

Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press

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OFFICIAL ORGAN ALLIED TRADES AND LABOR COUNCIL OF OTTAWA.



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The Canadian Labor Press

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A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER.

MONTREAL PLUMBERS.

THE Master Plumbers' Association of the City of Montreal at a recent meeting drew up what is called a new departure in declaring "the Association will pay the plumbers for work done rather than by an hourly basis." A special committee of the Master Plumbers' Association was recently appointed to investigate the conditions in that industry in Montreal. The findings of the committee are summed up as follows:

"Men must be judged by the work they perform and be paid accordingly, inasmuch as all men are not equally proficient at their trades, and to have a uniform rate of wages applicable to all engaged in a particular trade saps ambition and initiative, makes living easy for the slacker and the shirker, encourages discontent and dissatisfaction with their conditions among the workers generally, and ultimately places a burden on the public which it has no right to bear."

The above report was sufficient for the Association to adopt a sliding scale of wages. The International Trades Union Movement stands at all times for a flat rate of wages. The charge is frequently made that in fixing a flat rate of wages Labor refuses to allow an employer to pay over that amount. This charge is without foundation in fact. The International Trades Union Movement demands a minimum wage for all workers. The International Trades Union Movement is composed of craft organizations. When one craft decides on a minimum wage it has never been stated to an employer "you can not pay over that amount." It most emphatically declares that you cannot pay below the minimum wage. The Master Plumbers' Association of Montreal has decided that they shall have a sliding scale of wages in their trade agreements. The National Catholic Union agrees with this proposal and have entered into a contract with the Master Plumbers' Association of Montreal on this basis. The International Brotherhood of Plumbers and Steamfitters would never subscribe to such a policy.

OTTAWA'S BOARD OF TRADE.

THE Ottawa Board of Trade has at last shown its colors. We hesitate in placing it among the Bolsheviks, but it is riding very close to the line.

Last Saturday night a banquet was given in the Russell Hotel to the members of the Board of Trade and representatives of many of the public organizations in Ottawa, the occasion being a lecture on "Service-at-Cost as a Solution of Our Civic Transportation Problems."

Prior to the lecture Mr. G. B. Greene, president of the Board of Trade, announced the business transacted by the Council of the Board of Trade since the last regular meeting.

The policy formulated amounts to a declaration of war on Labor. In brief it is as follows: The Board of Trade demands that the City Council reduce the wages of its laborers from 58c to 45c per hour. Mr. Greene stated that this is being sought because last year Judge Gunn, in making his award on the wages for civic laborers, stated that there should be a difference of seven cents between civic laborers and building laborers.

The Board of Trade supports the Association of Building and Construction Industries in the question of laborers' wages—the rate of wages fixed by the Association is 50c and to this the Board of Trade most heartily subscribed.

And that is not all. The Board of Trade demands that the fair wage clause in civic contracts be abolished forthwith.

Many of the members of the City Council were present at the meeting and one controller and one alderman were accepted as members of the Board of Trade without a dissenting voice.

"SERIOUSNESS OF HOUSING PROBLEM."

THE high cost of building material, the rapidly increasing population, and the enormous annual destruction of dwelling houses, in which there were 5,644 fires last year in Ontario, have combined to make the housing problem one of most serious and acute proportions.

Ontario is noted for its extravagance through unnecessary fire waste, which is nothing short of an economic crime, caused chiefly through our careless habits and indifference.

Statistics show that 64 per cent., or practically two out of every three fires which occur, are in our homes; eighty per cent. of which are preventable.

The Ontario Fire Prevention League, in affiliation with the Fire Marshal Department, has inaugurated a Province-wide publicity campaign for the purpose of conserving our homes as well as our lives from destruction by fire. The boys and girls of the Province will be called upon to assist in this most desirable and patriotic movement. Through the principals and teachers of our schools, the League will distribute 250,000 copies of a "Home Inspection Blank" so that the pupils, with the help of their parents, may answer the questions. The primary object is to clean up attics, cellars, back yards and remove hazardous conditions. The underlying thought being to prevent fires by removing the cause and thus save our homes.

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POLITICS AND PEOPLE THROUGH THE TELESCOPE OF LABOR.

J. A. P. Hayden. Apparently it is the policy of the Government to carry on by marking time. Although the present Parliament has been in session since the middle of February little legislation has been enacted. Much of the time of the House has been taken up in debating the right of the Government to remain in power. All parties have used every opportunity of placing their views on the election next year. The Government has announced little legislation and the policy of the Prime Minister is one that gives the House and country little opportunity of deciding. The Rt. Hon. Arthur Meighen never shows his hand.

During the past week the House considered the payment of \$200,000 to the League of Nations. This is one of the great international tribunals. Press dispatches during the past few months would lead one to believe the expenditure was protesting against the League of Nations and more especially that portion of it expended by the International Labor Office. It is interesting to note that when the matter was before Parliament that the only person to protest against the expenditure was a Canadian manufacturer member of the House of Commons for Brantford. Mr. W. F. Cockshutt has on several occasions during the present session, sought out a way to amend the International Trades Union Movement. When the question of the League of Nations was being discussed the member for Brantford again attacked the labor movement by advocating that Canada should withdraw from the League of Nations. Mr. Cockshutt was the construction of immense armaments to police the world rather than submitting to an international tribunal, such as the League of Nations provides. The member for Brantford was the only member of the House who had no faith in the future of the League of Nations.

Mr. Cockshutt said the whole idea of the League of Nations was a delusion. Canada's delegates instead of following the introduction of a resolution by Dr. Edwards, Frontenac, Mr. Cockshutt was the only member of the House of Commons who had no faith in the League of Nations. No doubt he had in his mind the fact that at the International Labor Conference at Washington in 1919 that of all the delegates present the Canadian employers' representative was the only one who voted against the application of the forty-eight hour work week.

A very bitter and lengthy debate followed the introduction of a resolution by Dr. Edwards, Frontenac. The motion, which was afterwards adopted, was as follows: "That the question of whether Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux, who was elected for two electoral districts of Maisonneuve and Gaspé, has not infringed the privileges of the House and violated its rules in not securing for which of the two divisions he would serve, be referred to the select standing Committee on Privileges and Elections, that committee to enquire into all facts and circumstances connected with the matter and to report thereon to the House as soon as possible." Mr. Cockshutt said the whole idea of the League of Nations was a delusion. Canada's delegates instead of following the introduction of a resolution by Dr. Edwards, Frontenac, Mr. Cockshutt was the only member of the House of Commons who had no faith in the League of Nations. No doubt he had in his mind the fact that at the International Labor Conference at Washington in 1919 that of all the delegates present the Canadian employers' representative was the only one who voted against the application of the forty-eight hour work week.

SERVICE-AT-COST.

THE President of the Ottawa Trades Council, at the conclusion of an address on "Service-at-cost as a Solution of Our Transportation Problem," asked the speaker:

"If in the drafting of a service-at-cost franchise should there be a clause concerning industrial relations?"

The speaker replied as follows: "There should be a clause concerning industrial relations. The Toledo franchise does not include such a clause, and it is a great mistake. I hope to be the most unpopular man in Toledo in the very near future. The street railway men are anxious that their present rate of wages, hours and working conditions should continue for another year. The men have gone to the City Council and the legislators' sympathies are with the men. I am seeking to get the matter into my own hands when I hope to make a re-adjustment of wages, hours and working conditions. I believe that with the decline in the living cost there should be a reduction in the wages of the street railway men."

The Toledo Service-at-Cost Board of Control is composed of business men and no member knows of the wants of the workers. The above is submitted for the careful study of the workers of Ottawa. No comment is necessary.

INDUSTRIAL FATIGUE.

ELSEWHERE in this issue appears a very interesting article from the pen of Professor Charles S. Myers, Director of the Psychological Laboratory of Cambridge University, England. Professor Myers, who was consulting psychologist to the British army during the war, has been conducting at the Psychological Laboratory of Cambridge University, England, exhaustive tests on the mind in work, which have demonstrated, he reports, that the chief element in industry is psychological. Best results can be had from labor, he finds, by taking into account the mind of the worker. It is a business error, which he has demonstrated scientifically, to attempt to use human beings as systematic machines in their toil.

The article is one of the most instructive that it has been our privilege to publish in a long time.

BRANTFORD LABOR SUPPORTS MacBRIDE.

ACTING on instructions received at the Welland Convention of the Independent Labor Party of Ontario a committee of the Executive of that organization appeared before the Brantford branch a few days ago in an endeavor to clear up the misunderstanding that exists between the Central Executive and Mr. M. M. MacBride, the Labor member for Brantford.

It would appear that the electors, who were responsible for the election of Mr. MacBride to the Ontario Legislature, are quite satisfied with his actions. The Central Executive read Mr. MacBride out of the I.L.P. because he left the Labor Group and now sits with the Independents.

After both sides had laid their cases before the Brantford Branch of the I.L.P. a resolution was adopted, with only a few dissenters, declaring absolute confidence in Mr. MacBride. The Brantford Branch have now left themselves open to suspension from the I.L.P.

REV. BEN SPENCE ENTERS THE I. L. P.

REV. Ben Spence, according to the Toronto Globe, has joined the Independent Labor Party. He was introduced and recommended for membership by his prohibition friend Mr. James Simpson.

We wonder how Mr. Spence can swallow himself in accepting the Beer plank in the Labor platform. It was only at the last convention of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, at Windsor, that the great Labor Parliament declared once again for beer. Probably Mr. Spence with the assistance of Mr. Simpson or Mr. Simpson with the assistance of Mr. Spence can convert the entire Labor movement into acceptance of "Prohibition."

FIRE FIGHTERS AND POLICEMEN.

TESTIFYING before the Board of Conciliation on the rate of wages for Ottawa fire fighters recently, Mr. Donald A. Dear, secretary-treasurer of the Ottawa Local Union of Fire Fighters, stated that "statistics show that for every policeman killed on duty eight firemen lost their lives." Yet in many of our cities policemen receive higher remuneration, shorter hours and better working conditions than the gallant fire fighters. Think it over.

PUTS IT UP TO BUILDERS.

SOUND advice was given the members of the Toronto Branch of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association at a recent meeting by Mr. S. R. Parsons. He advised that the building material manufacturers, the builders and Labor to get together at a round-table conference. Mr. Parsons further declared that Labor was quite willing to meet and discuss the situation.

Speaker of the House had difficulty in maintaining order. Hon. Rodolphe Lemieux stated that he had nothing to say by referring the matter to the committee, and appealed to the House not to call a division on the matter. Mr. Lemieux repeated the action of the Minister of Justice in the matter and was able to get a retraction from Hon. C. J. Doherty. However, after a long debate, the matter was referred to the select standing Committee on Privileges and Elections.

President D. B. Hanna of the Canadian National Railways, appeared before the special committee on National Railways during the past week and gave some very interesting evidence. Mr. Hanna admitted the identical position as the Minister of Railways and the Prime Minister "that many of the transactions and much of the correspondence of the Canadian National Railway should not be made public."

It will be remembered that the Liberals attempted to have the Government buy four Canadian National Railways. A division of the House followed and the Agrarians supported the Government in its intention. However, President Hanna's evidence is very interesting and in the following figures there is a ray of hope for the Canadian National Railways.

According to President Hanna the total receipts of the Canadian Pacific Railway for 1920 were \$216,249,817 for the Canadian National \$195,541,729.29, although the Canadian Pacific had to earn this on 13,492 miles of railway and the Canadian National earned its amount on 13,535 miles, exclusive of electric lines. The total expenditures of the C.P.R. were \$193,488,305, as against \$136,532,811 for the Canadian National. Thus its greater receipts put the Canadian Pacific, in spite of greater expenditures, \$23,000,000 to the credit of the Canadian National \$27,000,000 to the bad.

The receipts compared as follows: Passenger earnings, C.P.R. \$49,125,749; C.N.R. \$19,999,191; freight, C.P.R. \$143,813,469; C.N.R. \$79,350,482; other earnings, C.P.R. \$22,212,311; C.N.R. \$9,792,139.

Making comparisons of expenditures, on the C.P.R. spending for maintenance of way and structures \$32,573,927, where the C.N.E. spent \$14,456,556. With greater receipts, the Canadian Pacific costs were much greater, being \$46,359,793, while the Canadian National lines spent \$27,124,599. The Canadian Pacific spends nearly ten million dollars more for costs of transportation by rail than the Canadian National, and in these two items found the difference between the total expenditures of the two roads.

Comparing with its big receipts, the Canadian Pacific operating charges were 84.7 per cent., and the Canadian National, 134.6 per cent. of its receipts.

Other statistics follow: paying passengers carried, C.P.R. 16,769,555; C.N.R. 12,811,945, the trips being

Candid Expressions on the N. C. U. by a French-Canadian Roman Catholic.

The publicity being given at the present time to claims of the National Catholic Union for recognition along with the International Trade Unions by the Dominion Government recalls, very forcibly, the almost parallel position that existed in the past so far as the political situation was concerned. The Liberal Party in the Province of Quebec, at that time, was destroyed by the Conservative Party as being controlled by free thinkers and free masons. A number of the Catholic took an active part in those political campaigns in the same way that they are now taking part in the campaign against the international trades unions. Many will, no doubt, remember the court proceedings in that connection for "undue influence on public platforms." It is perhaps needless to remind your readers also that the color adopted by the Conservative Party at that time was red. During the period referred to the Catholic clergy often declared from the pulpits that "heaven was blue and hell was red." It was an open war against the political liberty of the electors.

The Liberal Party of the Province of Quebec was denounced with all the bitterness possible just as the international trades union movement is being denounced today. In those days one had to be a Conservative to be saved. Today a French-Canadian worker must belong to the National Catholic Union under the direction of the Catholic clergy, if he hopes to be saved.

Then the issue of a free political association was being attacked. Today the right of free industrial association is being similarly attacked. It seems strange, and to be desired, that one most prominent in this attack against the international trade unionism is a certain liberal leader who professes to protect such men as Lemieux, Langelier, Laflamme, and Dorion, who fought so hard against this same influence when the Liberal Party itself was the bulwark of the attack. It is now making himself the champion of intolerance and bigotry in attempting to press forward the unwarranted

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