

## Canada and the Twenties

### 1) Communism

A system of government where the means of productions and distribution are publicly or state owned

### 2) General Strike

A walkout by all employed workers

### 3) Collective Bargaining

Union leaders negotiate with employers on behalf of union members

## End of the War

- veterans return to a changed world
  - o *many experience difficulty coping w/ post war life – stress disorders, disabilities, although not many diagnosed*
- meager pensions and few medical services
- jobs were not held / unemployment
  - o *no job placement services / handicapped type jobs available*
- workers that stayed home were prosperous
  - o high tariffs and railroad costs anger farmers, happiness in mfg. Ontario,
  - o unions want to regain what they had sacrificed for war effort
  - o high inflation in the economy

## Strikes and Lockouts

- Maritimes and Cape Breton were mainly one company towns
  - o *Tumbler Ridge / Trail / Nanaimo*
  - o Long, violent strikes
  - o Provincial police / federal troops broke up
  - o British Empire Steel was worst offender

## 1917 Communist Revolution

- influenced some western leaders (CCF / NDP)
- workers should have more control / evenly distribute wealth in society
- ONE BIG UNION (Winnipeg General Strike)
  - Business leaders and politicians react
  - Resistance in the form of Citizens Committee of One Thousand

## **Riots in Winnipeg:**

- May 1919, metal and building workers walked off the job
  - wanted collective bargaining, shorter week, higher wages
- the whole Winnipeg Labour Union supported this, and 30,000 people went on strike
- Winnipeg ceased to function
  - no firefighters, postal workers, telephone operators etc.
- Citizen's Committee of One Thousand – did not sympathize with strikers
- believed it was Communism trying to overthrow society
- government stepped in:
  - foreign union leaders deported
  - appointed special 'strike breaker' police
- during a protest, RCMP charged into the crowd with billy clubs and pistols
  - known as Bloody Saturday
  - one person died, thirty injured, lots arrested
  - marked the end of the strike
- what did they accomplish?
- short-term was a disaster – people lost jobs and were arrested
- long-term was better
  - royal commission found the workers had a real beef
  - parties like NDP and CCF were founded (left-wing)

## **Society in the Roaring Twenties...**

- this was a classic age – an age of great highs and lows
- gangsters, flappers, prohibition, silent film, radio, etc.

### **Highs:**

- this was the age of the automobile
  - Ford's Model-T was very popular
  - Canada had 1600km of good highway
- radio boomed
  - Hockey Night In Canada – 1923 was first broadcast
  - changed the way Canadians saw their world and the world around them (news, and American influence)
- women: politics, work, and play
  - women had the vote!
  - women also began to run for office
    - 1921: Agnes Macphail, MP
  - women had new jobs in the workforce
  - “flappers” – young women who partied for the first time ever
    - danced the Charleston
    - wore revealing clothing
    - a sexual revolution in many ways
- silent movies were very popular
  - Charlie Chaplin and others were celebrities
  - spread ideas about fashion, romance, and places other than where young people grew up