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OVERSEAS

Continued from page 1.

group have written to the prime minister suggesting legislation in the coming session of parliament to establish peace in industry.

The petition is signed by the following members: Messrs. J. A. Suedou (chairman, N.P.P.), Clem. A. Edwards, J. F. Green, C. E. Stanton, J. Walton, T. E. Case, E. Lewis (N.U.T.), J. Edwards (N.U.T.), Sir Edgar Jones (N.U.T.), Captain Loseby, M.C., Captain E. Gee, V.C., Captain E. A. Bagley, and Messrs. A. F. Jephcott and C. Jenson (acting hon. secretaries).

It is the aim of the petitioners to secure a restoration of confidence between buyers and sellers, employers and workers.

Most industrial disputes, whether caused by strikes or lockouts (they say) are nearly as disastrous to the public as civil war; they inflict enormous suffering and loss on millions of people in no way responsible for them; and these innocent sufferers have a right to ask parliament to protect them from the effects of other people's quarrels.

We believe this protection could best be afforded by compelling those taking part in industrial disputes that inflict injury on any section of the public to submit their differences to specially appointed industrial courts; that the arguments and evidence of both sides should be stated on oath, and that the decisions given should be binding on both sides under penalties.

Reference is made to the fact that thousands of workers refuse to join trade unions because they may be called upon to strike as a result of the action of extremists, and also to the fact that thousands are leaving their unions. The petition adds:—

"We realize that unemployment cannot be effectively solved without the most complete organization amongst both workers and employers, and we fear that this disorganization may tempt unscrupulous employers to re-establish the old sweating conditions of pre-war days, and so compel the good employers, by unfair competition, to follow their example."

Another important fact is the difficult position many honest trade union officials are placed in by the competition of the extremists, which often compels them to choose between being hounded out of their unions, to which they may have given years of faithful service, or agreeing to policies they know to be wrong.

In conclusion, the petitioners ask the government to introduce legislation of their own, or to give facilities for the "Industrial Armistice" Bill, introduced at the end of last session.

TRADE BOARDS.
 If the whole of Trade Unionism does not rise like one man and declare that Trade Boards must stay, it will be betraying the most dedicated members of the community," said Eldred Hallas, M.P., at a meeting held in the Birmingham Town Hall to protest against the attack on the Trade Boards.

Referring to the shameful conditions existing locally before the Trade Boards were set up, Hallas said he had gone into hovels where a man and his wife and child were carding hanks and eyes, and the total sum earned by their combined labour in an hour was three shillings.

"We have to realize that in this matter we are our brothers' keepers," declared Jack Jones, M.P., in a fighting speech. The Trade Boards were not ideal, he continued, but they were a big step forward. They stood for the principle that a decent standard of living for the producers must be the basis of industry.

If Trade Boards went, it would be the unscrupulous and merciless employer who would dictate conditions to the workers.

Miss Madeline Symons said that even in the event of the Cave Committee reporting in favour of the Trade Boards, there was no guarantee that the present Government would honour the findings of its own committee.

The meeting unanimously carried a resolution demanding that existing Trade Boards be retained with all their present powers, and that new Boards be established in all trades in which the workers are not to protect their interests by trade union organization.

ACTORS' CONTRACT.
 Representatives of the Society of West-End Theatre Managers have met representatives of the Actors' Association.

After a friendly discussion, the managers stated that the Actors' Association had misconstrued their letter, and that the Society of West-End Theatre Managers had no intention of repudiating the Valentine Standard Contract.

The managers wished merely to point out that they found it impossible to enforce the contract on all their members in its entirety.

JONES' OPINION.
 In a few weeks' time the workers of this country will be trooping to the market, said Jack Jones, M.P., at a meeting. "And no longer have they to decide whether Collins or Short is their friend. In every industrial centre in the country they will have the choice of decisions between the robbers and the robbed."

The Labour Party was out to establish the principle that the people who made the wealth of the country were good enough to make its laws.

The Prime Minister's slogan to his followers would be, "For God's sake, ladies and gentlemen, let us hang together, or there is grave danger that we shall hang separately."

"But some of Labour's enemies have got the wind up," said Jones. "Sir George Younger says, 'For God's sake don't let us have an election yet.' If he thought he could win, he would have an election tomorrow."

Lord Morley had prophesied in 1905 that the political fight of the future would be between the Haves and the Have-Nots. That fight was now proceeding.

STONEMASONS' TROUBLE.
 Owing to a breach of faith on the part of the masters, the Cornish stonemasons are on strike against a proposed cut of 4d. an hour. Both sides recently signed an agreement which, about a year ago, was

according to prices, would have stabilized wages until the end of February, when an estimated reduction of 1 1/2d. an hour would have come into operation.

The masters, for reasons best known to themselves, later resolved to violate this agreement and to enforce a reduction of 4d. an hour as from January 1.

This the men declined to accept, and the strike was the consequence.

LAY OFF IMMINENT.
 Nearly 3,000 men are slated for discharge from Rosyth Royal Dockyard during the next three months. This will result in a saving of one hundred thousand pounds annually.

GOVERNMENT ATTITUDE ON HELD-UP CONTRACTS.
 No action has yet been taken by the Government toward the commencement of work on certain contracts, awarded by the late Government, and on which instructions were issued either to commence or to stop work where such was already under way. Among these were the contracts for the construction of an ice-breaker at the Vickers yards in Montreal, and the building of dry docks at Vancouver, B.C. Investigations are understood to be under way by the Public Works Department as to the advisability and necessity of proceeding with the drydock contracts at present and under present conditions. Until these investigations are completed no work is to be done.

In regard to the ice-breaker contract, regarding which a deputation from Montreal met the Prime Minister and the Minister of Labor it is understood that the Montreal men were informed that the Government did not intend to present ordering the contract to be proceeded with as a means of combating unemployment. The matter of unemployment relief, it was stated, was being cared for separately and this and other contracts were being reviewed before there was any decision as to whether or not work on them was to be allowed to proceed.

At Vancouver the Premier received numerous protests from public bodies in the Ottawa order which has caused a cessation of work on the floating drydock here. He is investigating the drydock problem and also other Government projects during his stay.

MISREPRESENTATIONS ARE BEING MADE.
 That the return to normal prosperity is being seriously delayed, and that inconceivable harm is resulting from misinterpretation of the actual situation as regards the farmer in the United States was the statement made today by E. A. Strout, President of the Strout Farm Agency, Inc., which has headquarters in New York City and nearly 700 local offices throughout the United States and Canada.

"A wholly false impression regarding the situation is being developed," said Mr. Strout, "in that what is undoubtedly true of a certain class of farmers is made to appear as true to all engaged in farming. As a matter of fact, conditions as they affect the farmer generally are good when compared with almost any other industry in the country today. The one-crop farmer working on a high price for his grain or cotton crop, for instance, has suffered a serious setback. But the average small general farmer with eight to a dozen cows, a few hogs and sheep, a flock of poultry and with fair-price land and a good diversified crop is in a pretty comfortable position."

"The high cost of labor, which is the determining factor in so many industries, cuts a very small figure where the general farmer is concerned. For government statistics show that of the more than 9,000,000 farms in this country, only about 7 per cent. employ hired labor in any form. That means that more than 90 per cent. of the farms are actually operated through the high cost of labor, because the labor they are buying is their own, and the diversified products of their farms, despite reduced prices, are giving them a good labor income."

"On the average dairy farm there are from eight to twelve cows, and practically all the work on that farm is done by the owner and members of his family. A good deal of the feed for the stock is produced on the farm, and in addition to the dairy products, there are certain farm products, eggs, poultry, etc., that can be sold in the local markets quite as readily as can milk and cream and butter. Many general farmers raise a few acres of sweet corn, often on land worth from \$35 to \$50 an acre, and the records show that they receive from the cannery for their sweet corn at the rate of as much for one acre from their own land as the one-crop dent corn farmer in Iowa, for instance, receives from two acres of his 320-acre land. And the man who raises sweet corn is at no time in fear of disaster, because even if his sweet corn crop fails, which it is not likely to do, he will still have his 'guinny' giving him two crops a day with a ready market right at home."

"An example of what is being done on many small general farms at the present time has just been made known by G. W. Mapes, who owns and operates a small farm in Orange County, N.Y. About the only help Mr. Mapes has on his farm is his 18-year-old grandson, and at the present time, Mr. Mapes says the grandson is doing practically all the work. They keep 10 cows and 1,500 hens. The income from that farm in the month of December was approximately \$1,000 of which about one-half was labor income. Mr. Mapes says that while December was admittedly a big month with him, he has had a good balance on the right side of the ledger every month last year."

"There are a good many families in the cities and industrial towns whose labor income has given them a mighty scant living during the past year. The general farmer usually counts his labor income above the rest of his. His farm provides him a good home, with shelter, fuel and a large portion of the food required for his family. On the whole, his condition at this time is markedly better than the situation of the average man in city or town."

ONTARIO CONGRESS EXECUTIVE

Continued from page 1.

iteration of our demands for public ownership and operation of all public utilities. Labor representation on appointed commissions and especially on the Hydro Electric Commission. Protest against the unnecessary use of the Dominion Police at the request of Provincial authorities in the Thorold strike. Consideration of aid in developing Co-operative Societies. Protest against the arbitrary fixing of low wages on highway construction. An Act to license Barbers.

In speaking Pres. Moore asked for provision for an old age Pensions Act and an amendment to the Ontario Temperance Act to permit the sale of beer and wines, under a license system, in Ontario, in discussing legislation to be introduced at the coming session of the Legislature, which opens on February 14. Mr. Moore declared that the trades unionists of the province expected consideration of these matters by the Legislature. The delegation urged that the Provincial Government recognize its moral obligations as a province of the Dominion and enact as much of the legislation as possible.

On the 8-hour day legislation the Premier pointed out the difficulty of enforcing it in a single province.

The suggestion was that it should not be operative until at least surrounding provinces, or perhaps the Dominion, enacted a nation-wide law.

The suggestion of legislation of light beer and wine licenses, Premier Drury pointed out that the law as at present in effect was passed by the people themselves, and the proper form for the Laborites in this connection was before the people, who, if there was to be a change in law, must be educated to sanctioning such change.

The understanding the labor men got from discussion of suggested proportional representative legislation was that a bill would be introduced during the coming session to give the electoral system a tryout in one or two urban and rural ridings. Premier Drury said afterwards that such action was not improbable. Mentioned in that connection, however, were Toronto and Ottawa and surrounding districts. A report of a special committee dealing with the subject previously recommended one of the Middlesex ridings as a suitable place for a rural experiment.

All of the balance of the suggested programme of legislation, according to both the Premier and Mr. Moore, received very sympathetic hearing.

BENEFITS OF TREES ON PRAIRIE FARMS.
 Chicago.—At the recent convention of the Brotherhood of Railroad Patrolmen, held in this city, Charles C. Copeland was re-elected grand president and A. C. Berndt grand secretary (re-elected), both for terms of four years. Every local was represented at the meeting. By a change in the constitution the brotherhood will meet hereafter every four years, the next convention being held in St. Louis, November 22, 1925.

DEMAND BETTER FOOD.
 Edmonds, Wash.—Over 125 lumbermen in one of the camps of the Admiralty logging company have quit work because their repeated requests for better food were not complied with.

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BILL LIMITS WOMEN'S HOURS.
 Albany.—Under the provisions of a bill introduced in the legislature females over 16 and males between 16 and 18 years of age may not be required to work more than six days a week and eight hours a day.

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