

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE HEADQUARTERS

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NOTES OF THE WORK OF THE C. I. B. DIVISION
FOR THE WEEK ENDING 28TH OCTOBER

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1. General Characteristics of the Period

Fuller details of the collapse of the strike in the Alberta Coalfields emphasize two points. One is the reckless lying and callous leadership of the junta of the O. B. U. heads who brought about the strike. By the third day they were alarmed about money, by the end of the first week they realized that things were going badly with them, and they knew that the

struggle was hopeless some time before they would admit it. The men must have lost a good deal. The leaders were exceptionally untruthful in the statements they made, and incidents of the later days of the struggle were the sending of delegations from Fernie and Lethbridge to Drumheller to see for themselves what the conditions actually were. The other point is the disposition of the leaders to indulge in mutual recriminations.

Two consequences are beginning to appear. One is the imminence of the extinction of the Searchlight. The other is the adoption by the mine-operators of a distinctly more aggressive attitude; a number of O. B. U. men are being refused employment.

Details of the split in the O. B. U. continue to be received. They contain no additional facts of importance, but they make it clear that the quarrel is deep-seated and that a bitter struggle may be expected. This week's development favour Midgley as against Winch; the former has got a measure of support from the B. C. Federationist, and the latter seem rather isolated. In British Columbia the impression seems to be that the O. B. U. is beginning to disintegrate.

Reports continue to be received to the general effect that a coal strike is likely to occur in Nova Scotia.[4]

I. BRITISH COLUMBIA

2. The O. B. U. Referendum

The O. B. U. have made public the clauses of the referendum which is to be taken as a result of the Port Arthur Convention. These number fifteen, and are strongly adverse to the L. W. I. U. Among the questions circulated are:-

- No. 1. That in the preamble of the constitution the words "not according to craft but according to industry" be deleted.
- No. 6. To prevent overlapping and disputes the approval of the General Executive Board must be obtained in conducting organization work in new territory, and the opening up of affairs in new districts. (This clearly is aimed at the L. W. I. U. incursions into Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario and Montreal).
- No. 9. A section in arrears for per capita tax for three months shall be suspended. Every branch must be in good standing for 30 days before the Convention, in order to secure representation.
- No. 12. If any unit, council or body fails to send in a financial report, the next highest authority may audit its books. (This is particularly aimed at the financial autonomy of the L. W. I. U.)
- No. 13. Every section of the One Big Union must use the official membership receipt, issued by the General Executive Board. (The L. W. I. U. have a separate receipt).

Another proposed change takes the General Secretary out of the General Board and makes him its servant.

3. B. C. Federationist against Winch

Another development in the situation is that the British Columbia Federationist, despite its nominal control by the L. W. I. U., has declared editorially against Winch. In its issue of 15th October it deals with the question of industrial organization and pronounces against it and for district organization. The former, it says, would make the O. B. U. a mere federation of industries, and is not far removed from craft unionism. It also contends that the purpose in [5] organizing the O. B. U. in March 1919 clearly was not industrial. It describes the present quarrel as one among a few officials, whom it rebukes in the name of the rank and file.

4. O. B. U. Losing Ground

Commenting upon the foregoing, a well-informed agent says:-

"The general impression among labour men is that the organization is losing steadily. Midgley refuses to state what the membership is. On every hand I hear that there is a weakening. For instance J. H. McVety (the leader of the Internationals) in speaking of the recent strike of gas workers, told me that the strikers -- who went out as an O. B. U. organization -- approached him after the strike had been going on for some time and offered to come back in the International fold if he would get their jobs back for them. He said he got Sir Henry Drayton and Hon. G. Robertson, Minister of Labour, to see George Kidd, general manager of the B. C. Electric Railway Company, parent company for the gas works. Kidd refused to entertain any proposition of conferring with the strikers".

"I asked McVety if the Internationals were going to let the O. B. U. people come back. He said some, not all. The radicals would never be permitted in again. A clause in the constitution of the Vancouver Trades and Labour Council had been changed since the O. B. U. was created, which permitted exclusion of the 'reds'.

"I asked him where the rejected ones would go, where they could join any organization. He said the only thing left them would be the socialist party.

"McVety laughed at any likelihood that the Third Internationals would ever get a dangerous footing here. The labour men would not stand for it".

This agent further quotes a conversation with a number of shipyard workers, all Scotchmen, and all apparently good types of reputable workmen. "During our talk", he says

"we touched on the O. B. U. They said it had weakened, partly due to poor leadership, but rather deplored its failure. They said it had some good principles, if properly led. What appealed most to them was the aim to get free from domination of United States. They favoured a true Canadian or all-empire organization. They did not like the American colouring to the Internationals and the A. F. of

L.”[6]

5. Midgley's Explanations

On his return to Vancouver Midgley spoke freely in private conversation. He argued that the real membership of the O. B. U. is about 38,000; in addition to the 19,000 paid-up members there were 5,000 members in Alberta who were excused paying because of their fight with the U. M. W. of A.; Vancouver had been let off temporarily to pay for their new hall; and the L. W. I. U. had never paid up to full strength.

His explanation of the withdrawal of the loggers was that the I. W. W. element was in control; he hoped that the saner men of the loggers would repudiate this element. Winch, he said, had fought the I. W. W. until he saw that they were too strong, and then had switched; now the I. W. W. look upon him with suspicion and the saner men will reject him; he would be a “dead one” as soon as the I. W. W. executive felt strong enough to oust him.

Midgley was very bitter against Carl Berg, whom he described as “a syndicalist of the rankest hue”.

He also expressed the opinion that in the present juncture strikes are folly. They should organize for a more auspicious time.

The N. C. O. in charge of C. I. B. work in Vancouver regards the foregoing as mere special pleading.

6. Strength of the O. B. U. in British Columbia

The N. C. O. in charge of C. I. B. work in Vancouver has furnished an estimate of the O. B. U. as in September. He regards the organization as on the verge of disintegration. The records are in a chaotic state, owing to the tendency of districts to default, so that figures are difficult to compile. However, he recalls previous estimates of the membership in British Columbia thus:-[7]

On 16th July	22,050
“ 10th August	13,357
“ 20th September	16,522

This last estimate was made up as follows:-

L. W. I. U.	13,357
Other Units	3,165

As the loggers have seceded, the real O. B. U. membership accordingly should be placed at 3,165, with the 13,357 loggers in an anomalous position, not exactly hostile, and not sympathetic.

Labour bodies friendly to the O. B. U. are placed at 7,726; those hostile or indifferent at 13,275.

A decrease in the number sympathizing with the O. B. U. is expected.

7. Alexander Attacking Winch

At the Port Arthur convention W. A. Alexander, one of the L. W. I. U. organizers, deserted Winch, and sided with the Midgley faction. On 13th

October he held a meeting of the O. B. U. at New Westminster, at which he advocated the Midgley plan of district organization. Only 20 attended, out of about 200 who were not more than six months in arrear with their dues.

It was agreed on all hands that all the units were out of money, and that the members were badly in arrear. The meeting decided to ask T. A. Barnard, who was the labour candidate in the recent bye-election, to become district organizer.

Our report says:-

"He (i.e. Alexander) then told a few facts about the O. B. U. convention and said that, as a result of the stand he took there, he expected to be let out of his job as an O. B. U. official in about a week's time. There were too many officials in the O. B. U. at present, and the majority of them are striving jealously for power that is why he took his stand in favour of the District Organization system in opposition to their plan of Industrial organizing. He said he came very close to blows with some of them and had to order Carl Berk out of his room, and the struggle is [8] still going on, and an agreement will not probably be made until it is voted upon, as it will be shortly".

8. O. B. U. Notes

Mention was made a while ago of the enrolment of some Indians in the O. B. U. at Prince Rupert. It now appears that those people were enrolled in the "Fisheries and Water Products Unit, O. B. U." The younger Indians are mixing a good deal with whites as labourers and are somewhat prone to join such organizations; in the Prince Rupert case they had sleeping in the O. B. U. hall and probably thought that the paying of a dollar was a return for hospitality.

The Fisheries and Water Products Unit has the following membership:-

Trollers and Deep Sea Fishermen	190
Cannery Hands	200
Fish Packers	70
	<u>460</u>

The O. B. U. metal miners of the Skeena district held a convention at Prince Rupert on 4th October. Hitherto they have belonged to the General Workers' Unit, they now see, disposed to form a unit of their own.

While particulars are lacking as yet, it is understood that they evinced great dissatisfaction with the Port Arthur convention.

A Shipyard Workers' Unit of the O. B. U. has been formed in Prince Rupert. It began with about 40 members.

On noting the presence of Winch at the revolutionary-prohibitionist meeting at Vancouver our informant remarks on his aloofness from his fellow agitators. "He sat alone behind the circle, and as far away as he could get from Midgley". After speaking he left the meeting.

A report from Midway states that the O. B. U. is losing ground in the Okanagan Valley. Michael Casey (whose alcoholic activities have [9] been noted already) has ceased to be the salaried organizer; he has gone to work, to escape a charge of vagrancy, but he sooner or later will be convicted of boot-legging.

His successor as local secretary is a man named Wm. Whritson.

9. Revolutionists as Prohibitionists

On Sunday 17th October a curious prohibition meeting took place in Vancouver. It was in the hands of the extremist element, the chairman being Thomas Richardson and the speakers including R. P. Pettipiece, E. Winch, V. R. Midgley, W. H. Cottrell, W. R. Trotter and a number of other "Reds". The only speaker not associated with this element was a woman, a member of the British Columbia Teachers' Federation. The theme of all the speakers was:-

"The dawn of Social Revolution is approaching, and its accomplishment will be speeded up by the advent of total prohibition".

There was the usual abuse of everybody; in addition to attacks on those who opposed prohibition there were references to the Provincial Premier, and the R.C.M.P. who were termed "Stoolpigeons". Some of the remarks made may be noticed.

Winch said that he was governed by self-interest.

"He believed his interest would be advanced when all were total abstainers. The employers benefited the workers when they brought in prohibition. They sought during the war to increase efficiency for their individual profit; and now their class interest as capitalists was menaced by prohibition. Total prohibition would not come, no matter what Act was passed, until such time as the workers of the World controlled governments.

R. P. Pettipiece dealt largely with present conditions in Russia, which he said had been brought about by the prohibition of vodka. He had voted "wet" before, but this time he would vote "dry". [10]

W. R. Trotter said that if revolution was to come, the people needed to be sober, so that they could take hold of things.

All the speakers except the woman and Charles Cassidy, representative of the International Boilermakers, talked revolution.

At a meeting of the Moderation League (the party opposed to prohibition) Sir Hibbert Tupper referred to the "Soviets" as being lined up with the clergymen who were for prohibition, and he was interrupted by a number of men who resented criticism of the Soviets.

10. Revolutionary Meetings

Dr. Currie was the speaker at the people's Open Forum" at Vancouver on Sunday, 10th October. His subject was "Production for use", and he illustrated it with charts which he said come from a book which had been suppressed by the United States Government. He declared that his subject

was seditious. He states that in the Steel trade in the 30 years from 1870 to 1900 the production per man per year had risen from 60 to 360 tons; the wages per man per year from \$400 to \$900; and the profits from \$300 to over \$900. He said:-

“What would happen if a crowd of working men wanted to build houses for themselves, and in doing so, took possession of one of our large lumber mills? They would immediately have the Police after them most likely the Mounted Police, ‘Yellow Legs’ as they are called. If the Police could not stop them, then the Militia would be called out and the consequences would be that the working man would be worse off than ever. If we want to produce for our own use, we must do away with this social parasite class, and take over the industries on a co-operative basis amongst ourselves”.

J. Harrington was the speaker at the Socialist meeting held on Sunday 17th October in Vancouver. The meeting was not very successful, the attendance being smaller than usual and the speaker not impressing the audience. [11] Harrington made the surprising statement that since the revolution in Russia the projected canal to connect the Baltic and Black seas has been completed. “This was to prove that the working class could manage without the boss”.

11. Miscellaneous Notes

Further reports on the Chinese Labour Association seem to show that it is mainly confined to Vancouver. The Esperanto classes which are taken by one J. Clarke seem to have much to do with it; and they are revolutionary in tendency, the text-book being the “Communist Manifesto”.

Uncertainty exists at present as to who and what J. Clarke is. He may be a cog in the Bolshevik machine.

In reporting that Thomas Richardson has accepted the Labour nomination for the bye-election in Yale, the V. C. O. in charge of the Midway detachment says that he will have very little support. His campaign manager is one J. W. S. Logie of Summerland, a druggist whose ideas on social questions, religion etc. are regarded as peculiar.

There is reasons to believe that the B. C. Federationist is contemplating a change of policy, in the direction of moderation.

A weekly detachment report from Cumberland contains the following remark:- “All workers seem anxious to hold their present jobs in anticipation of a hard winter”.

Another weekly detachment report, this time from Kamloops, describes the loggers as seeming satisfied with the conditions under which they are working.

At a meeting of the Vancouver Longshoremens on 15th October a letter was received from the Secretary of the Seattle district, couched in pessimistic terms.

At Vancouver the B. C. Street Railway has settled with the union on a

basis satisfactory to the men. Increases are given to various classes of labour.

Frank Cassidy is continuing his speaking tour. On 8th October [12] he spoke at Yahk, B. C., and proceeded by way of Cranbrook to Fernie.

II. ALBERTA

12. The Story of the Strike

We are in possession of a record of proceedings at the O. B. U. headquarters in Calgary during the coal strike; they show that the leaders guided the men into disaster. The strike was called on 1st October; on 2nd October the leaders at Calgary were in good spirits; on the 3rd they began to be troubled about money; on the 4th Evans, Beard and Ormond began a tour of the Crow's Nest Pass; on the 8th when they had returned it was understood that things were going ill. Evans, the Secretary, left on the 10th for a tour in the north, his real object apparently being to collect enough to pay his own salary of \$200 a month. By the 13th the Fernie men had sent a delegation to Drumheller to see the facts for themselves; Bray, who was there, told them that the strike was lost. Yet the struggle was allowed to continue. There was much mutual recrimination among the leaders.

13. Lawson's Speech

A belated report of a speech by Lawson on 1st October to the Transportation Unit of the O. B. U. at Calgary shows that he utters two characteristic observations. One was a statement that he had authoritative information that the coal handlers at Port Arthur and Fort William "had only to be notified" and they would tie things up there. The other was that the Drumheller miners might sign the check-off because "it was too early in the year to pull a steam coal strike". "They would wait until Senator Robertson got nicely settled in Ottawa, and then, boys, look out for the trouble".

He also gave a curiously incorrect account of the quarrel at Port Arthur, representing Berg as assailing the loggers union.[13]

This singular speech seems to have been delivered before the coal strike had begun.

14. Strike Notes

An interesting episode at Taber on 17th October was the co-operation of mine-management and union in sending a man to Drumheller to ascertain the true state of affairs. The management paid expenses and half wages.

The N. C. O. in charge of the detachment observes:-

"The general feeling was that the men do not resent the check-off. But they object to a union which is not their choice and also the fact that dues and assessments go to the different headquarters of the U. M. W. of A. in the States. They were satisfied here and wished to remain in agreement with Howard, (the manager who made the

arrangement described). But they felt they had an interest in these other camps and if need be would back them up".

A report upon the Drumheller strike by the N. C. O. in charge of C. I. B. work in Southern Alberta lays stress upon the part played in it by the foreigner led by English-speaking agitators. About 60 per cent of the miners went out; of these nine-tenths were foreigners.

A report upon conditions in Wayne (in the Drumheller area) dated 13th October is to the effect that the strike leaders were not having a very comfortable time. A meeting of 1st October was broken up by the heckling of U. M. W. of A. men; on 2nd October another meeting developed hostility towards the leaders, who had a narrow escape from violence.

On 18th October the miners at Fernie decided to return to work. Full notice was given that the management would refuse to employ certain men. One of these was Wm. Sherman and some disposition to resent this was shown. On 19th October 289 men reported for work i.e. about half the regular shift. Five or six men have been "discriminated against".[14]

The troubles at Coalhurst flamed up again on 21st October, when the men struck because the management had refused to employ six or seven men who had been active advocates of the O. B. U.

Considerable restlessness on the part of the coal-miners at Lethbridge is reported.

On 19th October two developments appeared at Michel; the strike showed signs of weakening over 100 underground men reported for work --; and the coal company dismissed all the O. B. U. leaders. The last action caused indignation among the strikers.

A strike at Nordegg, which involved about 400 men, began on 9th October and ended on 15th October. It was due to resentment at the "check-off" and a desire to co-operate with Drumheller, the local secretary, James Bewsher, being principally responsible. It ended upon a prospect of increased wages and the news that the majority of the other mines in the district were working.

15. The Searchlight

The failure of the O. B. U. strike in the Alberta Coalfields probably will mean the demise of the Searchlight, and a move by Lawson to fresh fields. A proposal was made by him by R. E. Bray and David of Winnipeg that the Searchlight and the O. B. U. Bulletin unite, the new paper to be known as the O. B. U. Searchlight, with Lawson as its editor; Lawson declined to entertain this idea, probably because he expects the O. B. U. leaders to be arrested soon and fears to identify himself with the organization. He is anxious to go to Nova Scotia to spread O. B. U. propaganda there; he has telegraphed to J. B. McLachlan, but so far has received no reply. He is very short of funds.[15]

16. R. E. Bray

On 13th October R. E. Bray addressed a meeting of strikers at Drum-

heller. It comprised 400 or 500 men, nine-tenths of them foreigners. As a direct aid to the strikers it was not much, being a recital of his personal experiences in the Winnipeg strike and in the trial. It contained, however, much preaching of class hatred, and a strong insinuation that the jury at Winnipeg had been bribed, with the connivance of Judge Metcalfe and Mr. Andrews. The fact that the audience was largely composed of foreigners increases the seriousness of such a speech.

At the meeting Bray made a personal attack upon Sergt. Waugh, who was present, using very scurrilous language about him and the R. C. M. P., and indeed laying himself open to a charge of assault.

Bray spoke at Canmore on 15th October. His address did not interest the audience, and he gave the impression of being anxious to get money.

17. Miscellaneous Notes

The Ukrainian Society "Samo Obrazowania" of Edmonton on 9th Edmonton put on a play named "The Striker". It was revolutionary propaganda, the principal part being taken by John Klybanowski. It made a considerable impression upon the audience, which numbered about 160. The play seems to be a stock piece of propaganda, having been performed elsewhere.

A report upon Uus Ilm, an Esthonian paper printed in New York, shows it to be thoroughly Bolsheviki, and very dangerous. It apparently is the only paper printed in this language on the Continent.

Inquiry as to the resignation by Edward Brown of the post of Secretary of the O. B. U. "District, No. 1" shows that it was [16] principally due to domestic trouble.

Frank Cassidy's address at Fernie on 14th October was a failure, there being present fewer than 20 people all foreigners, and mostly Germans.

III. MANITOBA

18. Violent Speeches at an O. B. U. Meeting

An O. B. U. meeting was held in the Ukrainian Labour Temple in Winnipeg on Sunday, 17th October. One G. B. Currie and M. Popowich were the speakers.

Currie's speech was very violent. He boasted of the progress made by revolutionary unionism in Great Britain, and after asserting that shipments of munitions to Poland had been stopped, said:-

"The great body of workers is classed in three divisions, that is, Miners, Manufacturers and Railway men. If these unite together, England will be paralyzed, which I hope will come soon. The miners are on strike. They strike not on account of the High Cost of Living nor because their labour is worth more than they get, but they strike to crush the Capitalistic employers and to get the operation of that industry into their own hands, which is only just, because that Industry should be operated not for profit but for use".

He continued:-

"I am glad", says Robert Smillie, 'that the miners' strike is on because it will put a crimp into the little game of France'. Coal, coal was what France wanted and England was the country to supply her, as she was unable to get it anywhere else. Imagine, therefore, what will happen if the strike lasts about seven days! Famous Lloyd George and Churchills have exerted all their means to overcome the strike, but in vain. Councils of Action are established in every village and town amongst organized workers, and the Government is unable to stir, through fear of its own existence. All the efforts of Lloyd George, Millerand and other Italian and Polish Statesmen, are of no avail".

Other expressions used by him were:-

"Think it over, and let us use all weapons to sweep away and eradicate the profiteering Capitalists, and turn all the industries of the world into use of everybody, rather than that they should remain for the profit of a few only". [17]

"My coming to Canada, and my speaking here before you would not be vain were you all strongly united in one body, mind and soul, and not idly awaiting the promises of your bosses. Rise, and join your hands with your brothers over the ocean for the whole of Europe is boiling and chances offer themselves to you to challenge your enemies for emancipation, to own and operate the industries you produce for your own use".

Popowich spoke in Ukrainian, his speech consisting of an attack on the press, on the ground that it did not tell the truth, with the usual moral that revolutionary papers should be read. One interesting passage was:-

"In order to fabricate their news, they go even so far as to make damage to the public to make their news the more exciting, and the more horrible. You are all aware, I suppose of the explosion of a bomb on Wall Street in New York? What was the purpose of that explosion! Well, it has been found through investigation that it was done by the Capitalists simply to have their papers filled with news, and this news to be used as a weapon upon the workers".

Little is known as yet about Currie.

19. Misinformation about the Alberta Strike

At a meeting of the Socialist Party held in Winnipeg on 17th October F. Woodward, who is a member of the O. B. U. Central Executive Committee, spoke about the Alberta Coal Strike. Statements that the strike was nearly over were an absolute falsehood. "Telegrams had recently been received by him, direct from the strike committee, both at the Drumheller and other mines, stating that fourteen mines were at present completely tied up, and that the men had been offered a dollar and a half a day raise in wages, if they would only return to work, but as yet they had declined the offer, as they were out this time to make a job of the

situation". He added some incorrect statements as to the Bienfait situation, describing the strike as still in progress, and called for help for the Alberta men. The concluding portion of his speech is thus reported:-

"He commented on how solid the Capitalist walls were built, and stated that no means could be too severe to be used against this system, when it became time for the workers to control industry".[18]

20. O. B. U. Notes

The Winnipeg and District Branch of the O. B. U. met on 20th October in the Ukrainian Labour Temple. Apparently it was a Ukrainian meeting.

P. Anderson, who was a delegate at the Port Arthur convention, secured approbation of his action in withdrawing from it. His reason for withdrawing was that the committee refused to pass a resolution to the effect that the "United Workers of Canada" should join with "all the workers beyond the oceans".

Delegates were appointed from the Ukrainian Unit, O. B. U. to the relief committee for Soviet Russia.

A possibility exists of trouble on the Winnipeg Street Railway caused by the O. B. U. unit refusing to work with members of the International Unit.

21. Charles Lestor

Charles Lestor, who is on his way to England, spoke at the Socialist meeting in Winnipeg on Sunday 17th October. After a disquisition on the iniquity on the Capitalistic system, he predicted the coming or revolution.

"The strike of the miners now in progress in Great Britain, he said, was very probably the start of the abolition of this system. It had not as yet gone far enough to say for sure just what the miners meant, but one thing sure, they would accomplish what they were out for. "If the strike continued to grow, it would be armed revolution like that in Russia very probably, he said, because he felt quite sure that the Capitalist system would not go out of business without a fierce struggle because they had all the Army, Navy and Police at their disposal.

"In Great Britain herself, he said, they were quite confident of success in the final struggle, because the workers were organized to such an extent that a general strike would completely paralyze the country's industry, but it was the United States which held the firm hand of Capitalism and they stamped out any of the Labour movements with terrific vengeance".[19]

"Revolutions were sure to take place in all countries, Great Britain, France, Italy, Spain, United States, but he would not say in Canada, for he would not be safe in so doing".

Other remarks of his were that in the United States the private spies and detectives blew up public buildings to create a disturbance; and that

he wished that Napoleon had won against England, because Waterloo had been followed by the employment of child labour to pay the war debt.

Another statement was that when the Socialist Party gained power they would "mete out proper punishment" to Judge Metcalfe and Mr. A. J. Andrews "and all others of their kind and their followers". "You know it will not be a difficult task to hand a jury of workers who will probably take care of the situation".

The attendance was 700.

Another report of this speech contains the following passages:-

"When the final time did come, and the workers had captured Political power, which they would be forced to do, if people were to be kept alive in the world, he said, the question seemed to be, 'What would be done with the Capitalist Class?'

"The same would be done with them in Russia, he declared. They would be out selling papers on the streets, and out working with the workers.

"As a joke, he said, when this change of Political power took place, he was going to be a Magistrate, and when any of the Capitalist class came before him, he would say, twenty years, regardless of the crime, and if the individual began lamenting and asking for leniency, he would say, ten years more for contempt of court, because all this was coming to this class when the workers once got their chance".

IV. ONTARIO

22. O. B. U. NOTES

Investigation of the labour situation at Kirkland Lake about the middle of October showed conditions to be satisfactory. For some time the O. B. U. have been inactive. The mines report a shortage of labour, high wages paid in the bush attracting many men; nevertheless, [20] the men seem aware that the exaction of higher wages would result in the mines closing down. This feeling results in neglect of the O. B. U., which is not of immediate service to them.

The O. B. U. is keeping its office at Kirkland Lake open and has a secretary, one S. Kirk; he has little weight.

J. R. Knight has announced that he will remain permanently in Toronto. He now is tampering with the Street Railway Union.

Knight has been urging the Hamilton local of the O. B. U. to get to work on its projected campaign for increased membership.

A "Brass Check Club" has been formed in Hamilton. it is comprised of radicals and is to circulate the book of that name and other revolutionary matter.

23. The Extremists

The Jewish Socialist League has appointed a committee to instil communist ideas among Jewish Trade Unions. The members are Al-

mazoff, Wolf, Esspr, Shapiro and Russkin.

Complaint is made that this league is not receiving any radical reading matter from the United States.

At a meeting held on 1st October Almazoff said that he had formed a Jewish Communist Party in Montreal.

The Plebs League of Toronto have affiliated with their namesake in England. They also have decided to act under the direction of the Third International.

On 15th October the group of Russians which meets in Hamilton discussed the formation of a local of the Communist Party. A proportion of the 50 or 60 persons present were afraid to do so, apprehending imprisonment and deportation, and the meeting failed to come to a decision.[21]

The Russian Progressive Library in Toronto at a special meeting on 20th October decided not to form a school for agitators, but to keep the library for reading only.

Considerable unemployment is noted at Welland, with the men getting very hard up and rather in the mood for disorder.

V. QUEBEC

24. Miscellaneous Notes

On 17th October at a meeting of the Society for Technical Aid to Soviet Russia Revenko judged it necessary to argue at length against the anarchist point of view. He gave a thorough-going defence of the course of the Moscow Government in shooting persons who did not agree with it.

A travelling agitator from New York named Platonoff also spoke on "Revolution and Government".

There are in Montreal several allied societies, the Esperanto Club, the Theosophical Society and the Universal Library. A preliminary investigation goes to show that they have no connection with revolutionary agitation.

VI. MARITIME PROVINCES

25. The Coal Mines

In reporting upon the prospects of a coal strike in Nova Scotia, one of our informants draws attention to the course pursued by J. B. McLachlan, the Secretary-treasurer of the District. McLachlan is strongly for a strike, of the most extreme description; and this in spite of the fact that the district treasury is ill-supplied for a struggle. He adds:-

"I have often heard it said that McLachlan has kept the treasury empty by holding so many meetings, conventions, conferences, etc., and that he had a sinister motive behind this, namely:- that in event of a strike the International officials of the U. M. W. of A. would fail to supply money enough to pay a substantial strike allowance. This would then create dissatisfaction in the ranks of the U. M. W.

and cause a split among the miners, and perhaps the miners of District 18, O. B. U. section would come to their rescue, and therefore organize McLachlan's pet idol the O. B. U. in District [22] 26. This is what McLachlan has been secretly working for ever since the split in District 18, but he has been extremely cautious and careful since the O. B. U. show down at the convention in Truro last April".

The chances of District No. 18 (Alberta) helping with money are uncommonly remote.

On 13th October a strike occurred in Dominion No. 1. Mine, Cape Breton. The cause was a small and local grievance, and the men acted in defiance of the labour agreement, and of their own chiefs.

A mass meeting at Glace Bay on 17th October seemed strongly in favour of a strike.
