

Editorial Page of The Canadian Labor Press



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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 of Canada.
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.

Mining Under the Sea

By F. W. Gray, Mem. I. Min. Eng.

It is a singular circumstance that on the whole Atlantic coastline of the American continent, there are only two places at which coal and iron-ore deposits are found at tidewater; namely: in Nova Scotia and in Newfoundland. In both instances the presence of the coal seams and iron-ore deposits was revealed by outcroppings on land. The amount of coal and iron-ore underlying the land areas is, in both instances, relatively small and unimportant when compared with the undersea deposits.

There can be little doubt that large beds of coal, and possibly iron-ore, are concealed by the waters of the sea in such a manner that their presence can only be surmised, and they are, of course, inaccessible to mining. In one or two instances the erosion by the sea has been so extensive that the outcroppings of the coal seams and the iron-ore seams are only sufficient in area to indicate the presence of these minerals in greater quantity under the sea.

The most valuable and important undersea coal deposit in Nova Scotia lies off the shores of Cape Breton Island, extending for about 20 miles on either side of Sydney Harbor, and underlying the waters forming the entrance to this splendid roadstead.

The coal seams in the Sydney field extend inland for a comparatively short distance, running inland at no point further removed than seven miles from the seashore, but their extension under the sea is unknown. The workings of a number of the collieries have proceeded under the bed of the ocean for varying distances, up to a maximum of two and one-quarter from high-water mark. How much farther the coal seams extend is not known, but the probabilities are that they continue uninterrupted to a distance beyond the limit of man's ability to carry air for ventilation, and for the cutting and transportation of coal. What this limit is no person can determine.

When the mining of coal under the sea was first undertaken in Cape Breton about 50 years ago, the vision of the pioneers of that day did not carry beyond the possibility of mining coal to a distance under the sea of one mile from the opening at the shore. To-day coal is being mined off the coast of England almost four miles from land, and it is thought that coal can be mined off Cape Breton Island up to a distance of five miles from shore. It may be even mined at much greater distances from shore should the progress of the arts and the need for coal develop as rapidly in the next 100 years as they did in the century that has gone by since coal was first mined on a large scale in Cape Breton.

The pioneer of coal mining in Nova Scotia was the General Mining Association of London, England. This company has a monopoly of the miners in Nova Scotia, and between the years 1825 and 1857 expended £300,000 in developing the mining of coal in that province, a very considerable investment at that time. In 1857 this monopoly was broken, the ownership of the coal seams being vested in the Government of Nova Scotia, and a number of smaller, independent coal-mining companies were formed.

The General Mining Association, by arrangement, was allowed to select coal areas for its operations and retained, under a royalty arrangement, coal areas at Sydney Mines, Glace Bay, Springhill and Stellarton. The General Mining Association gradually parted with its coal properties to other companies, but independent coal-mining did not prove successful in Nova Scotia.

The need for consolidation led, in 1893, to the formation of the Dominion Coal Company, which was an amalgamation of a number of smaller companies in the Sydney coalfield, with which was amalgamated also a large part of the General Mining Association's holdings. Later the remainder of the General Mining Association's holdings in the Sydney district was acquired by the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company, which brought under the control of these two companies virtually all the submarine coal in the Sydney coalfield.

With the partial exhaustion of the coal lying under the land in the course of years, the mining of coal from under the sea became more and more extended, with the result that the lease boundaries of the two companies commenced to conflict and became a grave hindrance to the further progress of large scale mining in the future. The two companies were very much in each other's way, and the difficulty was eventually solved by the consolidation of interests.

In the meantime, the Dominion Coal Company had acquired the Springhill areas and the Nova Scotia Steel and Coal Company had acquired the Acadia areas at Stellarton, both on the mainland of Nova Scotia, so that when the British Empire Steel Corporation was formed there came back again under one management the four most important coal areas in Nova Scotia, which were originally selected by the mining engineers of the General Mining Association in 1857.

The consolidation of the British Empire Steel Corporation took in not only the coal areas above mentioned, and notably the great submarine field off Sydney Harbor, but acquired also the sole ownership of the iron-ore deposits lying off the shores of Belle Island, in Conception Bay, Newfoundland, and thereby brought under the control of one Canadian company the mining operations of the most important iron-ore areas in the world.

The iron-ore deposit at Wabana, Newfoundland, is unique. It has no geological counterpart anywhere. The iron-ore is found in seams that are as even in thickness and as regular in inclination as a normal coal deposit. Like the Sydney coal-field, the outcropping of the iron-ore seams on Belle Island is of small extent when compared with the enormous area of the ore seams under the sea. The extremity of the main tunnel, from which the ore is mined in this district, is over two miles from the shore, and at this point the workings are in an ore seam varying in thickness from 15 to 30 feet.

The ore is shot down by explosives and is then loaded into cars by mechanical contrivances. The height of the seam permits the use of loading machines of greater size and to a larger extent than coal mines; and there are few places underground, and certainly no other places situated at such a distance under the sea, where mechanical shovels of the type used in the Wabana mines are to be found.

The extent of the iron-ore deposits under the sea at Wabana, is, like the coal deposits at Sydney, not known, but they are believed to continue as far as it will be possible to mine the ore.

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At the present time the mines of the British Empire Steel Corporation are producing from under the sea 3,500,000 tons of coal and 1,000,000 tons of iron-ore annually, and there is every probability that these tonnages will be very largely increased in the years that are to come.

The consolidation under one management of the coal areas in the Sydney coal-field and the iron-ore areas at Wabana was the compelling reason for the formation of the British Empire Steel Corporation, and it has proved, and will increasingly prove as the years go by, to have been as wise a proceeding as it was an inevitable one.

At the present time three large undersea collieries are projected in the Sydney coalfield, one of which is well advanced towards completion. Each of these collieries will win and render fit for mining large tracts of coal, owned jointly by the consolidated companies. Unity of interest has made it possible to mine these areas with a minimum of waste of natural resources and greater protection for posterity than would have been otherwise possible.

The development and equipment intended to win submarine coal is extremely expensive. Openings at the shore must be very large in order to carry the air required for ventilation and pumping must be unusually powerful; similarly the machinery for hauling coal over long distances and the equipment for the generation and conveyance of power underground must be carried out on a much larger scale than is necessary in a land colliery.

One of the new collieries before mentioned, will cost in the vicinity of \$2,500,000 before completion. Such an expenditure could not be justified except it made possible the winning of large quantities of coal over a long period of time; and, in this particular instance, the sum named is expected to render available for mining approximately 1,000,000,000 tons of coal over a period of 120 years to come.

This colliery is being equipped with electrical appliances for ventilation and pumping, for the haulage of coal, the transportation of men to and from their work at the coal-face, and for the cutting and removal of coal from the seam.

It is reasonable to expect, as previously suggested, that new inventions will come to the assistance of the coal-miner during such a long period of time as 120 years to come, and it would be an interesting occupation to speculate on what the future may hold in this regard.

It is quite evident, however, that submarine deposits, no matter how valuable and lasting they are, can only be developed by consolidation of interests and by the unity and continuity of management, and the financial resources that competing companies could not attain to.

The attempt to mine coal and iron-ore in the Sydney coal-field and in Newfoundland by individual companies, brought about a physical condition which insistently called for a consolidation of management. The experience of the successors of the General Mining Association in Nova Scotia has pointed out, with irrefragable logic, the weakness of unconsolidated and scattered interests in connection with the financial side of mining. There rarely has been a case where amalgamation of interests was so compellingly demanded by the circumstances, or where it has been, and will be, so thoroughly justified by the results.

Communist Propaganda

The Communist Party of Canada (formerly the Workers' Party) continue to work overtime in their endeavors to obtain new recruits to be educated to their malicious methods of destruction of Canadian industry. On Sunday, April 20th, they held a mass meeting at the Toronto Labor Temple, at which two of the outstanding Communists were in attendance, namely James McLachlan and Ruthenberg, both of whom are on parole for seditious utterances. An urgent invitation was extended to those present who were not already members, to join their ranks. Upon a question from the audience as to when "something was going to start" the reply was forthcoming from the platform that a revolution would break out in Canada some fine day soon, and would blaze forth from all over the country like a smouldering fire fanned to life.

Why this foreign element wants to pick on Canadian industry to receive the butt of their demented ideals is more than we can understand. Canadian industry is but a child trying to struggle along, and keep alive and with odds so great against it by way of tariff instability, radical agitation and unfair competition, it is not given a chance to develop and grow such as any normal child is entitled to. If the Communist Party are to bother anyone and want somebody to chew the rag at, they should try out the class of people who have money but who are withholding it from circulation and from the development of the country, rather than the industries who have everything tied up in their struggle to put Canada on the map and if they make profits in the performance of their gigantic undertakings they are certainly entitled to them.

Builders' Wages

Contractors Expect Old Agreement
 Will Be Re-Worked

Hamilton, Ont.—Negotiations are now being carried on between R. A. Lamb, secretary of the Hamilton branch of the Association of Canadian Building and Construction Industries, and the local bricklayers regarding a working agreement for the new year, which commences in May. An agreement satisfactory to both parties is likely to be reached within a few days. It was learned here recently.

Indications are that living and other conditions will be about the same this year, and the local employers of labor do not feel, at the present, that any increase in wages should be granted, and it is expected that most of the old agreements will be renewed.

Will Fight to Keep Eight-Hour Day

French and German Laboring Classes
 United

Geneva.—Before the governing body of the international labor bureau, the French and German governments, together with the French and German industrial magnates, have joined hands in a fight against the eight-hour day.

And with equal solidarity the French and German laboring classes have joined hands to support the victory which they won when the eight-hour day labor convention was launched by the first international labor conference at Washington in 1920.

With the French and German laboring classes thus a solid unit against the solid unit of the French and German governments and the French and German industrial classes Europeans point out that this is the first time since the war that the French and Germans of about any class whatsoever have ever gotten together on any question whatsoever.

While the fight now being conducted by the French and German laboring classes against the eight-hour law is only part of a campaign that has been launched in a number of the leading European industrial countries the question or reparations as a basis for the fight has enabled the French and Germans to push the matter farther than has been done elsewhere.

To Increase Production

Before the governing body of the international labor bureau the German government and the German industrialists have taken the position that the only way in which Germany can pay her reparations is by increasing her production and that one of the most effective means to this end will be to set aside temporarily the eight-hour day and go back to the nine and ten-hour day.

Against this position, however, the German and French laboring classes have united as solidly as have the opponents of the eight-hour day. The German labor representatives are bitterly opposed to the idea that the burden of reparations must fall on the German workman. And in this the French workman is supporting his German brother.

So emphatic was the defense put up by the French and German labor representatives that the governing body of the international bureau has decided to continue harder than ever the fight to have the eight-hour day convention ratified by all of the leading nations of the world.

This victory has just been followed by a similar victory by the Swiss workmen by means of the Swiss referendum law.

The fight in other countries over the eight-hour law is expected to be pushed to a conclusion by the workmen. The favorable position by the new English Labor cabinet on the eight-hour law has greatly strengthened the position of the supporters of the convention in all of the other countries.

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