

Labour History

A Unit of Study on

“Unions in Nova Scotia”



by Allan King
for the Nova Scotia
Teachers Union (1998)

Labour History

A Unit of Study on “Unions in Nova Scotia”

Response Guide

Invitation to Respond

This Study Unit is a project of the Curriculum Committee in response to Resolution 95-5 which states:

95-5 *Labour History - NSTU cooperate to develop*

That the NSTU cooperate with other labour organizations to develop and make available to all schools in Nova Scotia units of study on labour history in the Maritimes and Canada, which would give students an understanding of the role and importance of unions in our society, the historical goals and accomplishments of the organized labour movement, and appreciation of the necessity of a strong labour presence to the future prosperity of the people of this region.

The Curriculum Committee of the NSTU invite you to respond to this document. Group or staff responses are encouraged. This document will be revised in response to comments or suggestions from teachers.

Content of Responses

In your response, please comment on (1) your general impressions of the document, its focus and content, and (2) specific sections, outcomes, concepts, or vocabulary in the document.

Respondent Information

Please include your name, your school or the group that collaborated on the response.

Please submit your response at any time prior to September 30, 1999. You can send it by mail, fax, or email, to:

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Labour History Kit Response

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1. Where does this document fit into the curriculum?

2. Does it meet any of the outcomes as identified in the PSP and Curriculum Guides? ☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, which outcomes? _____

Which Guides? _____

3. For what grade level is the material appropriate? _____

4. What are the positive aspects of this document?

5. Provide some suggestions for revision.

Labour History

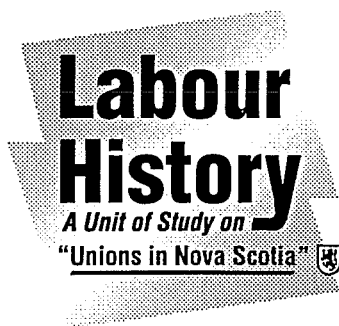
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Teacher Notes:

This unit has been designed to be used either as a complete package or it can be used in parts.

PART I -

THE BEGINNING

is a general introduction to the concept of organized labour. Historically, it begins with the **Neolithic Revolution** to show students how the invention of agriculture changed the way communities were organized and how this led to *surplus* production and the *specialization of labour*. **The Middle Ages** deals with the development of merchant and craft *guilds* and how these were early attempts by workers to take some control over their working conditions. **The Industrial Revolution** introduces the concept of *mass production* and how workers' lives were effected by the newly emerging factory system. **The Wealth of Nations** introduces students to *Capitalism* and how the marketplace regulates workers' wages. **Labour in the 19th Century** outlines the ideas of *Karl Marx* and how Capitalism can exploit workers. This section ends with the very beginnings of organized labour in the last century.

PART II -

"THEY CAN'T STAND THE GAFF":

A CASE STUDY OF THE LABOUR HISTORY OF NOVA SCOTIA

is a detailed study of the 1925 strike between The British Empire Steel and Coal Company and The United Mine Worker (District 26) which took place in Cape Breton. This strike represents one of the most dramatic episodes of labour history in Nova Scotia.

PART III -

THE STRUCTURE OF UNIONS

describes the advantages of *collective bargaining*, the difference between *craft* and *industrial unions*, how unions are legally formed and has students engage in a role playing activity in which they must *negotiate a contract*. **When Negotiations Fail** deals with the various options which may occur if a union and their employer are unable to reach agreement on a contract including descriptions of *work to rule*, *conciliation*, *arbitration*, *strike* and *lockout*. The final section of the unit introduces **Unions and Government**.

The unit is intended to "stand alone". That is, you should be able to do the entire unit (or portions of it) with very few extra resources. A couple of student activities require library research and one activity requires access to an Internet site, although I would not describe any of these activities as critical to the overall objectives of the unit. There are, however, a number of resources listed at the end of the unit which you might want to consider using to embellish what is included here. The section on the labour history of Nova Scotia only scratches the surface of that subject, but there are many resources available through most public libraries (some of which are listed at the end). The feature length movies listed in the resources at the end may require a little hunting, but are well worth including. If you chose to do the unit "as is", it is estimated that the entire unit would take between 10 and 15 class hours to complete, so you may want to be selective about the activities you want your students to do based on your objectives. The student exercises appear in italics throughout the unit and a sample of test questions appears at the end.

OBJECTIVES

(From the Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum)

1. ACQUIRING, PROCESSING AND COMMUNICATING INFORMATION IN SOCIAL STUDIES

- classify, interpret, and analyse data to help respond to research questions
- draw inferences, consider alternatives and form decisions using critical creative skills to take age appropriate action to deal with personal and social issues
- create summaries, essays, reports and oral and multimedia presentations that demonstrate increasingly complexity of thought, structure and conventions

2. CITIZENSHIP, POWER AND GOVERNANCE

- critically analyse major issues involving the rights, responsibilities, roles and status of individual citizens and groups in a local, national and global context
- analyse critically the origins, development and current condition of the main principles of democracy including freedom, equality, human dignity, justice, the rule of law and civic rights and responsibilities
- evaluate the unequal distribution of power in society and the sources of authority in the lives of citizens
- identify and evaluate various strategies for influencing public policy
- evaluate public issues, taking into account multiple points of view, in order to arrive at informed conclusions and suggest creative solutions to problems

3. GROUPS AND INSTITUTIONS

- analyse how individuals and formal and informal groups can influence each other
- evaluate why the function of a group may be influenced by such factors as ethnicity, age, gender and status
- explain how selected institutions have developed and changed over time

- analyse group and institutional influence on people and society in both historical and contemporary settings
- analyse how individuals influence groups and institutions in both historical and contemporary settings
- analyse and evaluate examples of tensions between and within groups and institutions
- evaluate the role of institutions in providing continuity and change

4. INDIVIDUALS, SOCIETIES AND ECONOMIC CHOICES

- evaluate the role played by economic institutions such as banks, labour unions, government agencies, national and multinational corporations and examine their impact on individuals, private and public organizations
- evaluate factors that influence the distribution of wealth locally, nationally and internationally
- evaluate how government policies, expenditures, regulations and trade agreements influence productivity and living standards

5. PARTICIPATING IN SOCIAL STUDIES

- evaluate why it is critical for individuals to respect and accept others
- manage and mediate conflict and differences of opinion by negotiation, persuasion, compromise, consensus building, peer mediation, arbitration and adjudication

6. TIME, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

- apply key concepts such as time, chronology, causality, change, conflict, and complexity to explain, analyse and show connections among patterns of historical change and continuity
- demonstrate that historians are selective in the questions they seek to answer and the evidence they use and that this influences their interpretation of history

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PART I - THE BEGINNING

THE NEOLITHIC REVOLUTION

About 10,000 years ago, a fundamental change occurred in the way in which people organized their communities and exploited their environment in order to feed, clothe and house themselves. This event has come to be known as the **Neolithic Revolution** and its most important characteristic was the discovery of **agriculture**. Beginning in what is now called the Middle East (and later in China, Egypt, Europe and parts of America), people discovered that they could save the seeds of certain edible plants and replant them year after year to insure a continuous supply of food. They also discovered that certain herding animals such as goats, cattle and sheep could be tamed such that they could control the movements of these animals.

Prior to this, small communities of people relied on

hunting wild animals and **gathering** edible plants in order to supply themselves with the necessities of life. This meant that people had to be continually on the move, following the wild herds of game as these animals searched for food themselves. Because they were continually moving, communities were unable to build permanent structures to live in and most historians agree that virtually everyone in the community had to spend most of their time in the search for food.

The Neolithic Revolution brought about a profound change in the way communities organized themselves because agriculture most often meant that people could produce a **surplus** of food. That is, a fairly small number of individuals could produce enough food, not only for themselves, but for others as well. Now some individuals could be freed from the responsibility of producing food. They could spend all of their time making pottery, clothing, shoes or any number of other items needed by the community. Because a shoemaker could produce more shoes than he/she needed and a farmer could produce more food than they needed (i.e. both could produce a surplus), they could **specialize** in one activity and exchange their surplus production for the things that they needed (but did not produce themselves). This is known as the **specialization of labour**.

Agriculture also allowed people to remain in one place for extended periods of time. This meant that people could build permanent homes clustered around a place where they would exchange their surplus production. These, of course, eventually became towns and cities.

THE MIDDLE AGES

In Europe, during the 11th and 12th centuries, some merchants and traders began to group themselves together to form organizations called **guilds** to promote their mutual interests. Merchant Guilds were sometimes granted (by the monarch) exclusive rights to buy and sell certain products. For example, the *Merchant Adventurers* was an English trading company formed in 1407. By organizing many guilds and traders in northern Europe together, the Merchant Adventurers were able to control the export of cloth from England to continental Europe. By 1550, the company came to control 75% of all trade between England and other countries. Clearly, this gave the Merchant Adventurers a great deal of power in terms of setting prices, regulating the quality of goods and controlling the number of goods available to the public. The economic power wielded by many Merchant Guilds often translated into political power; power that could challenge the authority of the monarchy. In 1689, the Merchant Adventurers lost their charter (their exclusive trading rights) because it was felt that by pursuing their activities, they were in conflict with the economic interests of England. The company was dissolved in 1806.

Merchant Guilds often attempted to exclude individual craftworkers as they attempted to monopolize trade in a particular town. As a result, beginning in the 12th and 13th centuries, skilled artisans such as masons, woodworkers and clothing makers began organizing themselves into **Craft Guilds** to protect themselves from the possible exploitation of the merchants. Craft Guilds regulated wages, fought against unfair working conditions and set the standards for those who were to enter the craft. They included employers as well as journey-

men (skilled craftsmen) and apprentices (workers who were learning the craft) and, in some cases, became very powerful politically. By the 14th century, Craft Guilds had largely taken local control from the Merchant Guilds. As well, Craft Guilds fulfilled many social and charitable functions by supporting injured, sick or elderly workers and their families. Guilds generally lost their position after the 16th century as Capitalism became more pervasive in Europe.

THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION

Beginning in the mid-18th century, improvements in crop rotation, enclosing farm fields to more efficiently use land, and developments in animal breeding greatly increased agricultural output and the number of workers needed to produce enough food for the whole society was reduced. These improvements in efficiency allowed individual farm owners to make increased profits and become wealthy. With this new-found wealth, individuals were able to redirect some of their wealth to the newly emerging industrial system which was based on the **mass production** of goods. It began in the textile industry in Britain, where inventions such as the spinning jenny and the flying shuttle (and later the power loom) made spinning and weaving so much more efficient that they allowed weavers to greatly increase their output of cloth. The use of steam energy to power the new machines changed the role of the worker and redefined their participation in the production process. This rapid change from a primarily agrarian society to one based on manufacturing was called the **Industrial Revolution**.

The industrial system, rather than being centred around the ownership of land like the agricultural system had been, was centred around the ownership of machines, factories, railroads and mines (to supply the new factories with raw materials and energy in the form of coal). Economists call these elements of production **capital**. The number of workers needed in agriculture was falling while the number of workers needed in

industry was increasing. Essentially, workers moved from working out of their **home** where they often produced most of their needs by themselves (e.g. food, clothing - from cloth woven in their home, simple furniture) to working in **factories** where they produced goods almost entirely for other people. Workers had to go to a factory each day because the machines used in manufacturing were far too large to be used in a person's home. First towns and then cities quickly sprang up around factories and mines to house workers and their families. Most importantly, the new industrial worker was now dependent on a **wage** to buy the goods he/she needed.

Student Exercises

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All of the following individuals contributed in some way to the British textile industry and their inventions were instrumental in ushering in the Industrial Revolution. Use an encyclopedia to do research on each and write a short report of about half a page outlining HOW each was important in changing the way textiles were manufactured in England. In your report, describe the machine each invented and how it improved the efficiency of textile production in England.

- a) John Kay (1704 - 79)
 - b) James Hargreaves (? - 1778)
 - c) Richard Arkwright (1732 - 92)
 - d) Edmund Cartwright (1743 - 1823)
 - e) Elias Whitney (1765 -1825)
 * Whitney was actually an American
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THE WEALTH OF NATIONS

In 1776, **Adam Smith**, a Scottish economist/philosopher, wrote an important work called "**The Wealth of Nations**". In this book, Smith argued that wealth was created by the division of labour and that production should be divided into a number of small repetitive steps each carried out by a different worker. A modern example of this concept can be seen in an assembly line in which a product (such as a car) moves from one worker to the next, with each worker adding a small component to the vehicle. Smith further argued that, given the freedom to do so, each individual would act in his/her own **self interest**. For example, it would be in the interest of a worker to try and earn as much money as possible. It would not, however, be in the interests of the worker to demand such high wages so as to put his/her employer out of business. Thus, a worker would try to receive a wage which was as high as possible, but at the same time not put his/her employer out of business. On the other hand, an employer would try to pay his workers as little as possible so as to increase his/her profits. It would not, however, be in the interests of an employer to pay such low wages that his/her employees would quit and go to work for someone else. Thus, the employer would attempt to pay wages which were as low as possible (to keep profits high), but at the same time, satisfy his/her workers enough so they would not quit. Smith believed that, while neither the worker nor the employer can be totally satisfied with such an arrangement, the two (while both attempting to satisfy their self interests) would come to an agreement which would be as agreeable as it could be to both.

This basic idea became the basis of an economic system we now call **Capitalism**. "The Wealth of Nations" argued that people **should** be allowed to pursue their own self interest because, in doing so, everyone would benefit. Workers would get fair wages, manufacturers would lower prices to compete with other manufacturers and, at the same time they would earn a fair profit. Smith believed that it should be the responsibility of the government to pass laws which protected citi-

zens from criminals and to defend the nation from outside aggression, but the government should not, in any way, interfere with business and the way it was transacted. Issues like wages, prices, working conditions, profits and business practices would be regulated by an **invisible hand**. That is, each day (as all people pursued their self interest), buyers and sellers would meet in the "marketplace" and agree on prices, just as employers and workers would meet to agree on wages and working conditions. At the time "The Wealth of Nations" was published many people agreed with Smith because they believed that his ideas corresponded with what they thought was human nature. (That is, humans were, by nature, competitive and acquisitive.)

Student Exercises

SUPPLY, DEMAND AND PRICES

Capitalism is based on the idea that the price of a product is based not only on the cost of making the product, but on the availability of the product (the supply) and how badly people want the product (the demand). Going back to the discussion on self interest, it would not make sense for a producer of goods to continue to manufacture a product if people did not want it. (Because they could not sell the item, they would eventually have to go out of business.) It would, however, be in the interest of a manufacturer to make (supply) things that people **did** want. The relationship between the consumer (the demand) and the manufacturer (the supply) is, therefore, such that they will come together in the market and agree on a price based on how badly the consumer wants the product and on how many items the manufacturer is willing to make. For example, some years ago a potato chip manufacturer thought that buyers would like fruit flavoured potato chips. They manufactured the chips and put them on the market for the same price as the "usual" flavours. Many people tried the new chips, but very few people liked them. The demand fell to almost zero - no matter how low the price went. Eventually, of course, the manufacturer stopped making the chips. This is all done without government

regulation or rules; the market simply sorts itself out by Smith's "invisible hand".

DETERMINE THE PRICE

It is possible to graphically illustrate the relationship between supply and demand and how these two variables determine the price of an item. For this illustration, we will use a small compact car as an example.

DEMAND: If compact cars cost \$1000, clearly there would be a great demand for them. If the price rose to \$4000, there would still be a great demand but it would not be as great as if the price was \$1000. If the price rose to \$7000, the demand would fall again. As the price continues to rise, demand would fall until the price became so high that the demand would be very low. The following chart might indicate the demand for compact cars at various prices:

IF THE PRICE WAS	THE DEMAND WOULD BE
1,000	40,000
4,000	35,000
7,000	30,000
10,000	25,000
13,000	20,000
16,000	15,000
19,000	10,000
22,000	5,000
25,000	0

Construct a graph of the demand for compact cars. Put the price on the vertical axis and the demand on the horizontal axis.

SUPPLY: If compact cars cost \$1000, there would be a great demand for them but manufacturers would be very reluctant to supply cars at that price. Perhaps they would not be willing to supply any cars at that price because they would lose money on each car. If the price rose to \$4000, manufacturers may be willing to supply a small number of cars but, because they would make very little profit at that price, they would not want to produce too many vehicles. As the price continues to rise, manufacturers will be more willing to supply cars for the market. The following chart might illustrate the supply of compact cars at various prices:

IF THE PRICE WAS	THE SUPPLY WOULD BE
1,000	0
4,000	4,000
7,000	8,000
10,000	12,000
13,000	16,000
16,000	20,000
19,000	24,000
22,000	28,000
25,000	32,000

Construct a graph of the supply for compact cars. Put the price on the vertical axis and the supply on the horizontal axis.

PRICE: The price of compact cars is determined by the interaction between the demand for compact cars and the supply of compact cars on the market. We can determine the price of compact cars by constructing a graph which combines the information we have graphed above. Construct a graph of **both** the supply and demand for compact cars. Put the price on the vertical axis and the supply/demand numbers on the horizontal axis.

The point at which the two lines intersect is called the **equilibrium price** for compact cars. Neither buyers nor sellers are absolutely happy when compact cars are sold at this price, but it is the price at which both buyers and sellers will be most satisfied. In fact, it is the price which has been set by Adam Smith's "invisible hand", or what is called the **market price**.

SUPPLY, DEMAND AND WAGES

Capitalism takes the position that wages are determined by the same process as any other product. The cost of labour is, quite simply, the price of a worker. If, for example, a manufacturer is producing a very popular product and needs more workers to supply the product to the public, they might be willing to increase their wages in order to attract the workers they need. That is to say, the demand for workers goes up so wages go up, particularly if the number of workers available (the supply) is limited. Just like the consumer, an employer must go to the **market** to find workers. If there is a large number of workers avail-

able, the employer will ask workers what they are willing to work for and will pick the worker who is willing to work for the lowest wages. Some workers who have particular skills which employers need can command high wages because the demand for their skills is higher than the supply of workers. A very skilled hockey player or business executive can demand a very high salary because the supply of workers with their skills is very low (while the demand might be very high). On the other hand, wages in fast food restaurants might be quite low because there are a great many people who have the skills necessary for these jobs (while the demand might be relatively limited).

DETERMINE THE WAGE

Wages can be graphed in the same way that prices are. The following chart might illustrate the number of workers who are willing to work at a fast food restaurant at various rates of pay (the supply) and the number of workers the employer would be willing to employ (the demand) at the various wages.

IF THE WAGE WAS	NUMBER OF WORKERS WILLING TO WORK	NUMBER OF WORKERS THAT WOULD BE HIRED
\$2.50/hr.	25	120
\$3.00/hr.	30	110
\$3.50/hr.	35	100
\$4.00/hr.	40	90
\$4.50/hr.	45	80
\$5.00/hr.	50	70
\$5.50/hr.	55	60
\$6.00/hr.	60	50
\$6.50/hr.	65	40

Construct a graph of the demand/ supply of workers and the wages for workers. Put the various wages on the vertical axis. Put the demand/supply of workers on the horizontal axis.

The point at which the two lines intersect, would be the wage which the "market" determines for fast food workers.

UNIONS IN NOVA SCOTIA: A UNIT OF STUDY

Work together with a small group to answer the following:

- a) *List as many factors as you can think of which might be important in determining the following: The first one is done for you as an example.*
- i) *the demand for professional hockey players in Canada*

The demand for professional hockey players in Canada might be determined by such things as: the number of professional hockey teams in Canada, the popularity of hockey as opposed to other sports in Canada, the price of tickets to professional hockey games and how the price compares to other forms of entertainment, the income professional hockey players expect to be paid.
 - ii) *the supply of computer programmers in Nova Scotia*
 - iii) *the demand for salespeople at a department store in Sydney*
 - iv) *the supply of welders in Wolfville*
 - v) *the demand for forest workers in Nova Scotia*
 - vi) *the supply of part time fast food restaurant workers in Yarmouth*
- b) *After completing your list, go back through each factor and identify which things an individual worker has some control over, and which are beyond the control of an individual worker.*
- c) *Cooperatively, have your group write a response to the following statement: “In general, workers have very little control over the wages they receive.” Use examples from your list to illustrate your position.*

LABOUR IN THE 19TH CENTURY

Most governments in Europe and North America embraced the views of Adam Smith in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Capitalism was virtually unrestricted because it was felt that competition between manufacturers and the invisible hand of the marketplace would eventually benefit everyone; consumers would get the products they wanted, prices would be as low as manufacturers could possibly make them, wages would rise as manufacturers made more profits, and the economic system would be efficient and productive. The power and influence of the merchant and craft guilds was virtually eliminated as governments became less and less involved in controlling the economic activity of their newly industrializing nations.

What Capitalism did not factor in, however, was the fact that unrestricted competition might not be fair to everyone. For example, what would happen to a worker who was injured and not able to compete with others for a job? What if an employer took advantage of a surplus in the number of workers available and was therefore able to pay very low wages? Who would make sure that the safety standards in a factory or mine were sufficient to insure the health of the workers? Governments simply believed that the market would sort these questions out and they were reluctant to become involved in regulating any kind of economic activity.

As the 19th century wore on, many people began to believe that, while the “market” was efficient and did provide benefits to many, there was also a certain amount of heartlessness to Capitalism. While unrestricted competition might be fair if everyone had the same opportunity to compete, the playing field was not level for most people. The challenged, the uneducated, the poor and the unskilled, often through no fault of their own, were unable to compete in the unforgiving labour market. This view was reinforced by the fact that in several European countries workers were, in fact, living in poverty and squalor and working in unsafe and unhealthy environments. A common work day was

between twelve and fourteen hours with only brief periods of rest, and Sunday the only day off. Children as young as seven or eight would frequently work alongside men and women, being paid only a third or a sixth of what the adults made, despite the fact that adults made such low wages that they themselves lived in abject poverty. Wages were frequently paid in 'truck' tickets which required workers to purchase goods from stores owned by the company. The monotonous, repetitive work was relentless and the hot, stuffy mills, along with the long hours, ruined the health of many.

In 1867, **Karl Marx**, a German philosopher, wrote "**Capital**", a work which was to become the basis for modern Communism, in which he criticized Capitalism and pointed out that factory owners (whom he called **capitalists**) used unrestricted competition as a way of taking advantage of workers - paying them very low wages while they (the owners) lived in affluence and plenty. He pointed out that in the relationship between workers and owners, it was the owners who maintained all the power because they had the ability to fire a worker and doom him/her to a life of extreme poverty and misery. Marx believed that wealth could only be created by human labour.

Because wealth could not be created by capital alone (factories and machines), the capitalist created no wealth, yet they lived in splendour and prosperity. The wealth that the capitalist accumulated was, in fact, wealth created by the workers. While the workers had earned the wealth, they did not receive very much of it. The portion of the wealth that workers earned but were not paid was profit. In effect, the capitalist **had** to pay workers less than the wealth that they created; otherwise he/she would make no profit. This contradiction between what workers actually earned and what they were paid was, according to Marx, a fundamental flaw of Capitalism; a flaw which would eventually bring about an end to Capitalism as a form of economic organization.

Workers, realizing that they were being exploited by Capitalists, would violently rebel against the Capitalist system and take over the ownership of the factories in which **they** created the wealth. The new economic system in which the workers controlled the means of production Marx called Communism.

The idea that workers should share the wealth that they produced was not a new one. Small communities of workers had experimented with the concept of co-operating to share the wealth that they produced. They were called **Socialists**. Socialists believed that Capitalists would eventually see that Capitalism was unfair to workers and embrace Socialism by choice. Marx felt that Capitalists would never give up their positions of power and influence willingly. Socialism, in his view, could only be introduced by a revolution of workers in which the Capitalist class was eliminated and he felt that this revolution of workers was inevitable in all Capitalist societies.

THE BEGINNING OF ORGANIZED LABOUR

At the beginning of the 19th century, workers were generally not organized in any way. Indeed, the British Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800 forbade workers from organizing themselves into groups to attempt to raise their wages or shorten working hours. Because Capitalism allowed unrestricted competition, an organization of workers who tried to influence wages or working conditions could be prosecuted for 'conspiracy in restraint of trade'. Nevertheless, workers began to form **trade clubs** containing workers from a particular trade or occupation such as bricklayers or millwrights. Each week, each worker would set aside a few pennies to be used to help those who were injured or sick and unable to work.

The Combination Acts were abolished in 1824-5, and, although there were still many restrictions imposed on workers' organizations, **trade unions** were, at least, legal.


Student Exercises

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Do research on Robert Owen (1771-1858). In an essay of four to five hundred words, describe Owen's ideas with regard to workers' rights and his influence on the development of the co-operative movement.

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Labour History

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PART II - "THEY CAN'T STAND THE GAFF":

A CASE STUDY OF THE LABOUR HISTORY OF NOVA SCOTIA

On March 10, 1925, four days after a strike had been called by the United Mine Workers (District 26) against the British Empire Steel and Coal Corporation (BESCO), J.E. McClurg, the vice president of the company, was being interviewed by the Canadian Press. The interviewer suggested that the strike was a bit like a game of poker, to which McClurg replied, "Game of poker, nothing. We hold the cards. Things are getting better every day they stay out. Let them stay out two months or six months - it matters not; eventually they will come crawling to us. **They can't stand the gaff.**" "Gaff", according to McClurg, meant the hardship and hunger

workers would have to endure during a strike. The miners of industrial Cape Breton "stood the gaff" for one hundred and fifty five days, and this expression has come to symbolize the solidarity and commitment of workers in Nova Scotia as they have fought for their rights to fair wages and to fair treatment from their employers. The history of labour unions in Nova Scotia is as colourful and, unfortunately, as tragic as anywhere in the world, and the 1925 strike of Cape Breton miners against BESCO remains as a dramatic example of the sacrifices and deprivation workers have endured to secure the rights of all workers in Nova Scotia.

THE BACKGROUND

One of the first labour unions in Canada was formed in 1879 when miners at the Springhill Mining Company organized the Provincial Miners' Association (renamed the Provincial Workers' Association in 1880). At that time, the company was threatening to cut miners' wages by 4 cents a ton (at this time, miners were paid by the amount of coal they extracted) and this was only a short time after the workers had already accepted a wage cut. At that time, workers had no legal protection from such arbitrary decisions by their employers, had

UNIONS IN NOVA SCOTIA: A UNIT OF STUDY

no unemployment benefits, no injury or medical care insurance, no pension plans and no way to even settle disputes. Indeed, it had only been six years since unions were even legal in Canada. The Springhill miners won their strike. Within a few weeks, they not only kept their old wage rates, but got a further three cent increase. Not that miners made a livable wage anyway! Cape Breton miners in 1880 made an average of 95 cents a day; or, at least, men over 18 made that much. Boys between the age of 12 and 18 made an average of 65 cents a day; for a twelve hour day, six days a week, between seven and eight months a year. The fact that mines shut down during the winter months (because many of the ports exporting the coal from Cape Breton were covered in ice) meant that miners were unemployed for extended periods of time. The coal companies devised a primitive kind of unemployment insurance during this time by extending credit in the "company store" where workers could buy groceries and other necessities. Of course, over the winter miners would run up a hefty debt which required them to continue to work for the company when spring came around. Miners frequently lived in homes owned by the company as well. The following illustrates what might easily happen to a miner:

Alexander McGillivray, a miner, is noted as having mined 66 tons of coal during the month and having brushed two cubic yards of stone, thus earning \$35.13 for the month. The entire earnings were lost through the check-off (money deducted by the company from his pay), as follows: ¹

Rent	\$1.50
Company doctor	.40
School tax	.15
Statute labour	1.00
Poll tax	1.00
Poor rates	.30
Coal haulage	.25
Oil for lamp	.80
Powder	3.24

Checkweightman	.30
Store Account	24.49
Church	<u>1.00</u>
	\$34.43

Take-home pay - .70

(You will notice that this miner had to pay for the oil for his lamp, the blasting powder he used to mine coal and the cost of having his coal weighed as well as repayment of the credit he had built up.) Clearly, miners had little to lose by organizing themselves into unions which, through collective action, might give them more strength in improving their working lives.

Throughout the first couple of decades of this century, the Provincial Workers' Association engaged in a number of strikes against both the coal companies and the newly emerging steel industry in Cape Breton. These two industries were increasingly coming under the ownership and control of fewer and fewer individuals. As such, the companies which controlled the production of coal and steel became, by virtue of their very size, very wealthy and powerful.

During this time, a man named **James B. McLachlan** emerged as one of the greatest labour leaders and organizers in the history of the province. McLachlan was born in 1870, in Scotland and emigrated to Canada in 1902. As a young boy of 11, he had gone to work in the coal mines of Scotland and had become active in the union movement there. He also became attracted to the Socialist movement in Britain; a movement in which workers were becoming politically active by attempting to elect pro-labour candidates to the British parliament. Despite his lack of formal education, McLachlan read everything he could get his hands on. He read extensively on history, politics and economics as well as taught himself mathematics, science and several foreign languages. As early as 1904, McLachlan began to think that miners in Nova Scotia might better be represented in negotiations with their employers if they

joined the very large international **United Mine Workers of America**, which had, since 1890, been successful in defending the rights of miners in the coalfields of the United States. For a number of years, the coal companies refused to negotiate with the United Mine Workers and there were disagreements (even among the miners) as to who would represent Nova Scotia miners, the Provincial Workers' Association or the United Mine Workers of America. In 1919, following a mine explosion in New Waterford in which 65 miners were killed and the Dominion Coal Company was found to be responsible for their deaths, miners elected to join the U.M.W. which they believed would provide them with more financial and organizational resources than a provincial organization. J.B. McLachlan was elected Secretary-Treasurer, although because of his exceptional skills and determination he became, effectively, the leader of District 26 (the Nova Scotia local of the U.M.W.). In 1923-4, McLachlan was imprisoned for sedition (*conduct tending to promote treason or rebellion*) when he was accused of plotting to overthrow the government and replace it with Communists. In actual fact, McLachlan was being held responsible for the violence which had taken place during a steelworkers strike in 1923; violence which resulted when strikers were attacked by the Provincial Police. McLachlan had had a long association with the Communist Party of Canada and with union leaders in the new Soviet Union, so it was not difficult for the government prosecutors to convict him. Clearly, his conviction was more political than criminal and in March of 1924, he was paroled from Dorchester and, as ever, immediately rejoined the struggle of miners and steelworkers in Cape Breton.

BESCO

The British Empire Steel and Coal Corporation (BESCO) was founded by Roy Wolvin on April 16, 1920 and was a virtual monopoly of the coal and steel industries in Nova Scotia. Wolvin had accumulated great wealth in the Great Lakes steamship industry, and later in ship-

ping and shipbuilding on both coasts. During the First World War, Wolvin's wealth increased even further as he was involved in many shipbuilding contracts associated with the war effort. By 1919, Wolvin turned his attention to industrial Cape Breton. He bought 14 companies related to the steel and coal industries throughout Nova Scotia. He eventually amalgamated all of his holdings into the British Empire Steel and Coal Company a year later. It was the third largest employer in Canada.

SETTING THE STAGE

Labour relations between BESCO and its employees were not good. There were three major strikes between 1921 and 1924 during which Wolvin showed a ruthless and heartless disregard for the living and working conditions of the miners and steelworkers in his employ. The miners contract for the year 1924 was to begin on January 1. Earlier, in November of 1923, BESCO had announced that they were not prepared to give any wage increase in 1924. By January 15, 1924, negotiations broke down when BESCO demanded a twenty percent **cut** in wages. A strike immediately followed.

The strike was settled on February 15, and workers were given a wage increase, but BESCO increased the price of coal it sold to its employees. Ironically, coal miners had to buy coal to heat their homes from BESCO, so the wage increase was effectively nullified. The contract was to end on January 15, 1925.

In late November, 1924, BESCO formally announced its intention to ask for a 20% wage cut in the new contract. Wages were already below the levels they had been in 1921. A wage worth \$5.00 in 1921 was worth only \$4.63 in 1924 and would be worth just \$3.70 with BESCO's 20% cut. The union demanded no wage cut, the abolition of the blacklist (a list of workers who were active in union affairs and who were refused work in any of the collieries because of these union activities) and year round mining.

In December, BESCO relented and reduced its demand to a 15% wage cut and then to 10%, but would move no further. As a compromise, the company asked to have the existing contract extended until November 16, 1926. (The company wanted contracts to end as winter approached because miners would be laid off during the winter and have to rely on the credit of the company store. If a contract ended just before a miner was to be laid off, the miners would be less likely to go on strike and have their credit cut off.)

By January 8, 1925, negotiations between BESCO and District 26 had broken down and the company requested that a Conciliation Board be established to settle the dispute. The union refused to become involved with the Conciliation Board because it was made up of businessmen who did a substantial amount of their business with BESCO, and so could not be impartial. As a result, the Conciliation Board reported on February 14 that no settlement would be possible. BESCO was still demanding a 10% wage cut, so a strike was inevitable.

One of the ways BESCO attempted to break the union was through the "truck" shop (the "company store" that had, for many years, provided miners with housing, groceries and dry goods). The company targeted three of their mines - No. 2 colliery in New Aberdeen, No. 4 pit in Glace Bay and No. 6 Donkin mine. These three mines made up the Phalen Local of District 26 and Phalen was one of the most militant locals of the district, so it is not surprising that the company chose these mines. During December 1924, January 1925 and February 1925, the miners of the Phalen Local were given less than half the number of days work that BESCO's other miners were given. Naturally, the men began to build up debt at the company store. On March 3, BESCO cut off credit to the Phalen workers (they owed \$185,000) in an attempt to literally starve them into accepting the company's offer.

On March 4, BESCO closed a number of other pits in Reserve Mines, Glace Bay, New Waterford and Sydney

Mines and refused to grant any more credit to the workers. Neither the provincial nor the federal governments could come up with an acceptable deal to solve the dispute (each saying that it was the responsibility of the other to deal with labour matters) and a strike was called on March 6, 1925.

THE STRIKE

On March 10, J.E. McClurg came out with his now famous "they can't stand the gaff" statement. This only served to galvanize support for the strike among all of the miners and maintenance men, who remained totally committed to the strike for the 155 days that it lasted. Nevertheless, the conditions which the strikers and their families had to endure were truly horrific. Starvation was a very real threat to thousands of people in Cape Breton and this deprivation was compounded by an outbreak of influenza which affected many hundreds. There was, however, a national outpouring of support for the workers. The Labour-dominated town council of Glace Bay immediately donated \$5,000 for the relief of striking workers and their families. Labour unions from across the country sent large sums of money, as did various church organizations. Even some corporations became alarmed at the reports of the miners' conditions. The Quaker Oat Company of Ontario sent several rail cars of oats and flour to support the strikers. There was even a contribution of \$5,000 from the miners' union of the USSR. Conspicuously absent was any relief from federal, provincial and municipal (Cape Breton County Council) governments. For the first six weeks of the strike, the United Mine Workers of America gave no financial support to the strikers, but on April 28 it authorized payments of \$40,000 per month to District 26—though that was less than a dollar a week for each of the striking workers.

The 1925 strike was somewhat unique in that it was a 100% strike. In many earlier strikes, the miners had allowed the maintenance men to maintain operation of the fans and pumps in the mines because the mines

would fill up with water and dangerous gases otherwise. In the strike against BESCO, **all** the workers walked out. The only exception was at a power plant located on Waterford Lake. This lake supplied the drinking water to New Waterford's 8,000 people and the power plant supplied electricity to the town. The strikers operated the power plant until June 4, when BESCO's private police force occupied the plant following a scuffle in which seven strikers were arrested. BESCO officials then cut off water and electricity to the town (including the hospital), although full power was restored to the nearby mines. Despite the fact that there was a heat wave occurring and the sickness and deprivation of the citizens was nearly unbearable, the miners set up a bucket brigade passing water from hand to hand from wells in the area. The mayor of New Waterford pleaded with BESCO to restore water and power, but was refused. Shockingly, the federal and provincial governments did nothing to help the citizens of the town. On June 10, the miners attempted to retake control of the power plant and were successful for a few hours, only to be forced out again by BESCO police later in the day.

In the early morning of June 11, mounted BESCO police, for no apparent reason other than to terrorize the citizens, charged through the main street of New Waterford. Men, women and children were attacked with clubs and whips. Homes were invaded and, although no one was killed, the people of the community were thoroughly brutalized. An eyewitness recalled:

They even chased the kids around the school yards. It was terrible... those guys were just drunken bums with uniforms on. The company would hire anybody during a strike, they didn't care... my knees were all cut from falling as I ran away from them. They were all on horses with big sticks and guns. They terrified us kids, and they were laughing about it... they had boasted that after the first shot, the miners would go under the bed to hide.²

By 10:00 am, the townspeople were joined by miners

from Glace Bay and within an hour over 3,000 people arrived at Waterford Lake. There they were met by one hundred armed and mounted BESCO police. The police charged, firing their revolvers, but the miners were so enraged and so outnumbered them that even with only sticks and stones as weapons, they quickly routed the force. After being pulled from their horses, the police fled to the woods, desperately hoping to escape the wrath of the miners. Though the battle had lasted only a few minutes, one of the miners, **William Davis**, had been killed (shot through the heart), two others were seriously wounded and a number experienced minor gunshot wounds. The incensed strikers turned their wrath on the power plant and totally destroyed the facility, after which they rounded up about thirty of the terrified and wounded police officers hiding in the woods and paraded them through the streets of New Waterford to the jail. They were released that evening by the town police and rushed to Sydney to escape the revenge of the enraged miners. At 2:00 on the afternoon of June 11, J.E. McClurg, BESCO's vice president, wired Provincial Attorney General O'Hearn informing him of the events of the day. O'Hearn responded within hours by sending a special provincial police force of 500 troops to Cape Breton. That night, the wash-house at No. 12 colliery in New Waterford was burned to the ground and the company stores at No. 12 and No. 14 were cleaned out by the desperate miners.

The troops arrived in Sydney Mines the next day greeted by an angry mob of several thousand, and over the next three weeks, 22 company buildings were burned, destroyed and/or looted. On June 12, the company store at Caledonia was cleaned out of \$20,000 worth of goods which were distributed among the needy and destitute. On June 13, the company stores at Sydney Mines, was looted and destroyed. The following day, the stores at New Aberdeen, No.11, No. 6, Reserve and Dominion were razed. J.B. McLachlan had earlier warned the government that, facing starvation for themselves and their families, it was understandable that miners would behave in this way. Desperate and

powerless, the strikes lashed out at all of the injustices which had been perpetrated on them. This desperation is illustrated by the fact that all of this happened despite the presence of hundreds of heavily armed soldiers. This had been the sixth time troops had been sent to Cape Breton to "settle" labour disputes. In all, BESCO claimed they had suffered over half a million dollars in losses. No one was ever arrested or convicted of any of the crimes.

On June 17, BESCO, believing it had won the strike, offered a settlement. It included its original 10% pay cut but also included four new demands. Union dues would no longer be deducted automatically from miners' pay (the check-off), men known to have engaged in "disorderly conduct" during the strike would be fired, the company would no longer bargain with anyone known to be a communist and maintenance workers were no longer to be part of the union. The miners adamantly rejected the proposal. It was clear to union leaders that BESCO was out to not only win the strike, but to break the union as well.

The strike was actually settled by the provincial election of June 25. The Liberals had been in power in Nova Scotia for forty-two years straight, but in this election the Conservatives won forty seats and the Liberals only three. Premier E.H. Armstrong was personally defeated (as was Attorney General O'Hearn), and the new Premier was E.N. Rhodes. Rhodes was sworn into office on July 16, and one of his first acts was to disband the hated provincial police force. On July 20, he travelled to Sydney to meet with United Mine Workers officers and officials of BESCO. On August 3, Rhodes proposed a six month contract in which the miners would return to work under the wage rates of August 31, 1922 (which really represented a wage cut of between 6 and 8 percent), BESCO was to rehire all the workers who had been on strike with no blacklist, there was to be a provincial referendum on the issue of the check-off, and the provincial government would rebate 20% of all coal royalties back to the company. The company immedi-

ately announced that it would reopen under these terms as soon as the union held a vote. On August 5, the miners voted to accept the deal. The deprivation and hardship that the workers had endured was, no doubt, the greatest factor in their decision, but because of the events of June 11 - 30, public sympathy for the strikers had dwindled and outside relief had virtually stopped. The miners lost \$7 million in wages during the strike; BESCO suffered a net loss in sales of about a million and a half dollars.

Student Exercises

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A warrant was issued for the arrest of Joseph MacLeod in connection with the capital murder of William Davis. Davis, it was reported later, was not even a participant in the attack at Waterford Lake. He was walking home from a neighbour's house with a bottle of milk which had been donated to his family (he was the father of nine children with a tenth on the way when he was killed) and had been drawn to the scene of the conflict out of curiosity. His son, many years later, recalled that he had actually witnessed the event. He stated, "I had seen this goon falling from his horse and my father went over to him. I'm sure he only meant to stop him from falling, but the guy just panicked and shot... the bullet went right through Dad's heart, but I didn't know it at the time. When the shooting had started, some of the men had grabbed us kids and ran into the woods with us to get away from the bullets..."³

Using what you know about the case (and a little imagination), write a play of the trial of Joseph MacLeod. In the play, decide what you think the verdict should be.

Take on the role of a young teenage boy or girl who is the son or daughter of a striking coal miner and write at least five entries of a journal between March 6, 1924 and August 10, 1924. Space the dates out relatively evenly so they accurately reflect what was going on during the strike.

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Labour History

A Unit of Study on
"Unions in Nova Scotia"



PART III - THE STRUCTURE OF UNIONS

INDIVIDUAL VS. COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Capitalism dictates that workers and employers meet in the "market" to negotiate the workers' wages and conditions of employment (in the same way consumers meet the owner of a supermarket to negotiate the price of a head of lettuce). Unless a worker has a very special skill which the employer desperately needs or there is a severe shortage of workers in general, the employer has the "upper hand" if they are negotiating with an individual worker. If an individual employee were to go to his/her employer and demand a pay raise which the employer considers to be too much, the employer can simply fire the worker and replace him/her with someone else. This would clearly hurt the worker much more than the employer. On the other hand, if workers act

collectively (as a group) when negotiating with their employer, they have more power because the employer would find it much more difficult to fire and attempt to replace all of his/her workers. As a group, workers are much more likely to be successful in negotiating with their employer because they have the potential to hurt the employer by refusing to work unless the employer agrees to their demands. A **union** is simply a group of workers who form an association to bargain collectively with their employer so as to give the workers more power in the negotiating process.

CRAFT UNIONS AND INDUSTRIAL UNIONS

As workers first began to form unions, they organized themselves by occupation. Workers such as masons, carpenters and other skilled craft workers formed unions in which the members were all engaged in the same trade. These were called **Craft Unions**. An example of a Craft Union would be the Musician's Union. All professional musicians are expected to join the Musician's Union and pay dues to the organization (to pay the expenses of the union). In return, the union negoti-

ates with employers (such as orchestras and club owners) to insure that musicians are paid according to an agreed-upon scale, work under specified conditions, and will help musicians find work. Employers who hire musicians who are not members of the union may be **boycotted** by the union (i.e. the union will not allow members to play for the offending employer). Conversely, musicians who do not join the union may find that they will not be hired by employers who only hire union members.

As time wore on, many unskilled or general workers found that they had no unions to join. At the same time, many large manufacturers were finding that they might be employing electricians, machinists, carpenters and engineers all at the same time and would be negotiating contracts with a number of different unions. This made it difficult for the employer to negotiate wages and working conditions which were similar for all workers. Thus was born the **Industrial Union**. An industrial union is made up of members who are all employed in the same industry regardless of their particular job. An example would be the United Auto Workers. All the members of this union, whether they be a machinist, electrician or assembly line worker, are employed in the automobile manufacturing industry and all work under the same contract.

Student Exercises

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Examine each of the following unions and determine if each is a Craft Union or an Industrial Union:

- a) The Nova Scotia Teachers Union*
- b) The Halifax Civic Workers Union*
- c) The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers*
- d) The International Brotherhood of Bricklayers and Allied Craftsmen*
- e) The Marine Workers Federation*

- f) The Nova Scotia Highway Workers Union*
- g) The National Association of Broadcast Employees and Technicians*
- h) The United Association of Journeymen Plumbers and Pipe Fitters*
- i) The United Food and Commercial Workers Union*
- j) The International Union of Operating Engineers*

FORMING A UNION

All workers in Canada have the right to form and belong to a union. Employers who refuse to allow their employees to unionize or who harass, fire or punish workers trying to form a union can be required by law to allow workers to unionize if they so desire. Employees who wish to start a union at their place of employment must first show that the workers are themselves interested in forming a union or want to join a union which already exists. In Nova Scotia, 40% of the employees who are eligible to join a union must indicate that they are willing to participate in a vote as to whether or not they want to be unionized. Once that has been established, the workers ask the Nova Scotia Labour Relations Board to oversee a vote of the employees asking them if they wish to form a union or not . If more than 50% of the workers wish to form a union or join a union which already exists, the Labour Relations Board **certifies** the union as the sole bargaining agent for the employees. Under normal circumstances, this means that all of the employees must join the union even if they did not vote in favour of joining the union. If the employees join an already existing union (as is most often the case), they then become a **local** (or part of a local) of that union, and the union begins to negotiate with the employer to establish a **contract** in which the employer and the employees agree to the terms of employment.

A contract usually includes three major areas: wages, working conditions and fringe benefits. Wages include the rate of pay the employees will receive (be it hourly, weekly or monthly) and would also include such things

as tips, commissions and bonuses. For example, an employee in a restaurant might receive an hourly wage plus the tips they earn. Working conditions include such things as the hours of work, the duties of the worker, when and how long breaks will be and how disagreements between employees and managers are resolved. Fringe benefits include "extras" the employer might provide to the employee that are not required by law. For example, an employer might agree to provide meals if employees are required to work overtime, give extra paid holidays to the employees or they might help finance a dental payment plan for their employees.

Student Exercises

Examine each of the following and determine if, in a contract, it would be considered under the heading of wages, working conditions or fringe benefits:

- A worker will receive double their normal hourly rate if they work on a statutory (legal) holiday.
- The employer will pay for half the cost of a prescription drug plan.
- The tips in a restaurant will be totalled and divided evenly among all of the employees.
- Employees shall perform overtime work on a voluntary basis.
- The employer shall provide the employees with safety shoes.
- Promotions will be offered to the most senior workers before being offered to employees who have been with the company for shorter periods of time.
- The employer shall provide scholarships to the children of employees graduating from high school and going on to further education.
- Each employee shall receive a bonus of a certain amount if the company makes a profit in excess of a certain amount.
- If the company has to lay off any workers, those with the least amount of seniority with the company will be first to go.
- Supervisors will receive pay over and above their regular rate based on the number of workers they supervise.

Using the contract included with this package (the contract between the M and L Box Company and the Nova Scotia Union of Paper Workers, Local 23), list the terms of the agreement under three headings: WAGES, WORKING CONDITIONS and FRINGE BENEFITS.

UNION SHOP AND CLOSED SHOP

Under normal circumstances, a union will insist that all of the workers at a unionized facility join the union. This means that the facility is a **union shop** (i.e. all new workers must join the union as soon as they are hired). It is understandable that a union would want all of the workers to be members because the benefits which the union wins for the workers will be enjoyed by every worker. Union members pay **dues** to the union to cover the expenses of the organization, and it would be unfair for a worker to enjoy the benefits won for him/her by the union but not pay dues.

As well, the success of a union depends on the fact that workers act collectively (as a group) and that every worker support the goals of the union.

In some cases, workers must be members of a union before they will even be considered for employment. For example, a plumbing company might only hire plumbers who are already members of the Plumbers Union. This means that the company is a **closed shop**. The closed shop not only protects the worker, but also benefits the employer since only qualified plumbers can be members of the union and the employer can be guaranteed that the worker is well trained and qualified.

Student Exercises

NEGOTIATING A CONTRACT

The following is an example of a typical labour contract (although many contracts are much more complicated than this one). Read through the information carefully, and follow the directions to learn what a contract is like and how unions and employers negotiate contracts.

An Example of a Labour Contract

This is a mythical contract between M and L Box Company and The Nova Scotia Union of Paper Workers (Local 23). M and L Box Company manufactures cardboard boxes. They have a number of contracts with several companies to provide them with containers of various sizes. They also print the various company names and other information onto the boxes as per the requirements of the different companies. The company is owned by five major shareholders and made an after-tax profit of \$600,000 last year. The company is 28 years old and began as a relatively small business employing 20 people. Over the last 10 or 11 years the company has been steadily growing and the owners have been putting most of the profits back into the business, taking out fairly modest salaries for themselves. At present the total work force at the plant is 220 (of which 30 are supervisors, department managers, and other management personnel). The company moved into a new factory three years ago and the owners hold an eight million dollar mortgage on the property and the machinery. The owners feel that the next couple of years are going to be critical for the company. During the last quarter of last year, there was a general downturn in the economy and orders for boxes were down for the first time in a number of years. They are unsure of how the economy will be performing in the next while, but they have not had to lay off any workers so far. The President of the Company (one of the owners) has increased the sales force by two people in hopes of getting some new contracts.

When the company was started, the employees were not unionized but five years ago the workers decided to amalgamate with The Nova Scotia Union of Paper Workers, which is affiliated with a national union. So far, relations between the employees and the managers of the company have been relatively good, although two years ago when this contract was negotiated, a conciliator had to be brought in because the negotiators for the Union and the Company could not come to an agreement on their own.

AGREEMENT BETWEEN:

M and L Box Company Limited
(hereafter referred to as "the Company")

and

The Nova Scotia Union of Paper Workers
(Local 23)
(hereafter referred to as "the Employee")

1. Recognition

The company agrees that the Nova Scotia Union of Paper Workers (Local 23) shall be the sole bargaining agent for the employees.

2. Length of Contract

This contract shall be effective from January 31, 1996 until January 31, 1998.

3. Wages

Hourly wages shall be as outlined below:

starting rate	\$9.45/hr.
after 1 year	\$10.05/hr.
after 3 years	\$10.90/hr.
after 5 years	\$11.95/hr.
after 8 years	\$12.80/hr.
after 10 years	\$14.30/hr.

4. Hour of Work

Under normal circumstances, employees will be required to work eight hours each day beginning at 8:30 AM and ending at 4:30 PM. This will include a paid one-half hour lunch break each day (at 12:30 PM) and two ten minute breaks (at 10:00 am and 2:00 PM).

5. Overtime

- Employees will be paid at the rate of 1.5 times their normal hourly rate for each hour over 8 hours in a day, or for each hour over 40 hours in a week.
- Employees will be paid at the rate of 2 times their normal hourly rate if they are required to work on a Sunday or a statutory holiday (New Year's Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas)

6. Sick Leave

- a) Employees shall be entitled paid sick leave up to 1.5 days per month. The rate of pay shall be the same as if the employee had worked a normal work day.
- b) Employees may accumulate unused sick leave up to a maximum of thirty-six (36) days.
- c) Employees shall be offered an optional long term disability insurance package which will provide employees their normal rate of pay should they become ill for longer than their accumulated sick leave. This will provide employees with their normal rate of pay for up to 300 work days. The insurance company will require that employees provide a medical certificate to authenticate their illness. The company shall pay 50% of the premiums for this insurance coverage. The employee shall pay the remaining 50% (currently \$22.00 per month).
- d) The company may require employees to provide proof of illness.

7. Other Leave

Employees shall be granted leave at their regular rate of pay for the following reasons:

- a) Five (5) days for the death of a member of their immediate family (son, daughter, spouse (or in-law), parent (or in-law), brother, sister).
- b) Two (2) days for the birth of a child.
- c) One half (1/2) day for the graduation of a child.

8. Holidays

- a) Employees shall be paid at their regular rate for the following statutory holidays:
New Years Day, Good Friday, Victoria Day, Canada Day, Civic Holiday, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day
- b) Employees shall be granted paid holidays as follows:
 - two weeks for employees who have worked for the company between one and five years
 - three weeks for employees who have worked for the company between six and ten years
 - four weeks for employees who have worked for the company for over ten years
- c) Employees may not accumulate paid holidays from one year to the next.
- d) Employees will be permitted to take their holidays at any time during the year after negotiations with the company. Senior employees will be given preference when granting holiday periods.

9. Life Insurance

Employees may enroll in a life insurance program provided by the company (\$30,000 whole life). The company agrees to pay 50% of the premiums for this program; the employee agrees to pay the remaining 50%. The insurance policy shall terminate if an employee leaves the company, but this agreement may remain in effect if an employee retires from active service.

10. Pension

- a) Employee pensions shall be calculated at the rate of 2% per year of active service with the company, based on the employees regular rate of pay on their last year of service (regular hourly rate $\times 8 \times 40 \times 52$).
- b) The company shall pay 50% of the contributions (4.5% of the employees regular earnings) into the pension fund; the employee shall contribute the remaining amount (4.5% of total regular earnings).
- c) All employees must participate in the pension program.
- d) An individual employee may not, on retirement, receive a pension which is greater than 70% of his/her regular annual salary.
- e) If an employee leaves the company before they retire, they shall be refunded the entire amount of their pension contributions plus an annual interest of 5%.

11. Retirement

- a) An employee may retire without penalty, under the following conditions:
 - i) after 35 years of service.
 - ii) when the age of the employee plus their years of service equals 85.
 - iii) when they reach the age of 63.

12. Grievance

- a) No employee shall be dismissed without just cause and without due process.
- b) If a dispute arises between an employee and another employee or between an employee and a manager:
 - i) The employee shall report (in writing) the circumstances of the dispute to his/her immediate foreperson. The foreperson shall meet with the employee and respond to the dispute (in writing) within fourteen (14) days of receiving the report from the employee.

A copy of both reports shall be forwarded to the Vice President of Human Resources.

- ii) If the dispute remains unresolved, the foreperson and employee shall meet with their immediate supervisor in an attempt to resolve the dispute. The supervisor shall respond to the employee and foreperson (in writing) within fourteen (14) days of the meeting. A copy of this report shall be forwarded to the Vice President of Human Resources.
- iii) If the dispute continues to remain unresolved, the employee, foreperson and supervisor shall meet with the Vice President of Human Resources. The Vice President of Human Resources shall report to the employee, foreperson and supervisor (in writing) within fourteen (14) days of the meeting.

13. Union Check-Off

All employees (including forepersons) must join the union, upon beginning employment with the company. The company agrees to deduct union dues from the pay cheques of the employees and turn such dues over to the union.

Signed this _____ day of _____ , _____

(for M and L Box Company)

(for the Nova Scotia Union of Paper Workers, Local 23)

Student Exercises

WHAT DOES THE CONTRACT SAY?

1. Using the contract between *The Nova Scotia Union of Paper Workers (Local 23)* and *M and L Box Company Limited*, determine what (if anything) the contract says about the following situations:
 - a) An employee wants to take off an afternoon of work to attend the university graduation of his son.
 - b) A female employee wants to take off 20 weeks for pregnancy leave.
 - c) An employee wants to take a year off work to go to a community college. He does not expect to be paid for the time he takes off, but wants the company to guarantee that his job will be available to him when he returns.
 - d) An employee works for 8 hours on a Sunday.
 - e) The managers of the company want to start another shift (from 4:00 PM to 12:00 midnight) each day.
 - f) There is an emergency in the plant and an employee has to work through their lunch period.
 - g) An employee is hurt on the job and her doctor has told her that she must stay home for 4 weeks to recover from her injury.
 - h) An employee would like to take an extended holiday of five weeks. They have been working for the company for six years.
 - i) An employee would like to take time off (at the rate of one and a half hours for every hour) for the overtime hours they work rather than be paid for the overtime.
 - j) An employee is fired by one of the managers because she thinks he is not working fast enough.
2. For each of the examples above in which the contract has no specific solution to the situation, write a short report indicating what you would do to resolve the situation. Discuss with other members of your class how your solutions differ and why.

NEGOTIATING A CONTRACT

In the following exercise, you will be a member of a negotiating team (either an employee or a manager). You, along with your partners, will be responsible for renegotiating the new contract between **M and L Box Company Limited** and **The Nova Scotia Union of Paper Workers (Local 23)**. The first step in the simulation will be to divide the class into groups of six people. (If there are not enough students to form groups of exactly six, you may use four negotiators - two from each side.) Each of the six students will take on one of the roles described below; three represent union negotiators, three represent company negotiators. Once the roles have been established, the negotiating teams (of three) will meet to discuss what they want in the next contract.

Negotiating steps:

- 1) Each negotiator must review the history of the company as described above.
- 2) Each team must prepare an "asking package" (in writing) and give it to the other side. This is the opening position of each side and includes what they want in the new contract. It is usual at this step for each side to ask for more than it really wants. This way each side will be willing to give up some of the things in their asking package in order to reach a compromise and still get what they really want.
- 3) Each side reviews the other's asking package and decides how they will respond to the position of the other side. Your team will have 15 minutes to make this decision.
- 4) The teams will negotiate face-to-face until they reach an agreement. The negotiations will be held in 10 minute sessions. If you do not reach an agreement in a 10 minute session you will take a five minute session in which each team will confer in private to consider their positions. Either team may ask for arbitration at any time in the negotiations. If you choose to go to arbitration, each side must present, in writing, its final position. The teacher will act as the arbitrator and **will choose one of the sides**.

Once the contract negotiations are complete, the two teams must prepare a complete copy of the new contract.

Each team must write a report in which they outline the strategy they used in negotiating the contract, why they chose that particular strategy and how successful they feel the strategy was.

The Roles of the Negotiators:

The Company

- 1) Eleanor Claire: Ms. Claire has been the Vice President of Human Resources (the person in charge of hiring employees and in charge of the relations between employees and the Company) for the past nine years. She began working full time for the Company in the payroll department 16 years ago after she finished university (majoring in Accounting). Before that she had worked on the box cutting assembly line during the summers while she went to university. Ms. Claire is 38 years old, is married and has two children. She is considered to be fair in her dealings with the employees and has shown considerable loyalty to the Company.
- 2) Robert Borden: Mr. Borden is 51 years old, a high school graduate, and has been working for the Company since it started 28 years ago. He began as a "jack of all trades" when the Company was small and, over the years, has worked in virtually all aspects of the business - the assembly line, the shipping room and the paint shop. He is currently the Director of Sales (responsible for maintaining the contracts the Company has with its clients, and with attempting to get new contracts for the Company) and he is considered to be a "tough boss". He began as Sales Director 10 years ago, is married and has three grown children. He is very loyal to the Company and is a personal friend of the owners.
- 3) John Stone: Mr. Stone is the President of M and L Box Company and is one of the five owners of the Company. Of the owners, he is the only one who still actually works at the plant. Obviously, he has been with the Company since it started and, over the years, he has had to endure some pretty difficult times as the Company grew. He has worked very hard to bring the Company to where it is today. Mr. Stone is 56 years old and is considered something of a hard-nosed businessman, but he is scrupulously honest and is generally considered fair. He expects his employees to work hard. Generally, he is the first one at the plant each morning and is often the last to leave. Mr. Stone is widowed and has two grown children. One of his sons (an engineer) is the Vice President of Production.

The Employees

- 1) Emily Ryan: Ms. Ryan is 24 years old and has been working for the Company for 3 years. She began with the Company right after she finished community college and works as a computer graphics operator in the paint shop. Ms. Ryan grew up in a fiercely pro-union family, and has been a keen supporter of workers' rights since she was a teenager. Many of her co-workers consider her idealistic, but admire her enthusiasm. She is single.
- 2) Margaret Porter: Ms. Porter is 31 years old, and has been working in the shipping department of the Company for 7 years. She is married and has two small children. She and her husband have just purchased a new house, so she is interested in increasing her wages and she tries to get as much overtime as she can, given the demands of her family. Ms. Porter is concerned that the Company is sometimes inflexible when dealing with the employees and she would like to see the Company consider the input of the employees more when decisions are made.
- 3) Don King: Mr. King is the President of Local 23 of the Union and has been active with the union ever since the employees unionized five years ago. He works in the maintenance department and has been with the Company ever since they opened 28 years ago. He feels that, generally, he has been fairly well treated by the Company over the years, but as the Company has grown, the relationship between the employees and managers has become more and more impersonal. Mr. King is 51 years old and married. His three children are grown up and have left home. He is interested in pensions, retirement age and health benefits.

Important information needed in negotiating the contract:

- 1) Cost to the company of a raise in pay: For each 1% = \$80,000
- 2) Cost to the company for an employee dental plan: \$150,000 per year (for a plan which would cover the employee and his/her family); \$75,000 per year (for a plan which would cover the employee only)
- 3) Cost to the company for an employee drug plan: \$175,00 per year (for a plan which would cover the employee and his/her family); \$90,000 per year (for a plan which would cover the employee only)

- 4) Cost to the company for each additional paid holiday: \$25,000
 - 5) Cost to the company to increase pension contributions: \$3,000 per year for each 1% increase in contributions
 - 6) Cost to the company to increase contributions to life insurance: \$2,000 per year for each 1% increase in contributions
 - 7) Cost to the company to increase contributions to long term disability insurance: \$1,200 per year for each 1% increase in contributions
 - 8) Anticipated rate of inflation each year for the next 2 years: 2%
-

WHEN NEGOTIATIONS FAIL

It is the goal of unions to negotiate with employers to arrive at a contract which will be agreeable to both the members and the employer. Union officials and representatives of the employer may meet for many months to try and come to an agreement, but sometimes they are simply unable. If this should happen, there are a number of alternatives available to both sides.

1) Work To Rule

Work to rule is a process whereby workers (or employers) follow the strict letter of the contract and do no more or less than the contract allows. For example, a contract may say that working overtime is voluntary. If this were the case, when working to rule, workers would refuse to work overtime or the employer might refuse to offer overtime to the workers.

While unionized workers do work under a contract, many disputes involving workers and managers are resolved informally. During times of crisis workers might take on extra tasks, sometimes workers might volunteer to "double up" and cover for an absent employee or agree to extra training on their own time. Most organizations rely on these informal arrangements

to operate smoothly. When employees work to rule, it can disrupt and slow down the production of a company. This puts pressure on the employer to come to an agreement with the union so that the company can get back to normal.

2) Conciliation

If the two sides cannot reach an agreement, they may request that an outside person be invited to participate in their meetings to try and help them reach an agreement. The outside person must be someone who is agreeable to both sides. The idea of having a **conciliator** take part in the negotiations centres around the notion that an outsider does not have the emotional involvement that the union and managers have. A conciliator can attempt to resolve the dispute in an impartial and unbiased way. Usually, a conciliator will try and find a “middle ground” between the two sides in hopes that it will be agreeable to both. The recommendations for settlement made by a conciliator are not binding on either side, so if agreement is not reached, the two sides must go back to bargaining themselves.

3) Arbitration

Arbitration works just like conciliation. An outside person is brought into the negotiations to resolve the dispute and they must be acceptable to both sides. The decision of the **arbitrator** is, however, binding on both sides and must be accepted as the resolution of the differences between the management and the union. Unlike a conciliator, an arbitrator cannot take a “middle” position. When deciding on arbitration, both the union and management must present their final position to the arbitrator and he/she must choose one of the positions based on what they think is the fairest settlement. In this way, neither of the parties will risk presenting an unreasonable position for fear of it not being chosen by the arbitrator. When either of the sides asks for arbitration it is an indication that they believe they have a reasonable and fair solution.

4) Strike

Perhaps the most serious consequence of not reaching an agreement is a **strike**. During a strike, workers simply stop working in hopes that the employer will lose income and be more willing to reach a settlement. The workers, of course, are not paid during a strike, but often unions put aside some of the members dues in a **strike fund** to provide them with at least some income during the strike. When workers are on strike, they often **picket** the employer's workplace, carrying signs telling the public about the strike. If the public supports the strikers, they have a better chance of settling quickly since an employer does not want to appear unfair to his/her workers. Sometimes members of the public will support the union by **boycotting** (refusing to buy) the products made by the employer to further put pressure on the company to settle. In the 1960's, farm workers in California formed a union and struck for higher wages. Thousands of people across North America supported the workers by refusing to buy California grapes until the workers' demands were met. This greatly influenced the speed at which the strike was settled.

Sometimes employers will attempt to continue to operate their business while a strike is on; sometimes by using management personnel; sometimes by attempting to hire replacement workers.

Replacement workers are referred to as **scabs** by striking workers. Obviously, unions consider the use of replacement workers as unfair and will attempt to prevent these workers from going to work. Clearly, this can cause serious tensions and can prolong a strike since the employer is acting in a manner which is contrary to the spirit of the negotiating process. During negotiations, both a union and their employer are expected to **act in good faith** when negotiating a contract. That is, they are expected to act in a manner that is considered reasonable and fair minded. If either side acts in bad faith, the other side can complain to the Nova Scotia Department of Labour. They may intervene in the conflict and require the offending party to change their tactics.

5) Lockout

A lockout might be considered a “strike by the employer”. The employer simply refuses to allow the workers to come to work (essentially **locking them out** of the place of business). A lockout has the same consequences as a strike. The employer loses income, as do the workers, but in this case, the employer believes he/she can cause more harm to the workers than the injury they are going to experience by closing the business. In this case, the employer also risks offending the general public since they may see a lockout as unfair to the worker. In either a strike or a lockout, **public opinion** can often be an important factor in determining the outcome of the conflict.

UNIONS AND GOVERNMENT


From their beginning, unions have worked very hard to try to convince governments that the rights of workers have to be protected by law. Throughout the last century, legislation has been passed by federal and provincial governments to regulate minimum wages, the length of the work day (and work week), overtime pay, the minimum age of workers, health and safety standards, holidays, pensions, compensation for injuries received on the job, unemployment insurance and many other benefits that workers now routinely enjoy. Our parents and grandparents were not always protected by law from unfair labour practices and unscrupulous employers. Because these workers of the past organized themselves into unions to fight for their rights (often at great personal sacrifice), the rights of **all** workers have greatly improved. Unions continue to work to improve the overall quality of their members’ lives by working to improve the overall quality of their workday. In doing so, unions also improve the quality of the lives of all workers.

Student Exercises

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Using the Guide to the Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code (the Internet address is included in the list of resources), determine what the Code says about the following situations:

- a) An employer refuses to pay an employee who is required to do jury duty.*
- b) A person is fired because they made a complaint to the Labour Standards Board.*
- c) A worker claims they should be paid for three hours of overtime because they worked 43 hours in one week.*
- d) An employee is called in to work because of an emergency at their place of business. They work for 1.5 hours and are paid 1.5 hours overtime.*
- e) A worker is fired for wearing a certain type of clothing the manager does not think is appropriate for work. The employee has worn this type of clothing to work several times before, but the manager did not say anything about it then.*
- f) A person working on a fishing boat is required to work for ten days in a row without a day off.*
- g) An employee insists on being paid for two days she took off for a death in the family.*
- h) A 13 year old is required by his employer to deliver flyers at 5 a.m.*
- i) An employee who has been working for 13 months wants to take a one-week paid vacation.*
- j) A part time worker who earns \$6.50 an hour is not paid vacation pay.*
- k) A person who has worked for a company for five years is given a layoff notice of 1 week.*
- l) A full time employee is not paid for Christmas Day because they did not work that day.*
- m) A female employee is fired because she wants to take a pregnancy leave.*

Labour History

A Unit of Study on
"Unions in Nova Scotia" 

RESOURCES

Books:

Calhoun, Sue; *The Lockeport Lockout*; Lockeport Lockout; Halifax; 1983 - A very good case study of the Lockeport lockout of fishermen and fishhandlers in 1939; one of the first major attempts of Nova Scotia fishermen to win union recognition.

Cootes, R.J.; *Britain Since 1700 (Longman Secondary Histories)*; Longman Group Ltd.; London; 1968

MacEwan, Paul; *Miners and Steelworkers - Labour in Cape Breton*; Samuel Stevens Hakkert and Company; Toronto; 1976

Mellor, John; *Company Store: James Bryson McLachlan and the Cape Breton Coal Miner 1900-1925*; Doubleday Canada Ltd.; Toronto; 1983

Internet Sites:

Guide To The Nova Scotia Labour Standards Code:
<http://www.gov.ns.ca/labr/lstcode/index.htm#contents> - An excellent overview of the legal requirements for employment in Nova Scotia

History of Coal Mining In Nova Scotia - The Louis Frost Notes 1685 to 1962:
<http://eagle.uccb.ns.ca/mining/lfrost/lfhist.htm> - An exhaustive study of the coal fields of Cape Breton (much of it appears to be from a geological perspective).

Films:

Imperfect Union: Canadian Labour and the Left Series (1997, 217 min 44 sec); National Film Board; 193C 0189 210 MSN:34957

A four-part series examining the relationship of organized labour and political parties of the left in Canada: *Part 1 - International Background - Canadian Roots*: A look at the Industrial Revolution and the birth of trade unions and democratic socialism (54 min 30 sec). *Part 2 - Born of Hard Times*: The Great Depression, the 1937 General Motors strike (51 min 32 sec). *Part 3 - Falling Apart and Getting Together*: World War II, unemployment insurance and full legal status for unions, the CCF comes to power in Saskatchewan in 1944, the Canadian Labour Congress is formed in 1956, the NDP is formed in 1961 (53 min 19 sec). *Part 4 - New Party, Old Problems*: the relationship between organized labour and the NDP.

Making Steel (1992, 59 min 30 sec); National Film Board; 111C 9192 106 MSN:30649

Explores the Cape Breton experience at the Sydney Steel Plant, illustrating aspects of steel making which are common to the industry all across North America.

"They Didn't Starve Us Out": Industrial Cape Breton in the 1920's (1991, 21 min); National Film Board; 111C 0190 118 MSN:16967

An impression of the day-to-day life during the long and arduous labour struggle in industrial Cape Breton during the 1920's.

UNIONS IN NOVA SCOTIA: A UNIT OF STUDY

12,000 Men (1978, 34 min 27 sec); National Film Board; 106C 0178 569 MSN:14184

A history of the struggles of the union movement in the Cape Breton coal and steel industries.

Why Unions? (1984, 10 min 32 sec); National Film Board; 106C 0184 083 MSN:16543

Using bank employees in British Columbia and employees of the Michelin Tire Company in Nova Scotia as case studies, this film argues that blue and white-collar workers can benefit from unionization.

Matewan - directed by John Sayles (1987)

This is a feature-length movie which deals with the struggles of miners in the coalfields of West Virginia in the 1920's.

Modern Times - directed by Charlie Chaplin (1936)

This is the last silent film made by Chaplin in which he satirizes the growth of the Industrial State.

A Christmas Carol - directed by Brian Desmond Hurst (1951)

This is the Alastair Sim version of the classic Christmas film of Victorian England which illustrates the injustices of the Industrial Revolution.

Footnotes:

1. MacEwan, Paul; *Miners and Steelworkers*; page 13
2. Mellor, John ; *The Company Store*; page 297
3. Ibid.; page 299

Sample test questions

Part I - The Beginning

1. Which of the following was a very important result of the Neolithic Revolution?
 - a) It allowed people to hunt and gather more efficiently.
 - b) It meant that structure of the family unit changed dramatically.
 - c) It allowed individuals to produce a surplus of food.
 - d) It meant that machines could be used to do the work of many people.
2. Which of the following would NOT be considered a characteristic of guilds?
 - a) They included both employers and workers.
 - b) They trained workers new to the various crafts.
 - c) They had considerable political power.
 - d) They were in fierce competition with one another.
3. The Merchant Adventurers:
 - a) was a powerful English trading guild.
 - b) was a conglomeration of several different craft guilds.
 - c) was a group of merchants who promoted the interests of business to the monarch.
 - d) was a workers' club formed to protect the rights of skilled craftspeople.
4. The Industrial Revolution began in Britain in which of the following industries:
 - a) agriculture
 - b) textiles
 - c) shipbuilding
 - d) railways
5. Which of the following would be considered CAPITAL?
 - a) a weaving machine
 - b) a field of wheat
 - c) coal under the ground
 - d) a shoemaker
6. Which of the following statements would Adam Smith NOT agree with?
 - a) Prices are determined by a market where buyers and sellers meet to negotiate.
 - b) Wages are determined by the supply and demand for workers.
 - c) Governments must protect workers from unscrupulous employers.
 - d) Everyone must be left alone to act according to their own self interest.
7. What would happen to the wages of forest workers if the demand for paper went down?
 - a) They would likely go up.
 - b) It would likely have no impact of wages.
 - c) They would likely go down.
 - d) They would go up only if the supply of trees went up.
8. During a depression, people tend to buy a lot less because there is high unemployment. This would mean that in general:
 - a) wages would go up only in manufacturing industries.
 - b) wages would increase.
 - c) wages would tend to remain unchanged.
 - d) wages would go down.

9. Which of the following statements would Karl Marx agree with?
- a) Socialism would be accepted by Capitalists because they would eventually see that Capitalism is unfair to workers.
 - b) People will generally enjoy a higher standard of living under Capitalism because wages will increase as workers (using better machines) can produce more goods.
 - c) Workers will only get a fair wage when they overthrow the Capitalist class and take over the ownership of the factories in which they work.
 - d) Communism can never work because it is fundamentally unfair to workers.
10. The Combination Acts did not allow for the formation of workers' unions because:
- a) they improved the wages and working conditions of workers to the point where they did not feel it necessary to form unions.
 - b) an organization of workers might (by going on strike) restrict the free flow of goods to and from the market.
 - c) they required that workers remain in such small groups that they could not possibly organize a union.
 - d) they allowed employers to ban workers organizations in the factories.
11. In a sentence or two, answer the following:
- a) How did the discovery of agriculture lead to the specialization of labour?
 - b) What did Adam Smith mean when he said that people would always act in their own self interest?
 - c) Using the concepts of supply and demand, why are the wages of fast food restaurant workers quite low?
 - d) What did Karl Marx see as the fundamental flaw of Capitalism?

Part II -

They Can't Stand The Gaff

1. Write a newspaper editorial of about 100 words reporting the events of June 11, 1925 in New Waterford when the strikers attacked the power station. Make the editorial such that it is sympathetic to the workers.
2. Write a newspaper editorial of about 100 words discussing the conduct of the striking miners between June 11 and June 30, 1925. Make the editorial such that it is sympathetic to BESCO.

Part III -

The Structure of Unions

1. Which of the following is an example of an industrial union?
 - a) The Nova Scotia Teachers Union
 - b) The International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftsmen
 - c) The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
 - d) The Halifax Civic Workers Union
2. Which of the following is an example of a fringe benefit?
 - a) Promotions will be given to the most senior workers before being offered to employees who have been with the company for shorter periods of time.
 - b) The employer shall provide the workers with safety shoes.
 - c) The employees shall be required to wear uniforms while on duty.
 - d) Employees shall receive double their normal hourly rate if they have to work on a statutory holiday.
3. Which of the following is an example of working conditions:
 - a) If the employer has to lay off any workers, those with the least amount of seniority will be the first to go.

- b) The employer will pay half the cost of a prescription drug plan for the employees.
 - c) Supervisors will receive pay over and above their regular rate based on the number of workers they supervise.
 - d) The tips in a restaurant will be totaled and divided evenly among all of the employees.
4. Which of the following is an example of a closed shop?
- a) When a person joins a company they may decide whether or not they want to join the union.
 - b) A person must join the union as soon as they begin working for the company.
 - c) All of the workers must agree to join the union before a union can be set up in the company.
 - d) A person must be a member of a union before the company will consider hiring them.
5. What is the difference between conciliation and arbitration?
- a) The employees must request conciliation; arbitration is implemented automatically.
 - b) The employer can request a conciliation officer; both the employer and employees must request arbitration.
 - c) Conciliation only recommends a solution; arbitration is binding.
 - d) A conciliation officer is only brought in during a strike; arbitration may occur before a strike.
6. Which of the following best illustrates a boycott?
- a) Striking workers attempt to block management and replacement workers from going to work in their place.
 - b) Management closes down the place of business in order to try and force workers to settle a dispute.
 - c) Workers only work to the absolute letter of the contract and do no extra work.
 - d) Workers attempt to convince the public to stop buying their employer's products.
7. What is meant by the term "scab"?
- a) a non-union person who replaces a striking worker
 - b) a person who accepts a contract with an employer in exchange for a bribe
 - c) a person who is promoted by the company to get them out of the union
 - d) a person who refuses to become a member of a union
8. What is meant by a "check-off"?
- a) The managers of a company must do an evaluation on the performance of each worker every year.
 - b) Union dues are automatically deducted from the pay cheques of union members.
 - c) When there is a dispute between a worker and a manager, the company must investigate the dispute and report their findings in writing to the worker.
 - d) The company must insure that minimum legal safety standards are being met for all workers.
9. What does it mean when a company is not "acting in good faith"?
- a) The company is not willing to give any fringe benefits to the workers.
 - b) The company locks out the workers to pressure them to come to an agreement.
 - c) The company is being completely unreasonable in its demands to settle a contract.
 - d) The company is making every effort possible to settle a dispute with its workers.
10. When a union and an employer start negotiations for a new contract the first thing that happens is:
- a) each side prepares an asking package.
 - b) each side hires a lawyer to help with the negotiations.
 - c) the Labour Relations Board appoints a conciliator to help settle the contract.
 - d) each side submits their proposal to an independent panel who decide how the contract will be settled.