

ROYAL CANADIAN MOUNTED POLICE HEADQUARTERS

Ottawa, 17th August, 1937.

SECRETNO. 867WEEKLY SUMMARYREPORT ON REVOLUTIONARY ORGANISATIONS
AND AGITATION IN CANADAReport

Alex Welch, [deletion:1/2 line] leader of the Peterboro (Ont.) textile strike was arrested at Peterboro recently along with nine strikers and charged with inciting to riot.

Harvey Murphy, notorious Communist and President of the Ontario Federation on Unemployment who was sent to Peterboro by the Southern Ontario District leadership of the Communist Party to assist Welch directing the strike, was arrested on charges of spreading false news.

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APPENDIX NO. I: GENERAL

1. Campaign in Aid of Spanish Loyalists

Communist Party leaders seem determined to disregard the Order-in-Council passed recently in respect of the Foreign Enlistment Act and continue recruiting men for the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion in Spain. A number of volunteers are reported to have left for Spain during the last few days. The two complete ambulances which were to be purchased in New York with the money obtained in the recent "Aid to Spain Week", as far as is known, have not yet left.

On 1st August Dr. Norman Bethune gave an illustrated lecture at the Orpheum Theatre, Vancouver, B.C., on the work of his Blood Transfusion Unit in Spain. The theatre was filled to capacity and many turned away when the lecture commenced at 8.00 p.m.

Dr. Bethune stated that he went to Spain not as a political representative but as a representative of the Canadian people. Asked, however, by a member of the audience if he belonged to the Communist Party the doctor without hesitation said, "I have the honour to be accepted as a member of the Communist Party." (The man asking this question, a member of the C.P., following the meeting, was severely reprimanded by Tom Ewen for "bringing out the face of the Party at a most inopportune time".)

In defending the cause of the Loyalists Bethune stated that there have been atrocities on both sides but the greatest atrocity is "the clique of moneyed men who have banded together to kill the workers in Spain in order to regain their lost power." Towards the end of his speech he said, "When Fascism is defeated in Spain it will vanish from the earth".

The proceeds of the meeting were about \$1,200; this includes donations made by the various Communist controlled organisations which were presented to Dr. Bethune in a style calculated to arouse a "donation spirit". The moneys thus contributed totalled \$700 and \$500 was collected at the meeting proper.

Dr. Bethune addressed also a public meeting in the Auditorium at Vancouver on the night of 8th August. This meeting was held to accommodate those who were unable to hear him speak at the Orpheum Theatre on 1st August. Approximately 1,000 attended and the collection amounted to over \$300. A. M. Stephen was in the chair. At this meeting Dr. Bethune

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devoted more of his time to the advocacy of the united front between C.C.F.'ers, Communists and trade unionists.

As a direct result of Bethune's meeting in the Orpheum Theatre at Vancouver on 1st August there has been a rush of camp project workers to enlist for service in Spain. Eight of these men are said to have entrained for the East en route to Spain on 8th August. The recruiting for the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion at Vancouver has been transferred from Tom Ewen to [deletion:2 words] the Organiser of the Friends of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion in Spain, Room 43, 615 West Hastings Street.

In connection with transporting these volunteers, the procedure adopted at Vancouver is to wire to Toronto that a certain number are on hand in

Vancouver and the tickets are wired back usually from Montreal to the ticket agent at the C.P.R. depot, picked up by Tom Ewen and distributed to the men on the platform the night they entrain. No passage money appears to be handled in Vancouver.

The opportunity to train Canadians in practical revolution in Spain was welcomed by the C.P. leadership but the possible casualties were overlooked until the lists of dead were published. Another point the leaders had overlooked and which now is the subject under discussion in all leading Party circles, was the possibility that the foreign born volunteers from Canada would not be allowed to re-enter Canada after doing service in Spain.

2. The Alberta Provincial Convention of the C.P. of C.

An open mass meeting in the Empire Theatre at Edmonton, Alta., on the evening of 30th July marked the opening of the Alberta Provincial Convention of the Communist Party of Canada. Malcolm Bruce of Vancouver, Alderman Penner of Winnipeg, W. Wiggins, Lawrence Anderson, J. McPherson of Edmonton, Leslie Morris representing the Central Committee of the Party, Jean Mason and Ben Swankey of the Young Communist League were the speakers; approximately 500 people attended. A large maple leaf with Tim Buck's picture in the centre was displayed on the stage.

The convention proper opened at 10.00 a.m. on the following day in the Albion Hall with J. Lakeman in the chair. Lawrence Anderson,

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Provincial Secretary of the Party, requested the convention to express its solidarity and greetings to Tim Buck, George Dimitroff, Joseph Stalin, Leslie Morris, Malcolm Bruce and Jacob Penner; he declared: "We must condemn Fascist aggression against the Spanish people; we must compel the Canadian Government to stop shipments to General Franco; we must sacrifice ourselves to beat Fascism and follow the role of the Soviet Union to lead the people to peace and progress". He further remarked: "We must follow the great development and crushing victory of the trade union movement in the U.S.A.; we must be prepared to meet a new crisis in Capitalism; the workers must be organised, especially in the basic war industry and unity must be achieved among the common people in the cities and the country." Referring to the present situation in the Social Credit movement in Alberta, Anderson said: "The Credit Government is faced with a critical situation — the war between the Government and the financiers — we must support the Government

through united effort to help the common people; the Provincial Government must become the champion of the common people and we must direct the future course of events in Alberta through the C.C.F. trade unions, U.F.A. and Social Credit."

During the afternoon session a Commission was appointed for each phase of Communist Party activity: —

Organisation	Commission, Chairman	— [Xdeletion:name]
Trade Union	" "	— [Xdeletion:name]
"Clarion"	" "	— [Xdeletion:name]
Agricultural	" "	— [Xdeletion:name]
Finance	" "	— [Xdeletion:name]
Women's	" "	— [Xdeletion:name]
Youth	" "	— [Xdeletion:name]
Unemployed	" "	— [Xdeletion:name]

[Xdeletion: 1 word] reported on the activities of the Spanish Aid Committee, J. Lakeman gave the report on trade unions, [Xdeletion:2-3 words] on the situation in his district, [Xdeletion:2-3 words] spoke on conditions in his "constituency", while J. Penner of Winnipeg reported on municipal affairs of that city, recommending to the convention that every municipality should administer their relief and not the Provincial Government, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or the Federal Government.

The convention reconvened at 10.00 a.m. on 1st August in the Albion Hall with W. Hammill in the chair. L. Anderson read a telegram of greetings from Tim Buck and the National Political Bureau of the Party at Toronto, W. Wiggins, reporting on the political and economic situation, stressed the need for unity based on a common programme, J. A. McPherson

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delivered a report on organisation stating that in Alberta "We have 224 Party branches organised in 23 constituencies with over 2,000 members of which 1,000 are industrial workers, 900 are farmers and only 126 women". He believed that the membership will be increased to 2,500 before the National Party Congress which is to convene in Toronto on 9th October next. He contended that the Party must take joint action with other progressive forces with a view to winning over those progressive forces for a Farmer-Labour Party, striving for a Popular Front Government in Alberta and Canada.

In the course of the afternoon a picnic was held at the South Side Athletic Park. The weather being unfavourable, the attendance was small.

On 2nd August at 10.00 a.m. the convention reconvened in the Albion Hall with Corry Campbell of Calgary acting as Chairman. On recommendation

(made by the Nomination Committee previously appointed) the convention elected the following Provincial Committee: [deletion: 4 lines]

The Provincial Finance Commission elected consists of: [deletion: 1 line] Malcolm Bruce, Editor of *People's Advocate*, C.P. organ published in Vancouver, outlined the political and economic conditions in British Columbia stressing the lesson learned from the last B.C. Provincial election. He emphasized the importance of building the trade unions, uniting the national and international unions, and organising the basic industries under the C.I.O. banner. He also dealt with the importance of the Party press, literature and education, and appealed for closer co-operation and "vigilance in the struggle to carry out the convention decisions".

In the course of the afternoon session [deletion: 1 word] representing the Social Credit League, spoke. He remarked that "ordinary people have usually fought shy of the C.P., but they are finding out that things are different now; we are compelled to have unity now if we are going to get results; that is why the Social Credit League want everyone to unite including the Communists in the fight against finance and the present system."

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Pledging support to the Social Credit Government, the convention issued the following statement: —

"The government has issued three pledge forms to the people of Alberta. One of these, the so-called 'true-blue' pledge, is designed for those who are not adherents to Social Credit, but is intended to be a sort of plebiscite to get backing for the government in its fight for \$25 a month and a lower cost of living.

"These two demands can be attained only if the government, on the basis of a great united people's movement, takes resolute steps to compel the exploiters of Alberta's people and natural resources to pay the cost of the dividend and lower cost of living. These demands cannot be satisfied by impractical measures which fail to take into account the existing powers of the government to tax the rich and to legislate for the workers, farmers, professionals and small trades people of our province and to create new wealth by putting the people of Alberta back to work.

"Any other method may result in dismay and disappointment, disrupt the people's movement and benefit the reactionary elements in Alberta and outside.

"The Communist Party in supporting the 'true-blue' pledge does so while maintaining its full independence and its right to criticize the methods of the government and the legislation which will be shortly introduced. It also reserves the right to advance with the labour movement as a whole,

those proposals for legislation regarding working hours, wages, conditions, prices, debt, and so on without the passage of which the unity of the people cannot be achieved”.

During the session that followed a number of delegates took the floor reporting on conditions in their respective localities and discussed the reports given by the main reporters. B. Swankey of the Y.C.L. stressed the importance of a united mass youth movement and the struggle for peace as reflected in the Canadian Youth Congress. He stated that the Y.C.L. in Alberta has 12 branches with 225 members, 50 of whom are in Edmonton. He appealed to the parent body to take the youth question more seriously and help to build the youth movement in every community throughout the province.

The concluding session was held in the Ukrainian Labour Temple starting at 8.00 p.m. on 3rd August and concluding at 4.00 a.m. on 4th August.

The proceedings of this convention show that the Party is preparing for any eventuality that may arise out of the situation prevalent in Alberta at this time and that the C.P. intends to concentrate all major activities on the question of the united front.

3. Serbian Communist Paper Records Progress

Prawda, youngest of the C.P. organs, published fortnightly in Toronto, Ont., in the Serbian language, for 30th July contains the result

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of the “drive conducted on behalf of this paper recently. Prawda, the official organ of the [~~2-3 words~~] Serbian Progressive Association — the members of which were, prior to 1936, included in the Jugo-Slavian Workers and Farmers Clubs — appears to be making rapid progress. The statement appearing in the said issue giving the result of the campaign follows: —

Location	Organisation	QUOTA		RAISED	
		Sustaining Fund	Sub's.	Sustaining Fund	Sub's.
Windsor, Ont.	Men's Branch	\$65.00	16	\$ 72.60	56
Hamilton, “	Branch	40.00	16	71.35	20
Toronto, “	Women's Section	40.00	10	80.00	9
Vancouver, B.C.	Branch	80.00	26	148.35	12
Montreal, Que.	“	40.00	10	44.00	16
Windsor, Ont.	Women's Section	35.00	10	35.00	7
Port Arthur, Ont.	Branch	40.00	10	46.90	5
Toronto, Ont.	Men's Branch	55.00	15	49.90	11

Chatham, " Branch	30.00	10	17.20	2
Welland, "	25.00	10	8.00	5
Kirkland Lake, Ont.	50.00	16	15.66	1
<u>From Sympathisers:</u>				
Valdor, Que.	\$ 35.00			
" " (S. Serdar)	16.00			
Duperquett, Que.	10.25		5	
Rouyn, Que.	11.00			
Regina, Sask.	8.55		5	
Schumaker, Ont.	5.00			
Nelson, B.C.	11.55		4	
Geraldton, Ont.	7.55			
Premier Mine, B.C.	2.00			
Toronto, Ont. (Z. Stokovich)	10.45			
Sudbury, Ont.	.50		3	
Bedmore, "	1.40			
Hazleton, Pa., U.S.A.			6	
Totals —				
Branches of S.P.A.	\$588.96		144	
Sympathisers	119.00		22	
Donation by Widov-Day Congress	<u>100.00</u>			
GRAND TOTAL	<u>\$807.96</u>		<u>166</u>	

4. Dr. Bethune Upbraides B.C. Provincial Executive of
C.C.F. for Refusing to Co-operate with C.P.

On the 6th instant Dr. Bethune was the guest of the B.C. Executive of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation at a house party at the home of Mrs. Dolly Steeves, M.L.A., at which the doctor is said to have scathingly denounced the C.C.F. for harbouring Trotskyites in their organisation and for their refusal to co-operate with the Communists during the recent Provincial elections. The Provincial leader of the C.C.F. — Dr. Telford — was not present at this meeting. [deletion: 1 word] took issue with the doctor but the doctor had been well coached beforehand by Tom Ewen and easily disposed of [deletion: 1/2 line] At this

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house party Dr. Bethune is said to have made the statement that he had received many telephone calls from Vancouver and Victoria doctors and professional men asking for information on how to join the C.P. He had referred them to Tom Ewen, he said.

[~~deletion:5-6 lines~~]

It is established that several of the C.C.F. clubs in the interior of British Columbia have returned their charters to the Provincial Offices and [~~deletion:1 word~~] is said to have interviewed Tom Ewen on the subject and accused the C.P. of influencing these clubs in their action. Ewen admitted the "impeachment" and told [~~deletion:1 word~~] that as soon as the C.C.F. made a move to expel the Trotskyite element from their organisation then the C.P. of C. would work with them on a basis of unity.

The real factor in the clubs returning their charters appears to be the expulsion from the C.C.F. of A. M. Stephen who seemed to be very popular with the membership of the C.C.F. at large.

5. Strikes & Industrial Unrest Throughout Canada

(A) Textile Strike in Quebec

The province-wide strike involving approximately 10,000 textile workers at the various plants of the Dominion Textile Limited remains unsettled with operations at a standstill. Minor disturbances have been reported from several points.

(B) Steel Workers Strike at Sorel, Que.

Disturbances over the week-end marked this strike, in progress since 4th August, and which is affecting about 1,200 workers employed in the various steel plants. Eighty-five Provincial Police dispersed a mob of 200 men advancing on the Sorel Jail on 14th August after violence earlier in the day in which a house and an automobile were set on fire. An offer made by the Provincial Minister of Labour to return to work

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pending settlement of the difficulties was turned down by the strikers.

(C) Rubber Workers Walk-Out at Drummondville, Que.

Dissatisfied with working conditions sixty-five employes of the Holetite Rubber Company at Drummondville walked out on strike on 11th August for improved working conditions.

(D) Silk Workers Stage Strike at Acton Vale, Que.

Demanding a provincial collective labour contract 125 employes of the Acton Vale silk mills joined the general textile strike on 12th Aug.

(E) Textile Strike in Ontario

The textile strike at Peterboro, Ont., was marked by disorder and minor rioting when on 10th August pickets attacked a number of strikers who attempted to return to work at the Bonner-Worth mill under police escort. During the scrimmage that followed several strikers received injuries necessitating medical attention. Fourteen persons were arrested including Alex Welch, Organiser for the United Textile Workers' Union (C.I.O.) who is charged with obstructing and assaulting Police Officers. On 9th August the Manager of the Dominion Woollens & Worsteds Auburn and Bonner-Worth mills informed the strikers that the mills would reopen on the following day. It is stated that approximately 130 strikers returned to work.

Tentative agreement was reached following an all-day conference between union leaders and company officials, with Premier Hepburn acting as mediator, on 16th August. The agreement, if ratified, would end the long drawn-out strike at three Cornwall plants of Canadian Cottons Ltd. and the two Peterboro units of Dominion Woollens & Worsteds Ltd., involving more than 2,000 workers.

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APPENDIX NO. II: REPORTS BY PROVINCESI. BRITISH COLUMBIA6. [~~deletion:2-3 words~~] Workers' Alliance at Vancouver Shows Strength

On 6th August the Workers' Alliance of British Columbia held a mass meeting in the Orange Hall at Vancouver. The hall was crowded to capacity and many were unable to gain admittance. The meeting was called to afford Alderman Pettipiece, of the City Relief Department, an opportunity to obtain the consensus of opinion of the members of the Alliance on the question of what demands to present to the Provincial Government relating to the problem of relief. Alderman Pettipiece was in attendance as well as Alderman Hurry and Gutteridge. During question period the meeting got pretty well out of control and Alderman Pettipiece was so badly heckled that he left the platform

and walked out of the hall. The meeting ended in confusion and it is said that as a result of the meeting about 75 new members were enrolled in the Workers' Alliance.

The aims and objects of the Workers' Alliance as set forth in a bulletin issued by its Vancouver District Council are:—

- “(a) For a Public Work program; the payment in accordance with the Dominion Fair Wage Act (1935), the established organized rate or the Trade Union rate of pay in any given area.
- “(b) Pending the introduction of such a work program and for the benefit of those who, by reason of ill-health or other cause, are ineligible for such work; that the scale of relief allowance, at all times be maintained in a balance with the cost of living in such a manner as to permit the unemployed citizens to live and raise their families in a proper, healthful manner.
- “(c) For a National Program of Unemployment and Social Insurance.
- “(d) That any benefits gained by our organization in its official capacity be made equally available to all members.
- “(e) That all members in turn, render their support and assistance to our organization to the best of their individual ability.”

II. MANITOBA

7. Winnipeg Communists Win in Local Trades & Labour Council Election

At the regular meeting of the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council held on 3rd August the Communists succeeded in electing their own choice — [deletion:1 word] a member of the Party and President of the Council — as the Council's official delegate to the forthcoming convention of the Canadian Trades Congress which is to convene in Ottawa on 13th September next.

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III. QUEBEC

8. Leaders of C.P. Discuss Textile Strike

[deletion:2 1/4 lines] stated that the strike, conducted by the Catholic Syndicate, was very poorly led and was showing signs of weakness. He further stated that the C.P. textile unit of eight members, led by himself and a man [deletion:2 words] was now working among the strikers but meeting with little success because of lack of opportunity to work among the strikers. The

union Organisers, he said, are also keeping a sharp eye on any so-called Communist elements thereby making work among the strikers practically impossible. He further stated that many strikers with whom he came in contact have expressed their desire to join with an A.F. of L. union and, as only forty per cent of the strikers are members of the Catholic Syndicate, [deletion: 1 word] thought it would be a good idea to immediately apply for a Federal Charter and commence enrolling the strikers into the A.F. of L.

Following his report a lengthy discussion took place. Fred Rose, Provincial leader of the C.P. in Quebec, in summing up the discussion, suggested that nothing should be done to endanger the strike which he considered was of the utmost importance, or give its leadership the opportunity of accusing the A.F. of L. of "splitting" tactics if an attempt were made to recruit members into the A.F. of L. For this reason, he said, it would be a wrong policy to apply for a Federal Charter at this particular time. He suggested that the local A.F. of L. leadership should be persuaded to send out a call to the Catholic Syndicates offering them their support both morally and in leadership. He further suggested that an attempt be made to have either Alex Welch or Arthur Lavery, leaders of the textile strike in Peterboro and Cornwall, respectively, to send a message of greetings to the local strikers and if possible have either Welch or Lavery come to Montreal for a short time and discuss the strike situation with the local A.F. of L. leadership. It was also recommended by Rose that the C.P. unit working among the strikers should agitate for stronger picket lines, a stronger strikers' committee and regular reports from the strike leaders as to what is taking place during negotiations for a settlement.
