

Labor unions around since 1870s

Q. How did Canada's trade union movement originate?

A. The Toronto Trades Assembly, founded in 1871, was one of Canada's first central labor organizations, according to "the Archivist," a publication of the National Archives of Canada in Ottawa. The magazine says the Trade Unions Bill, which was passed and became the Trade Unions Act of 1872, was Canada's first legislation to encourage and offer some legal protection to members of labor unions.

Previously, union members had been liable to prosecution under English common law for conspiracy to combine to block business activity when collective activities such as strikes occurred. In several cases charges were laid.

The Trade Unions Act resulted from two factors: the Nine Hours Movement and the growing level of organization and political clout of Canadian workers, particularly men in the skilled trades.

With the example of the Eight Hours Movement in the United States, establishment of nine hours as a fair day's work was seen as an important goal by many Canadian workers in the early 1870s and Nine-Hours Leagues were formed in Hamilton and eventually in southern Ontario and in Quebec.

The movement's main strategy to gain the nine-hour day

Reunion in Nova Scotia

1994 will be a banner year for Westville, N.S. when it will celebrate its 100th birthday.

In conjunction with celebrations, the Westville Homecoming Society has a full schedule of events planned during June 30 to July 7, 1993, including a full reunion of all former students and teachers, a dance, variety concert, family picnic, church service, town/county tour, etc.

The town's annual Canada Day celebrations will be on going during this time.

The committee is hoping to reach as many former Westville residents who attended or taught any grade in the Westville school system so they may send their name and address and in turn we will forward our Newsletter outlining our itinerary.

Send name and address to Mrs. Dorothy (Hunter) Boehk, P.O. Box 411, Westville, N.S., B0K 2A0.

? Trivia
Mark Keamey
Randy Ray

was a series of general strikes in several cities, including Toronto and Hamilton. Although the movement lacked solid support and eventually petered out, when conspiracy

charges were laid against the strike leaders, there was a considerable outcry against the prosecution of the unionists and the government of Sir John A. Macdonald responded by passing the Trade Unions Act.

Today, Canada's most recognized and powerful central labor body is the Ottawa-based Canadian Labor Congress, which represents about 2.3-million trade unionists and is headed by Bob White, former leader of the Canadian Auto Workers Union.

ANSWERS

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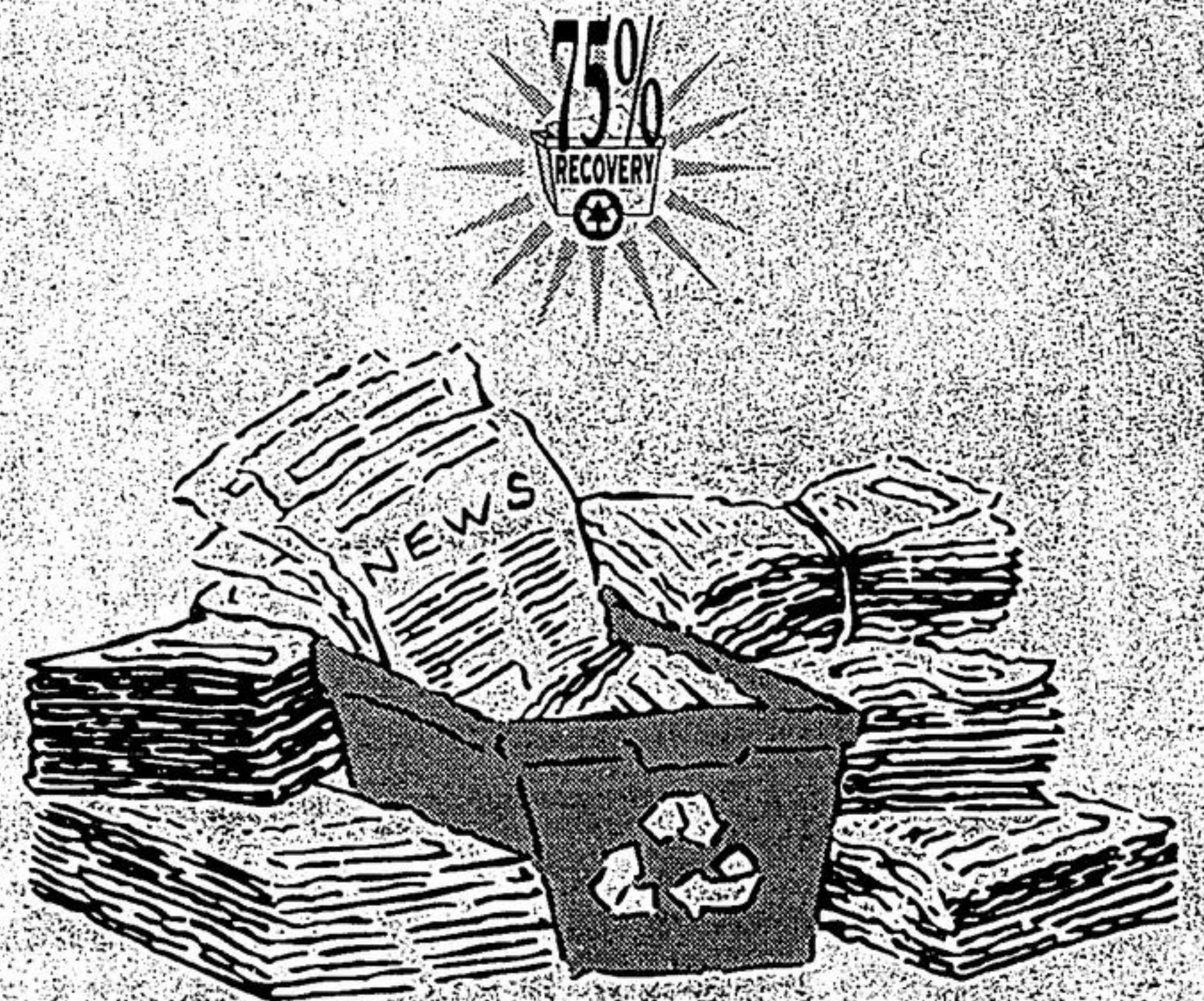
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