

9-10 EDWARD VII., A. 1910

Prof. SKELTON.—No exception. I shall mention later on what scope the courts have given this Act in their construction of it.

To continue the chronology of legislation. In 1900 letter-carriers were given an eight-hour day, or rather a fifty-six hour week, without as before the permission of overtime. (*See Exhibit A. (3)*).

The CHAIRMAN.—Read the Act please, let us get everything we can.

Prof. SKELTON.—(Reads):

#### SUPPLEMENTARY LEGISLATION.

‘Letter-carriers may be required to work as nearly as practicable only eight hours on each working day, but not in any event exceeding forty-eight hours during the six working days of each week; and such number of hours on Sunday, not exceeding eight, as may be required by the needs of the service; and if a legal holiday shall occur on any working day the service performed on such day, if less than eight hours, shall be counted as eight hours without regard to the time actually employed.’

This Act was passed in 1901. The following year, that is in the session of 1901-2, the eight-hour law was explicitly declared to apply to all irrigation works undertaken by the Secretary of the Interior. In 1905-1906 when the Panama Canal was being planned it was enacted that the provisions of the Act of 1892, the long one which I read, should not apply to unskilled alien labourers and to the foremen and superintendents of such labourers employed in the construction of the Isthmian Canal within the canal zone. Perhaps I might summarize briefly what the present position of legislation by the federal government is.

The CHAIRMAN.—Is that the last Act?

Prof. SKELTON.—I think I have included all the legislation that has been passed by the federal government.

The CHAIRMAN.—Have you the Bill of 1904 together with the evidence taken?

Prof. SKELTON.—Yes, I have that. I have a reference later to the different supplementary Bills that have been proposed, but this is all the legislation that has actually been put on the statute book so far. To summarize, the federal government has provided that eight hours shall constitute the limit that may be required or permitted of any workman, mechanic, or labourer in its own immediate employment whether engaged in erecting public buildings or fortifications—public works in the ordinary sense—constructing the vast irrigation works which are now being undertaken in the semi-arid west, or if they are citizens or skilled aliens, employed on the Panama canal; they are all in direct government employ. If they are employed in the government navy yards, arsenals or ordnance factories, or in the public printing bureau or engaged as letter-carriers—I should omit letter-carriers, that is a special provision—they all have the obligatory eight-hour day.

#### FEDERAL LAW *re* TELEGRAPHERS.

Mr. SMITH.—Does it apply to telegraphers too?

Prof. SKELTON.—In their case it is a nine-hour day and that is by virtue of the federal power to control interstate commerce.

Mr. SMITH.—It is a federal law?

Prof. SKELTON.—Yes, it is a federal law.

The CHAIRMAN.—Have they a federal law in the United States which limits the hours of labour on contract work to eight hours?

#### LIMIT OF PROVISIONS OF FEDERAL ACT.

Prof. SKELTON.—That is just what I am coming to. In the next place it is provided that eight hours shall be the limit which may be required or permitted by any contractor or sub-contractor engaged on the public works of the United States or the

PROF. SKELTON.