

Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press

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THE CANADIAN LABOR PRESS

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A NATIONAL, SANE LABOR PAPER

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Following in brief is an outline of our Policy:

1. The Canadian Labor Press supports the International Trade Union Movement, of which there are approximately three hundred thousand members in Canada.
2. The Canadian Labor Press supports the policy of the present Dominion Trades and Labor Congress.
3. In the interests of the Canadian Worker, The Canadian Labor Press believes that Canadian industry needs adequate tariff protection.
4. The Canadian Labor Press advocates fair play to employer and employee.
5. The Canadian Labor Press stands for the betterment of Trade Union conditions in Canada and the welfare of our country at large.
6. The Canadian Labor Press is independent in politics and free from any political influences.

When Will It End?

The lowering of Canada's tariff rates and consequently the wiping out of Canadian industries, has caused hundreds of thousands of Canadian workers to leave Canada for the United States, where production is in full swing, owing to proper tariff protection, and it is the most natural thing in the world for our skilled Canadian workers to go where the work is being done and not stay in a country that is used as a dumping ground for those countries that are doing the producing. The only thing that worries foreign countries is, how long can we keep going and how much more our dump will hold? We suppose, however, that they figure that it is impossible for Canada, with a fast depleting population, to meet outside competition in the way of manufactured goods and that therefore our dump should hold out for many years to come.

Unfair Treatment of Postal Clerks

It is rumored that if the Postal Clerks, Letter Carriers, etc., go on strike in order to gain their just dues, the Government will immediately take steps to replace them with new and inexperienced help.

This would be adding insult to injury and would be a very grave step on the part of the Government. The Dominion Government is one of the largest employers of Labor in Canada, and is supposed to set a good example to private employers, instead of tearing down the standards that have been set up by Trade Unionism. Private employers of Labor have got to live up to rules of a living wage and proper working conditions, and the Government has acted more than once to see that private employers did live up to the rules. The Government has enacted laws from time to time, established Minimum Wage Boards, etc. and in every way has endeavored to see that the working man gets a square deal, but here we come to one of the most important branches of the Civil Service, who are demanding something that they are certainly entitled to and the Government not only gives them the cold shoulder, but threatens to take their jobs away from them if they exercise their privilege to strike. Truly it is a funny world—and a fanner Government.

The State and The Workman

That Governments should begin to realize that they are not omnipotent is not surprising, and that they should commence to recognize rights that belong to individuals and bodies outside their own formation is quite a natural thing. It is under such conditions and circumstances that the beneficial effects of perfected organized labor cannot fail to be felt. The relations between the State and the Workmen are now being considered from a new standpoint and from a heretofore unfamiliar angle. A few hurried considerations in this connection may not be untimely.

In the first place the State is not the creator of all rights and privileges nor is it the sole solver of all problems. The family is the author of the State and has its natural rights as each individual member of the family, which antedates any prerogatives of the State. The rights that the State is called into existence by their children, the rights of individual conscience in accord with which the parents decide as to the instruction and moral obligations of the children, all these are not created by the State; but it is in order to better safeguard these rights that the State is called into existence by the families included in its jurisdiction.

From these obviously clear facts it follows that the safety of the State depends upon the integrity of the home and the contentment enjoyed by the individuals composing it.

Peaceful and happy as well as prosperous homes are the surest guarantee of the prosperity and greatness of the State. The man without a home is a person without any stake in the country, and the homeless man becomes very naturally, a menace to society and to the well being of the country. It follows that the very surest policy of self-preservation for a State is the fostering of contentment in the homes and of honest confidence in the breasts of all citizens at the head of such homes. The man who has a home to support has inalienable rights that no wise Government will invade, or jeopardize, or ignore.

Amongst other rights possessed by the citizen is that of selling his labor. He has a perfect right to demand adequate pay or remuneration for the work, be it physical, mental, or both that he supplies. But he has not the right to sell his labor for a wage that is not sufficient to decently support his family. There is a just limitation to rights and liberties, for the employee as for the employer.

It is not right for the workman to accept pay that is not proportionate to the work done or that is not sufficient to support his family. To do so would be to sin against those dependent on him, and against his fellow-workers whose chances of adequate pay he diminishes by accepting under pay.

It flows logical, from these principles that if a man has no right to work for inadequate pay, he has the absolute right to refuse to do such work under such conditions. The adequate price implies the right to refuse to work and therefore to "strike." This applies to a collective body of men as well as to the individual. Consequently, the more perfect the measures taken by the State to insure adequate pay for proper work done, the more faithfully does the State fulfil its duty towards those who created it. Legislation that tends to put down strikes, to punish strikers and to break up organized resistance to unfair treatment of the workman is not of the higher class nor does it indicate statesmanship in those who are in authority. But legislation that will tend to removing the causes of complaint, the sources of discontent, the motives of strikes is in accord with the more noble functions of the State. Hence the inclination of Governments to establish commissions of inquiry into labor conditions, or arbitration in case of disputes, of conciliation between Labor and Capital is the outcome of a saner appreciation of conditions that obtain in the great labor world to-day.

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Railway Men to Have New Bureau

Want Statistics and Industrial Research by Special Fun—Old Age Pensions

The establishment of a Bureau of Statistics and Industrial Research with a view to keeping all railway lodges in Canada properly advised of industrial activities and the intention from time to time of capitalistic concerns was advocated by Division Four Railway Employees Department of the American Federation of Labor in a biennial convention at the Mount Royal Hotel in Montreal recently.

The Division requested the Trades and Labor Congress to establish such a Bureau. Functions of the proposed bureau would be in part to ascertain how much money is invested in various corporations, who controls such investments and how much watered stock there is in a corporation. It would also set itself to determine what profits have to be made by an industry to cover the interest charge on investments.

The convention also unanimously passed a resolution regretting the action of certain railroads in declining to pay pensions to old employees who participated in a shopmen's strike 16 years ago. The hope is expressed that such employees who still survive will receive the pensions which they have been expecting for many years.

Old Age Pensions

E. J. Evans, vice-president of the electrical workers addressed the convention on general conditions. Touching on pensions, he pointed out that on the principal railroads in the United States and Canada there were pension schemes but a common proviso was that men in receipt of pensions must be prepared to return to work at any time they were called upon to do so by the management. This had its disadvantages to the workers in certain instances, particularly in times of industrial disputes. He urged the desirability of old age pensions being established by law in the United States and Canada, for all classes of workers.

Mr. Evans also touched on workmen's compensation. He congratulated the railway workers of the United States and Canada on the progress which was being made through en-

actments of compensation acts such as that prevailing in Ontario and the Western Provinces, and expressed the hope that the Province of Quebec would soon enjoy similar advantages. Numerous states in the Union had adopted similar legislation and other states that had not yet done so contemplated similar legislation in the near future.

Much could be done by good understanding between the employer and the employee Mr. Evans maintained. Whilst he had been brought up in a school that did not believe in the identity of interest as between employer and employee, his experience as an officer of the international labor movement had proved to his satisfaction that much could be gained through honest co-operation in shop management, always providing that it was definitely understood that where such principles were adopted employees should receive their fair and legitimate share of the increased profits made thereby.

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