

# CANADIAN LABOR PRESS

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A National, Socialist Labor Paper

True Confidence and Understanding Between Employer  
and Employee Absolutely Necessary to Industrial Peace.

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## The Minimum Wage Act

In certain circles it seems to be a fashionable thing to attack the Minimum Wage Act and its administration. For some time the Toronto District Labor Council has been busy at this pastime. Recently a section of the sensational press has devoted considerable space towards the same purpose. What object can be gained, or what good can be done by these attacks "The Canadian Labor Press" fails to understand.

The Minimum Wage Act was passed in response to pressure from the Labor movement. For at least ten years Labor has conducted a steady agitation, asking for the enactment of legislation to protect women and girls in the matter of wages and hours.

Since the Act has been established, the Board in charge of the administration of the Act has been subjected to unjust, carping criticism for which there has not been the slightest justification. It seems to be forgotten that since the Act has been in operation, the wage rates of women and girls have been raised fifty to one hundred per cent.

One has only to read the report of Dr. W. A. Riddell in the investigation he made prior to the passing of the Act, to obtain proof of this fact. The critics of the Act take the ground that the rates set by the Board are inadequate to meet the expenses of a working girl and that the Board does not enforce the penalty clauses of the Act against employers who violate it.

Let us look for a moment at these charges. It was fully understood by the committee which drew up the basis upon which the Act was drafted, a committee by the way, composed of a great many interests sympathetic to the minimum wage principle, and on which Labor was fully represented, that legislation could only be enacted in view of the opposition to it establishing the least or minimum basis of food, clothing and shelter necessary for the upkeep of a working girl. It was not intended to set a rate that would provide a surplus over and above these requirements.

Yet the Labor critics of the Act seem to think that the Board fails in its duty if it does not set a rate that will provide such a surplus.

The truth is, it is not the Minimum Wage Board that fails in its duty in that respect, but the Labor movement.

If Labor is desirous of seeing that women and girls should receive a wage sufficient to provide a surplus, then Labor has the duty of organizing them so that they will secure such a wage. Up to date very little effort has been spent by trade unions in this direction, although they have a good basis established by the Minimum Wage Board to build upon.

As to the second charge, there is not the slightest proof that the Board would seek to shield anyone who violated the law, rather the reverse, and "The Canadian Labor Press" is convinced that the present personnel of the Board, which includes Labor representatives, would, upon clear proof of any violation of the Act, proceed to enforce the Act impartially, regardless of what interest or influence was affected. Suspicion or rumor is not proof, and the Board is wise in seeing that clear proof of violation is obtained before proceeding to enforce penalties, because a prosecution that could not be sustained would seriously shake the efficacy of the Act, and "The Canadian Labor Press" feels that it would be a deplorable loss to Labor if the Act was abandoned or destroyed.

## Labor Men Seek Wage Safeguard

Want Penalty Clause Inserted in Public Contracts Forcing Cancellation

Winnipeg, Man.—Efforts will be made by the Trades Council to have a penalty clause inserted in contracts let by the provincial government, school board and city council, according to a resolution passed at its meeting recently. This clause would automatically cancel a contract if the Fair Wage Act as violated.

The resolution instructing the council to approach these public bodies was brought up by Neil Crowe, who declared the Fair Wage Act as pre-

sent was practically a farce. In almost every contract let under it so far a fight had occurred in connection with obtaining fair conditions.

The matter of the Fair Wage Act was raised by Delegates Crowe and C. Harding reported the carpenters were tract let by the city to the Nelson Construction Co. for installing the steam-heating mains. Delegate declared the council should aid the carpenters in their efforts to obtain fair conditions from the construction company, with respect to working overtime. Delegate Harding reported the carpenters were endeavoring to get the eight hour day recognized on the steam-heating work.

A letter was read from Frank Morrison, secretary of the American Federation of Labor, in reply to a request for an organizer for Winnipeg.

## Corporation Baiting

TEN or fifteen years ago a favorite pastime in the United States was what was popularly called "trust-busting" which was in actual practice, a series of attacks by sections of the United States press and politicians on large corporations.

The game has fallen into disfavor over the border, but signs are appearing in Canada which show a desire on the part of our politicians to enter upon such a course here. Recently attacks were made in the Toronto City Council against the oil, milk, bread and coal industries, and now apparently similar attacks on industry are to be attempted in Montreal.

A proposal has been placed before the Montreal City Council by two aldermen, that a surtax be placed on public utilities using the city streets.

Evidently the sponsors feel that such a tax would appeal to the popular mind, but in the opinion of "The Canadian Labor Press" this is very doubtful. As we believe that the public mind is coming to the very sensible view that agitations against industries for the purpose of vote-catching react to the disadvantage of the community and especially to the working class section, due to the fact that these attacks unsettle industry, create depression, retard the normal expansion of capital, plant and buildings, and thus add to the unemployment situation already in existence.

What industry needs is not more taxation, but less, for the burden it has to bear since the war is almost overwhelming and if politicians are sincere and want to do something that is constructive, that will build up industry, create more employment and help to sweep away the present business depression, they will really seek ways and means, by which the present heavy load will be diminished and if they do that they will earn the thanks of every citizen in every walk of life.

The City of Montreal would be well advised to let these proposals go into oblivion, and if they do, the prosperity that Canada is waiting for will come that much earlier.

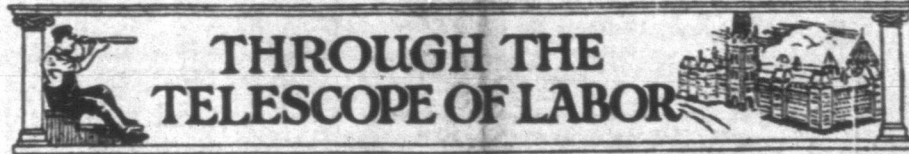
## Toronto Pump Contract

In our issue of October 11th, "The Canadian Labor Press" referred editorially to the contract for a pump to be let by the Toronto City Council and which we stated should be given to the John Inglis Company as against a bid submitted by a United States concern. There still seems to be some hesitation on the part of the Toronto Board of Control to give the contract to the Toronto firm, although why there should be does not seem reasonable.

It is admitted by the representative of the United States firm that the material will be brought from the United States, which means that a good deal of the labor in connection with the pump will be American. It is absurd for Mr. T. L. Church, M.P., to say that all the labor will amount to is \$1,500. This totally ignores the patent truth that if the contract is given to the Toronto firm, the material necessary will be produced in Canada and that will mean the employment of Canadian labor apart from the labor employed by the John Inglis Company in the construction of the pump. Mr. Church places himself in a very inconsistent attitude for a former mayor of Toronto and a member representing a Toronto seat, an attitude wholly impossible to reconcile with his previous utterances concerning the welfare and prestige of Toronto.

The fact of the matter is that if the contract is given to the Toronto seat, an attitude wholly impossible to reconcile with his previous utterances concerning the welfare and prestige of Toronto. The United States firm, they will not, and this should be the dominant factor for the Board of Control in making their decision, for if Toronto citizens are unemployed then the city loses in revenue and in addition has to make extra expenditure for relief purposes.

If employment is encouraged in Toronto, then the city derives the double benefit of more taxes and less expenditure.



## Toronto's New Magistrate

ACCORDING to press reports it is stated to be likely that the new senior magistrate for the city of Toronto will be E. W. J. Owens, M.P.P., the present member for South-east Toronto in the local legislature.

"The Canadian Labor Press" congratulates the City of Toronto on such a matter and hopes that the proposed appointment will shortly be announced.

Mr. Owens, or Eddie, as he is better known to Labor men, is a man of wide democratic sympathies well known and liked by citizens in all walks of life, who will fill the position with capability and who is possessed of a keen knowledge of Canadian law and will make an excellent senior magistrate. Mr. Owens' appointment is one upon which there will be no criticism that it was made for political reasons, for he is equally as popular with Liberals and Progressives as he is with members of his own party.

The old conception of a magistrate's duties, that of a stern official, whose sole function it was to distribute punishment, is passing away and we are beginning to recognize that the man who knows when punishment should be inflicted and who knows when to exercise wise toleration in cases that deserve it, does more to prevent crime than any other agency.

We now know that motives, environment and heredity play important parts in crime, and the man who can weigh these factors wisely is the ideal magistrate. Eddie Owens is such a type and there will be no regrets from any section of the community regarding this appointment.

## The Plebiscite Result

THE people of Ontario have recorded their votes on the O.T.A. and the result when analyzed emphasizes a situation that must be dealt with in a statesmanlike manner.

There are several features in connection with the plebiscite and the result that "The Canadian Labor Press" wishes to place before its readers. A plebiscite has not the same authority as a referendum. It is merely a device for obtaining an expression of opinion from the electors, the result of which may or may not be enacted into law according to the circumstances, whereas a referendum MUST be enacted into law according to the desires of the electors. Frankly, "The Canadian Labor Press" feels that the Moderation League committed an error when it agreed to be governed by the result of the plebiscite vote.

In our opinion the League ought to have pointed out to the Government that it was unfair to bind them to the result of an inquiry, and that they should be left free to decide their policy after the result. This would have placed the League in a stronger position to carry on the fight. The result, however, must make the Government feel that it is in a quandary. Let us look for a moment at the four years preceding the present Government's rule. We had in power a Government openly based on class divisions, which roughly approximated to rural and urban districts. That is to say, eighty per cent. of the Drury Government support came from the rural districts and twenty per cent. from the urban areas. It was almost inevitable that a Government based on class should fall and the Drury Government fell. The result of the plebiscite, if some relief is not given, will be to revive the antagonism between city and country which happily, had been dying out with the advent of the present Government, a revival which no one who desires the welfare of the province, can regard with equanimity, and the Government is faced with the duty of reaching a solution that will be equitable and fair to both city and country in view of the wishes expressed by the electors in both places.

There is also another point to be remembered that Sir William Hearst's Government lost urban seats to Liberals and Labor members because of resentment against the Ontario Temperance Act, and if that act had not been in force in 1919, whilst it may be true that class restlessness, due to the war, would have elected as many farmer members as actually resulted, yet the probability is that sufficient Conservative members would have been elected from the urban seats to form a Government and the province would have been saved from the miserable fiasco of the Drury experiment.

That this reasoning is sound was shown in June, 1923, when the Conservatives gained an overwhelming victory due in the urban districts to the belief that the people would get some relief from prohibitory legislation. It follows then that the Government must take some steps towards remedial legislation.

"The Canadian Labor Press" appreciates the magnitude of the problem facing the Government, but it feels that it can be solved. During the war period, one of the phrases that was in common use

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## Hamilton T. and L. Council Are Active

Enter Protest

A protest was forwarded to the provincial government concerning the reduction of interest to three per cent. in the provincial savings banks. It was pointed out that if the scope of business for the bank was broadened out that the institution would be even more profitable than at the present time.

Colonization Scheme

It was brought to the attention of the Trades Council that the colonization scheme suggested by Miss Margaret Bondfield, while in this city, has been taken up. One hundred acres has been secured in Muskoka and it is the intention to subdivide this territory into lots of one acre each where families of workers, whose breadwinner is departed, will be placed.

Unemployment Council

On the suggestion of the unemployment committee an effort is to be made locally to form an unemployment council. A call is to be sent out to all local trades unions asking that they affiliate.

## To Give Employment to Building Trades

Brantford Workers Pass Resolution Urging Bar to Immigration

Brantford, Ont.—With a view to providing employment for the men of the building trades, a joint meeting of all workers in those trades, held in the Labor Hall passed the following resolution:

"That in view of the unemployment of the building trades, as well as other workers, not only in the winter season, but during reasonable weather as well, be it resolved that this Building Trades Council urgently request that our representative at Ottawa put before the conference in the strongest possible manner the following clauses:

"First, that all immigration be stopped except bonafide farm settlers.

"Second, that all moneys spent directly on or for immigration be applied along with other moneys to assist in bringing coal from the Western provinces to other parts of Canada with the ultimate intention, in the near future of prohibiting the exportation of pulpwood entirely, and appoint an independent tariff commission with bonafide Labor representatives thereon."

## Has Spent Million on Relief in 8 Years

This Does Not Include Either Wages or Capital on Work Provided by City as Relief

Nearly a million dollars to be exact, \$992,116.75, has been spent by the city of Calgary in the last eight years in relief and charitable measures, growing more or less directly out of lack of employment. This figure, which is accurate even to cents, includes this year's estimates for relief which will probably be exceeded, according to all indications at present, making the total spent since 1916 very nearly a million dollars.

This does not include either wages or capital expenditure on work provided by the city as relief measures during the time referred to, which would run into many more thousands of dollars, spent not so much with a view to accomplishing work economically as to provide work for those living in this city who needed it.

## Canadian Barbers Form Organization

Canadian barber delegates, who attended the convention of the Journeymen Barbers' International Union of America, held in Indianapolis recently, have formed a Canadian association to be known as the Journeymen Barbers' Federation of Canada.

The following have been elected as officers for a term of two years:

President, Leon Worthall, Toronto; First vice-president, L. Di Mura, Montreal; Second vice-president, A. Na Vanstone, Regina; Third vice-president, H. V. Garayser, Medicine Hat; Fourth vice-president, G. Yorkston, New Westminster, B.C.; and secretary-treasurer, Albert Call, S. St. Catharines.

## The Chinese Problem

(The following paper by the editor of "The Canadian Labor Press" was read at the recent Lawdrymen's Convention held in the King Edward Hotel, Toron 10, October 30th to November 1st.)

CANADA is facing a grave problem in the Oriental immigration question and it is necessary that all classes of Canadian citizens and in particular the laboring class, should study keenly what will be the effect to Canada if this matter continues to increase at the rate which it is doing to-day.

On one occasion, a famous sociologist stated in reference to immigration, "your immigration is after all, a problem of intermarriage: admit to your national life any immigrant you are willing to accept racially as a member of your family in marriage."

Frankly it may be said that the Canadian people do and must look upon marriage between the Chinese and whites with disapproval, not only because of the difference in color, but also because of the vast difference in outlook, habits, temperament and social philosophy. Chinese cannot be assimilated into the national life; they remain a class apart, bringing with them all the habits and customs of China—habits and customs that in a great many instances are repugnant to Canadian ideals of life and citizenship. This objection applies to other Oriental races, such as the Japanese, but whilst the Japanese problem applies almost wholly to the province of British Columbia, the Chinese question affects the whole of the Dominion of Canada.

The remarkable race fertility of the Oriental intensifies the problem in a large degree; one has only to look at the birth statistics of British Columbia to see how the situation is aggravated. The ratio of Japanese births to whites in that province was in

1910	1 to 252
1911	1 to 198
1912	1 to 186
1913	1 to 138
1914	1 to 61
1915	1 to 35
1916	1 to 31
1917	1 to 29
1918	1 to 23
1919	1 to 26
1920	1 to 17

and the first six months of 1921 was 1 to 13, which means that the ratio of Japanese births to whites has increased over 1,800 per cent. in eleven and one half years.

Now whilst there have been less marriages among Chinese as compared with Japanese, the total volume of immigration amongst Chinese has been much greater. During the period 1908 to 1922, Japanese immigration has amounted to 16,565 and of these 7,290 have been admitted between 1911 and 1921. During the period 1911 to 1921, there were admitted to Canada 26,701 Chinese males and 636 females and 1,687 children. Canadians are faced with a dilemma from which there is only one way out for if Chinese females are excluded, then the males will contract either lawful or unlawful alliances with white women, either of which is repugnant to Canadian citizenship, or admit Chinese females so that marriage will be restricted to their own race and the tendency then will be as shown in the case of British Columbia, to equalize the ratio between themselves and the white races and ultimately to submerge the other races in the districts where they settle. There is only one way whereby Canadians can deal with this problem AND THAT IS BY TOTAL EXCLUSION OF ORIENTALS FROM CANADA.

Menacing as the Japanese question is, the Chinese problem is still greater, for the reasons that whereas the Japanese are centered in one area, the Chinese are distributed throughout the country and also because the two industries in which the Chinese are active are extraordinarily important to public health. I refer to the restaurant and laundry business, enterprises concerned with what people eat and the clothes they wear. Medical science makes it quite clear that food and washing, unless prepared under the best possible hygienic conditions, must inevitably tend to produce disease and sickness in the community and I venture to predict that no one will be found who can say that Chinese laundries and restaurants are the best possible exposition of hygienic conditions.

There is also an aspect that must be considered by the working class and that is that the establishment of each Chinese laundry and restaurant means the taking away of a livelihood from Canadian men and women.

Labor has organized itself into a movement to protect and better its standard of life; to be consistent then, it must protest against the settlement in Canada of a race whose methods of living are bound to react and lower the standard of living for thousands of working men and women. The Chinese race live unto themselves, and whilst they make money from trading with the white races, they spend it amongst themselves. They live cheaply, work all hours and only pay their white help, where they employ any, a decent wage when com-

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## King George's Navy

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