

Geneva Labor Congress Will Have Good Results

IDLENESS OF MEN AND MACHINES IS ROOT OF TROUBLE; HUMANITY IN NEED, DEMANDS ACTION, SAYS GOMPERS

(By Samuel Gompers)

An emotional economic conference should follow the conference on limitation of armament, taking full advantage of the tremendous impetus which has given it international character.

At home the major immediate trouble of the world today are economic. The world is not living normally. Over large portions of the world the machinery of production is practically at a standstill. In some places it is even in a state of decay.

Work is disjointed, production crippled.

I venture to assert that thousands of skilled workmen have lost much of their skill and many of their will to work, because of the long continued absence of opportunity to work. The world is losing both immediate and potential production.

However, much exploitation may interfere with the process, it is incapable truth that human progress, the improvement of standards of living, the broadening of the human horizon, rests upon our aggregate ability to produce and distribute wealth.

We cannot suffer a great breakdown in production without paying a penalty. It may not be immediately obvious, but society pays, nevertheless.

An economic conference, rightly conceived, going about its work in the spirit of the conference now being held, determined to achieve, having our best possible contribution of mind and thought and unselfish constructive ability, could accomplish much toward a restoration of economic stability.

It must be clear that a purely financial conference would be inadequate. More than finance must be considered. Finance may be discussed, but it is essentially secondary to commerce and production; production is primary. Finance is important, but secondary.

The root of the trouble is in the fact that factory wheels are idle, that human beings are in need. It is the basic needs of life that must be considered. Commodities must be produced to go to the necessities and fundamentals of the prime requirement of the hour.

We have been given such hope, such a certainty to hope, by what we have been witnessing that it is possible to go beyond the present state of affairs, that we shall have the great easiness to bring about such a conference and to carry the great project to success.

The first essential in this globe is the proper sustenance of humanity life. The response already manifested indicates the broad desire for a conference that will consider human life.

It will be noted that European leaders already are manifesting keen interest in the conference. American idealism again has an opportunity to function for the salvation of the world. I trust that those who are charged with the responsibilities of government will see and seize this great opportunity.

DEPUTY LABOR MINISTER ON CONFERENCE

After a four months' absence, during which he attended the League of Nations' third International Labor Conference, Gerald H. Brown, assistant Deputy Minister of Labor, has returned to Ottawa, and gave some information in amplification of details already received by cable. In addition to attending the conference as Canada's Government delegate, Mr. Brown spent some time in England studying labor problems, and also made a tour in Germany.

Representatives of countries in all the five continents attended the conference, said Mr. Brown, and Germany and Austria had delegates. The outstanding features, he intimated, were proposals looking to the adoption by international agreement of a weekly day of rest in industry; a proposal for the prohibition of white labor in inland, inland, and inland; and various proposals relating to the improvement of conditions among agricultural laborers. While an 8-hour day for agriculture was frankly discussed, a decision was postponed for some later conference.

The conference resulted in the adoption of seven conventions, and eight recommendations, besides a number of resolutions.

While none of the subjects under discussion originated in Canada, the Canadian delegation, said Mr. Brown, took an active part in all the principal committees, and very cordial relations prevailed, particularly of course, among delegations from different countries of the British Empire.

At the conclusion of the conference in Geneva, Mr. Brown, with W. R. Bello, Labor Minister of Ontario; Tom Moore and Arthur Maréchal, president and vice-president respectively of the Trades and Labor Congress, accepted the invitation of the German Federation of Trades Unions to visit Germany for the purpose of inspecting the big state-owned plants of that country, in which war materials were formerly manufactured, and seeing for themselves that these had been converted into industrial factories. Other countries whose representatives made the tour were Great Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Brazil, the United States, Sweden and South Africa. The itinerary included Munich, Nuremberg, Hanau, Berlin, Erfurt, Essen (where the Krupp armaments works were established), and Cologne. The center of the chemical industry and where German manufactured most of its gases for the purposes of the war. The object of the tour, said Mr. Brown, was to convince public opinion of the peaceful disposition of the German people and their earnest desire to make good the ravages of war; also to satisfy the outside world that the whole of German industry has been diverted to peaceful purposes in accordance with the terms of the armistice. The Federation of Trades Unions, from which the invitation emanated, represented 9,000,000 manual and other workers, and other industrial organizations with a further 3,000,000 members supported the movement.

The party met the president and vice-president of the German republic, as also some of the ministers. They were entertained on route by the Burgomasters of Munich, Nuremberg and of Cologne. Various visits were paid to working class residential districts, and a report on the tour will be made by Mr. Brown to the Canadian Government in due course.

PRESIDENT MOORE VOICES HIS OPINION ON ITS IMPORTANCE IS SANGUINE THAT BENEFICIAL RESULTS WILL ACCRUE

That some measures looked upon in Canada as being advanced or of a visionary nature, had been in existence in other countries some twenty or thirty years ago, was stated by Tom Moore, president of the Dominion Trades Congress, who has returned to Ottawa. Mr. Moore was a member of the Canadian delegation to the International Labor Conference held at Geneva.

From Mr. Moore's remarks, the government of Canada fell somewhat short both in the expenditure of money and the appreciation of the importance of the conference. Hopes for the betterment of understanding were emphasized, and for legislation along the lines of decisions made by the conference, were expressed.

Mr. Moore stated that the Labor Conference had demonstrated its necessity as an International body, and although it was making greater progress in some countries than in Canada, he thought that the results viewed from a world standpoint were very encouraging.

He pointed out that during the conference, many countries were represented by members of their parliaments, as well as by members of the trade unions, showing that working class representation in Europe was more prevalent than in the United States and Canada.

"Another very noticeable fact about the conference, was that when some measures which are looked upon here as being very advanced and almost visionary were brought up, a delegate from some country, perhaps Cuba, would arise and state that country had had such legislation for the last twenty or thirty years," said Mr. Moore. "Anyone attending a meeting of the International Labor Congress from Canada immediately realize that we occupy anything but an advanced position in social and labor legislation."

It was also unfortunate that circumstances arose in Canada which prevented the government of Canada from being represented by responsible members of the government, as many occasions arose where decision had to be arrived at, which could only be done by someone having full authority and responsibility, and in these circumstances the two government representatives, Mr. Gerald Brown and Colonel J. D. Smith, realizing their position and being responsible to a higher authority, could not undertake the responsibility of reaching a decision, and this caused them to refrain from voting on some very important decisions.

"This was all the more important because of the ruling of the conference, that delegates who abstained from voting were counted in the negative and in one or two close votes the decision might have been entirely changed had Canada been represented by members of the government, as all other governments present were."

He went on to state that this was no reflection on the personal services or abilities of Mr. Brown or Col. Smith, whose qualifications were fully recognized by the other delegates.

NOVA SCOTIA MINERS TO HAVE BOARD

Following the termination of the conference instructions were sent from here to post notices at the collieries declaring, effective January 1, a reduction of 25 per cent. in the wages paid to miners prior to the Montreal agreement which went into effect Nov. 8, 1920. Fifteen thousand miners are affected. This, Robert Baxter, president of District No. 26, declared to be equivalent to a reduction of 37.12 per cent. from the rates paid before the Montreal agreement went into effect. In commenting after the meeting, Mr. Baxter stated "there is no justification for this reduction."

Following the failure of the representatives of men and operators to agree, it was announced that the United Mine Workers ask the federal government to appoint a board of conciliation and investigation as provided for by the Industrial Disputes Act.

The representatives of the company also issued a statement reviewing the circumstances leading up to the present conference in Montreal at which they submitted a draft form of contract which they were generally willing to make with the United Mine Workers for a period ending November 30, 1922, providing for certain working conditions and a rate of wages 25 per cent. below the rates in effect before the increase granted under the agreement of November 8, 1920, usually known as the Montreal agreement. The statement continues:

"In offering a contract which included a reduction in wages the company expressed the hope and belief that such a reduction was the only course that would enable them to regain for the sale of their coal the markets lost during the war and that the only course open to the company was to accept any hope of bringing about steadier work of the collieries."

"No understanding having been arrived at to replace the agreement of November 8, 1920, the companies take the position that they are free to take such a step as they may consider advisable in their own interest, and notices have already been posted at the collieries of a reduction in wages effective January 1, 1922, twenty-five per cent. below the rates effective prior to the increases given under the terms of the Montreal agreement."

INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC CONFERENCE IS NEXT STEP FOR WORLD STABILITY

Problems Can Be Dealt With In No Other Way, Resolution of General Committee Declares.

Washington, D.C.—American labor, through President Gompers, of the American Federation of Labor, joins in the demand for an international economic conference to follow the present armament conference.

At a meeting presided over by Mr. Gompers, the governing board of the General Committee on the Limitation of Armament, by unanimous vote, adopted a resolution urging as an immediate and pressing necessity the calling of an international economic conference.

The resolution distinguishes sharply between a purely financial conference and an economic conference. Following is the resolution:

"WHEREAS it is apparent that the work of the International Conference on Limitation of Armaments inevitably leads back to basic economic conditions which can be altered little, if any, by political arrangements, and

"WHEREAS we are convinced that valuable and praiseworthy as is the work of the present international conference in Washington, it can be only a beginning in the solution of world problems which are of basic economic character; and

"WHEREAS there is very good reason to believe that further international conferences are in prospect; be it

"RESOLVED that the General Committee on the Limitation of Armament urges upon the United States and upon other nations the immediate and pressing necessity for an international economic conference to meet and deal with those problems which can be dealt with in no other way; and be it further

"RESOLVED that we adopt the following as a statement of reasons for this conviction:

"Governments and political arrangements between governments may transfer wealth but they cannot create wealth, hence to deal solely with political issues cannot produce of itself either the fundamental constructive thought or the basic economic adjustment necessary to world stability. The real and lasting reason for the reduction of armaments is the reduction of the state on the employment of domestic servants and the substitution of beans and peas as a substitute for coffee, are some of the many difficulties and hardships prevailing on German workers, according to Tom Moore, president of the Dominion Trades Congress, who lately passed through that country."

Mr. Moore recounted his visit to various places where workers were employed. The plants visited, he said, had formerly been engaged in the manufacture and production of war materials. One of the chief things that impressed him during his stay in Germany, was the application of the eight hour day policy.

"The Australian Worker," he said, came under his attention, and he noted regulations had since early in the world war put a stiff tax on the employment of persons in this class. He illustrated how a person might live on one servant, and would be taxed, but if he had a second servant they would be taxed correspondingly higher and if the household happened to have three maids, their collective state tax would be about the individual tax on five maids or servants in separate households.

Statements of unemployment in Germany, as compiled and issued by Chancellor Wirth, he said, were negligible as he said it did not exceed 25 per cent. or less throughout the whole country. This, Mr. Moore

Justice are produced to prove that one child and three-quarters is all they are entitled to claim support for.

"After days and weeks of this inhuman procedure, the tribunal adds up what it will cost to buy the necessities of bread, butter, beef, sugar, milk, potatoes, and other things. It is a list of things that are necessary to keep a human being in pain, multiplied the result by the average family, adds material for a small supply of shabby clothes and a roof with not too many holes in it, and that's the basic wage!"

"When prices increase in the same proportion as in a strictly arithmetical proportion, when prices fall, down to the level of the basic wage, as well."

"No provision is made for the betterment of working class conditions. The workers' status in life is not to improve. They are to remain forever under the drudge of a rich, just living enough to eat and drink as long as they are able to toil, and when they are sick or unemployed, struggling through existence, God knows how."

CONTINUING CONFERENCES? YES, THEY SAY, TELLING WHY

Washington.—The proposal of the General Committee on the Limitation of Armament, for continuing conferences, especially an International Economic Conference—is receiving prompt and enthusiastic support. William H. Short, Executive Secretary of the General Committee, of which Samuel Gompers and Oscar S. Straus are Honorary Chairmen, has received many expressions endorsing the movement for continuing conferences and for America's participation. They say:

Freid at Lowell, Harvard University: "If to remove future causes of friction and to avert continental wars are liable to break the peace of the world, it is helpful that nations should associate together, this should be done, theories and catchwords to the contrary notwithstanding."

Henry W. Parman, Political Economist, Yale: "I hope that the Washington Conference, which has begun so auspiciously, may be followed by similar further conferences as will bring the United States into our cordial cooperation with all of the leading countries of the world in a movement to remove the causes of war."

William Fellows Morgan, President of the Merchants Association, New York: "I earnestly hope that the present International Disarmament Conference will be followed by annual meetings of a similar character for the discussion of international problems that threaten or may threaten the peace of the world, and for agreement upon such measures as may safeguard tranquility and amity."

Theodore Marburg, Publicist, Baltimore: "In order to bring about even a reduction of armaments worth mentioning, there must be something to take the place of armament; some international organization which will give the nations any thing beyond that which has functioned long enough to prove its ability to provide that safety. I therefore feel that for the present the most we can hope for is an agreement to arrest the growth of armaments, that anything beyond that would not hold, and that the essential condition of a further successful struggle against this unmitigated evil is international organization pledged in advance to the maintenance of warring aggression."

George William Douglas, Canon, Cathedral of St. John the Divine, New York City: "Charles Lamb remarked of a passerby, 'I hate that man, and I don't want to know him. For if I knew him, I'm afraid I might hate him.' Already this International Conference on Limitation of Armament has demonstrated that Lamb's remark applies to nations as to individuals, where the public security is concerned and the practice of good will. But, to be effective, such practice must be kept up. Therefore let there be continuing conferences between the nations."

A. B. Farguhar, Political Economist, Vice-President and Director of United States Chamber of Commerce: "It is inconceivable that nations should continue to face a prospect of recurring holocausts of fire and sword which eventually destroy earth's strongest and best and leave in their train misery and degradation for millions of the human race. To those who object to entangling alliances, it can merely be said in the words of Franklin, that unless the nations hang together they shall assuredly hang separately; for the alternative will inevitably be recurring wars, which in these days of scientific and whole

CANADIAN LABOR PARTY TO HOLD CONVENTION

The Ontario section of the Canadian Labor party will hold its annual convention during the latter part of January or early in February, at Stratford, Ontario, James Simpson announced yesterday. This is the provincial organization of the Labor party recommended by the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, and made an active body during the last year.

"The call for the convention has been sent to the Trades Union branches of the L.L.P., and other affiliated organizations. It may be delayed until February, due to the general election, which has held us up a little," said Mr. Simpson. "It will be a large gathering, since many trades unions have joined it within the past few weeks."

WOMEN ADVISERS

Another point touched on by the president of the Dominion Trades and Labor Congress was the matter of women advisers. Most of the delegations, he said, had women advisers, and they were found particularly useful when questions pertaining to women or children were under discussion.

"Because of the parsimony of the Canadian government, Canada was very meagerly represented and it was not possible to include women advisers in our small numbers present," said Mr. Moore.

He referred to the fact that the employers' and the workers' representatives from Canada were only allowed one adviser each, which had resulted in their being unable to represent Canada on important committees, coupled with the fact that the numerous committees often met simultaneously.

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PORT WILIAM WORK — OPENING UP

Twelve hundred men will be placed on the pay roll of the Port William Shipbuilding Company to take care of two contracts just closed; eight hundred will find employment in the construction of a new steamship for the Mathews Steamship Company, which is to be ready for all runs for an immediate January 1, 1922, twenty-five per cent. below the rates effective prior to the increases given under the terms of the Montreal agreement.

The Daily Herald quotes Mr. Naylor, Chairman of the London Labor Party and the London Society of Compositors who toured Canada with the Imperial Press Conference last year:

"In the by-election in the East End of London in the British House of Commons, Mr. Naylor ran for the Labor candidate, and was elected, although he was defeated in the same constituency in the 1918 election."

The Daily Herald quotes Mr. Naylor when he was asked what the issue in the election was as follows: "Unemployment and the economic crisis," replied Naylor, "and after that the Irish question and disarmament."

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"Public works about the pushed ahead as rapidly as possible in order to help men and women to keep going until normal times return."

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LABOR REPRESENTATIVES IN GERMAN TERRITORY

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Items of Interest from Overseas

PREPARE LABOR.—The significance of the support which Ramsay MacDonald gave to his party in the general election which is likely to influence the movement for workers' control in industry is emphasized by the publication through the "Labor Leader" of a joint manifesto and appeal drafted by the National Advisory Council of the Party. In conjunction with the divisional representatives, at a special conference held last week.

According to the summary given out unofficially at the provincial legislative buildings this morning the Legislature stands at 56 government supporters (U. F. O. and Labor), and 53 Opposition (Liberal, Conservative and Independent).

There are still two vacancies, Ross and Kingston. These, with the Speaker, would make up the 111 seats in the House.

WINNIPEG TO PLAY HOST TO BRITISHERS.—Tom Mann, English labor leader, and the radical wing of the labor party, will speak at a public meeting in Winnipeg, under the auspices of the British Labor Council, early in January, it was announced. He is coming to Canada particularly to the part in labor work in British Columbia and will speak in Winnipeg en route to the coast. Early in the new year "Bob" Smalls or J. Thomas, or possibly both, will also speak at the same auspices.

MONTREAL ELECTS TYPO ORGANIZER.—Joseph Gauthier, organizer of the International Typographical Union in the Province of Quebec, and president of the French section of the I.T.U. local in Montreal, was elected member for St. Mary's Division in the Provincial election by a majority of 889 votes over his opponent, J. P. Davignon. Both candidates were supporters of the Liberal-Progressive Government. The voting was: Joseph Gauthier, 1,441; J. P. Davignon, 1,422; majority for Gauthier, 889.

LABOR QUALIFIED.—LONDON, Eng.—"Labor need have no fear of sending men and women to the house of commons from the mines, the railways, the factories, workshops, or the kitchens," declared Councillor R. J. Davies, M.P., the recent visitor of Westouthing, speaking at a meeting of the Joint Propaganda Committee of the Co-operative Party and the North and South Tottenham Divisional Labor parties, in the Municipal Hall, Tottenham.

Their opponents already, there were not one but better equipped than were the times, and women of the labor party.

The country had had forty years of free elementary education, and there were men and women in the movement who understood foreign politics balance sheets, finance, health and education as well as any other.

LABOR VICTORY.—LONDON.—The political party management now that parliament is once again out of session, have less to reflect on the astonishing labor victory in Southwark last week.

the question of political representation at once.

"Unless you believe in a new philosophy of politics you will have to suffer wars and the consequences of wars."

"You blame other people for the last war, but it is your fault, unless you stop it, there will be another war, but they had the power to save themselves."

LABOR CANDIDATE.—Readers will remember Mr. T. E. Naylor, Chairman of the London Labor Party and the London Society of Compositors who toured Canada with the Imperial Press Conference last year.

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the present negotiations shall issue in some form of Dominion Home Rule. I believe that there is good chance of getting that, and if I am successful I shall be heart and soul with the Labor Party in Parliament for that object."

"As for disarmament, I notice that the delegates at Washington assume that war can only be eliminated by removing the necessity for any form of armaments whatever. I believe in the League of Nations, and I want to strengthen it."

"The women's vote, as I suggested, will be an important factor in this election."

"I call upon the women's vote for Labor," said Naylor. "The Labor Party stands for full work and fair wages, and these are women's questions, and these are women's questions. I hope the women voters will be more awake than the Coalition has tried to reduce the children's milk."

"The Minister of Health, so-called, has introduced a reduction in the Labor Party's forced him to withdraw this decree."

"The work of the majority and child welfare workers must be kept going, and what is to be done?"

"Working women must have noticed the Labor Party's fight in Parliament against the tea and sugar duties. I want to be there to take part in a similar effort to transfer the burdens to those able to bear them instead of unfairly taxing the food of the poor."

"I am in favor of women having the vote on the same terms as men."

The Executive of the London "Ladies' Council" endorsed his candidate, and he came in at the head of the poll.