chosen. We, of course, have one or two employees who were in on this thing, and we called upon them to help us work it out, but the plan will not be submitted to you for adoption or rejection, neither will consideration be given to any objection even though expressed by a majority of some group affected."

Of course, every liberty-loving American citizen will say that the first plan represents "Industrial Democracy" and that the second is "Industrial Autocracy," but what I have outlined is just what happened on the Pennsylvania Railroad. Let us turn to the record of May 24, 1921, when this question was discussed in the company's office at Philadelphia.

This record shows that the management proposed individual representation only, while the representatives of System Federation No. 90 asked that a ballot be spread among the employees which would permit them to determine by majority vote whether they wanted representation through organization or by individuals. This latter plan meant "Industrial Democracy," but it was rejected by the management, which distributed its ballot for individuals only, with the result that out of more than 35,000 active service employees only 10 1/2 per cent voted as directed, while the 89 1/2 per cent, who were not given an opportunity to vote against it, took the only available means of registering their protest, and refused to vote. The election being finished, the management recognized those voted for, although some of them had received only one vote (the vote probably being cast by the individual himself), and proceeded to hold meetings at which new wage rates, rules, and working conditions were adopted and applied to the shop-craft employees as a whole. This is the substance of the record on which the Labor Board, and finally the Supreme Court were called to act, and on which they decided in favor of the employees.

In the meantime the management has refused to recognize the organization wanted by the 89 1/2 per cent by refusing to discuss grievances with local representatives, by cancelling furloughs granted to officers of the System Federation, and ordering them to return to work in the shops thus depriving the organization of its active leaders. These three officers refused to do so, so they were marked out of service and their transportation locked in July, 1921. Is it not a mockery to speak of such methods as representing Industrial Democracy?

"As a government, we have our country, State and national organizations. In business we have local boards of trade and city and national chambers of commerce. In the railroad industry we have separate system organizations of management which are merged in the National Association of Railway Executives, but in the case of railroad workers the "doctor" comes along and says to us on this railway system, as he is saying on many others: "No matter what the Constitution of the United States, the Bill of Rights, the Congress the statutory law, or the United States Railroad Labor Board says, we have decided that we don't want you to have a national organization, so we are going to prescribe for you. Our medicine is an organization of employees on this railroad which has no affiliation with the employees on other railroads, and when we have sold you our gold brick, and when your national organizations are all broken up, we will begin to collect from you what it has cost us for advertising and salesmanship. The medicine may be a little bitter, but it will be good for somebody."

More Points for the Jury. Do not be deceived Mr. Baker. The railroad workers are not, since they

know what is hidden inside the sugar-coated pill. And only a few of the employers, such as the Pennsylvania management, which has evidently lost a few pages out of its history of the labor movement, are blindly butting their heads against the wall.

Mr. Baker alleges the plan is being successfully operated on the Pennsylvania System. If that is so, why is it that, after a year of operation under it, more than 32,000 shopmen suspended work beginning July 1, 1922? And with few exceptions they are refusing to return unless the Labor Board's decision is complied with. Since that time many of those who remained at work have quit the service because of wages and conditions to which they have been subjected. At Verona, Pa., where about 250 shopmen are employed normally, eighteen old men have quit recently. The clerks and telegraphers have both sought through the courts to have an injunction granted, restraining the management from further violations of the similar decisions affecting them. Sufficient evidence to convince anyone of the dissatisfaction existing in several groups of the employees could easily be obtained by anyone who will go among the men and women in the shops and other departments instead of going to a few of the employees who are now assisting the management in trying to sell its plan.

In the matter of handling grievances it seems to me that co-operation is the answer, and the co-operation of the management was not enjoyed by System Federation No. 90. The management has not at any time attempted to conceal its antagonism toward this organization and is now bending every effort to destroy it, while it is doing everything possible to create a market for the "Atterbury Plan," the product of management, which it is trying to sell to the employee.

I have made a partial check of the figures quoted by Mr. Baker, tending to show the casual reader that in 1922 there were altogether 9,481 cases taken up and only 223 went as far as the System Reviewing Committee. It is at least implied that this covers all employees in the service. From a reliable source I find that the four transportation brotherhoods alone submitted 347 cases to the reviewing committee and decisions were rendered on 268. To this number must be added those from the shopmen, clerks, signalmen, telegraphers, maintenance of way, miscellaneous, and other groups, all of whom must, to say the least, have filed some cases. Regarding the suggestive statement of Mr. Baker that, "I heard, incidentally, a good deal of inside labor union history that would interest you if I could report it," it should be said in fairness to the thousands of honest and honorable men who are members and officers of trade unions that Mr. Baker spoiled his story. It reminds me of the time I was a kid in school, and we could taunt each

other by saying: "I know a secret but I won't tell." Come on, Mr. Baker, let's live up to our motto. If you want to take a good stiff punch at us, go ahead. That is a man's game, but let's lay off the mud.

To a close student of conditions on the Pennsylvania System, who has spent seventeen years in its service, and to others, some of whom have spent as much as forty-seven years it seems that in reviewing this question the great jury of the American Public needs to consider the following:

First.—The present strike of 32,000 shopmen on the Pennsylvania System and the court action sought by others.

Second.—The fact that the Pennsylvania management has complied with every decision favorable to it rendered by the United States Railroad Labor Board to which it was a party as well as some to which it was not a party, and it is now seeking to evade obedience to the one decision against it. Is this a land of special privilege for big corporations?

Third.—That there are those abroad in our land that are teaching that individual rights are greater than State rights, and, if we decide that the desires of a corporation are paramount to its moral obligations to government or society, what doctrine are we teaching?

Fourth.—Whether the blood that was shed in the Revolutionary, Civil, and World Wars was intended to guarantee to us the same freedom in selecting our industrial organizations that it guarantees to us in the selection of our political or religious organizations. If it does not, then our Constitution and Bill of Rights should be changed.

Fifth.—Whether the management of the Pennsylvania Railroad shall recognize its moral obligation to society or whether this large employer of labor is more powerful than our Government, and, therefore, has a mandate to set aside congressional enactments at its convenience. The Pennsylvania management exercised its constitutional rights by testing the case in court. The Supreme Court has decided against it, and has said that the Transportation Act (a statutory law) authorized the Labor Board to determine what ought to be done by railroad management and employees in the interest of public welfare, and imposes on them a moral obligation to obey. The employees are seeking the application of the board's decision.

Sixth.—Whether the employer can reserve for himself certain privileges of organization and deny them to his employees.

What is your decision?  
—Collier's, The National Weekly.

#### NEW ZEALAND.

According to a recent statement of the Prime Minister, there is a probability of a fund approximating \$1,000,000 being raised by the Government for the aid of persons desiring to build homes. Under the proposed plan, it is said that the Government may advance 95 per cent of the cost price of the homes which applicants seek to have erected.

Deciding that another good year is necessary within which financial stability may be attained, the New Zealand Arbitration Court has concluded that it is unnecessary and undesirable to make a general order reducing money wages for the ensuing half year.

#### AUSTRIA.

Unemployment continues to decrease slowly in Vienna and other industrial centres of Austria. The number of persons drawing the government unemployment dole dropped, in Vienna, from 97,800 in February, 1923, to 75,075 in May, 1923, while the total of this class in Austria fell from 178,147 to 122,353 during the same period.

#### FRANCE.

Stripes labor difficulties are feared in connection with the lockout against the Marseille metallurgical workers. Workmen are claiming about 21frs. per day, and employers in all metal plants, fearing a strike, enforced a lockout.

#### CANADA.

Many immigrants arrived and congregated in Montreal at the end of June, 1923, awaiting the new quota of the United States to be available per day, and employers in all metal plants, fearing a strike, enforced a lockout.

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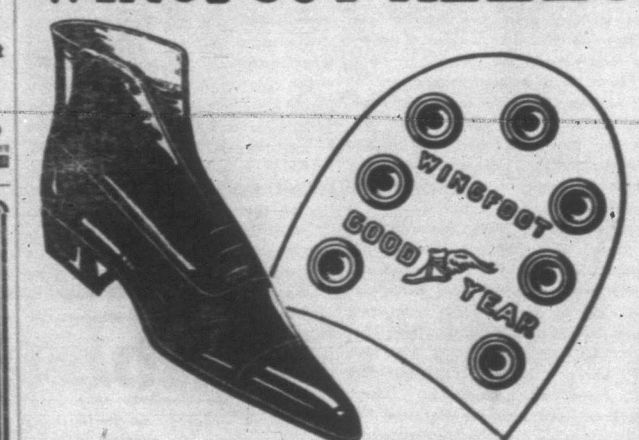
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