

Express Hopes of Reaching Agreement in Shopmen's Strike

ROBERTSON CHAMPIONS CAUSE OF RAILWAYMEN

Senator Robertson, former minister of labor, has sent a letter to Hon. A. K. MacLean, chairman of the special committee on railway costs, dealing with statements relative to railway employees made by Hon. George Langley and F. N. McCrea, M.P., of Sherbrooke. Mr. Robertson makes special mention that Mr. Langley proposes "a thirty to forty-two per cent. increase in wages" and that Mr. McCrea had attacked "railway employees and especially railway trade unions."

The senator opens his reply by referring to the war record of railway employees. He points out that large numbers of them enlisted and that no general wage increases were given those who remained at home between 1914 and 1918. The McCrea award, he states, granted less in the way of increases than had been asked by the Canadian railway employees, so that it was not true that "the Canadian railway companies were held up by United States officers of international railway unions and forced to adopt the McCrea award and supplements."

Recalls 1921 Wage Cuts.

In regard to the present wage situation, Senator Robertson recalls the reduction in railway wages as of last July, roughly approximating \$20,000,000 annually, and in addition cites the recent negotiations for further reductions. He calls attention to the present range of the cost of living index as prepared by the Department of Labor.

"It is worthy of note," he says in

this connection, "that the cost of living is higher today than in 1918, when the McCrea award became effective. Still more serious to employees is the fact that while in 1918 rent, fuel and light constituted 39 per cent. of the total, in 1922 these items represent over 50 per cent. and rents are substantially higher than in July, 1920, when the cost of living was at its height."

Employees Reasonable.

"The view is respectfully submitted," he continues, "that Canadian railway employees have not failed to be reasonable and have submitted to and accepted wage decreases as far as is consistent with the decline in living costs."

The senator declares that in view of these facts the proposal made by Mr. Langley for a wage reduction of 30 to 40 per cent. could not be accepted by the railway employees and would be regarded by the railway companies as "not only unfair, but impossible of adoption."

"Should Parliament," he concludes his letter, "be brought to a situation under which railway companies cannot make ends meet and pay wages sufficient to maintain present living standards among their employees, the employees are likely to use their utmost endeavors to maintain these standards. I speak for the 8,000 telegraphers whom Mr. McCrea attacked so unfairly in the House and venture to assert that the views expressed herein will be endorsed by all of the 200,000 railway employees in Canada."

BOARD FINDING ALBERTA MINERS

In the report of the Knowles conciliation board, which inquired into the dispute in District 18, United Mine Workers of America, embracing the union coal mines in Alberta and Eastern British Columbia, certain recommendations as to the future of the industry are made, as well as to the wages and working conditions.

There are really two reports, a majority, signed by Chairman W. E. Knowles and H. Ostund, and a minority, signed by R. G. Drinnan, who represented the operators. The majority report recommends the discontinuance of the war bonus of \$1.17 a day and urges a return to the 1920 agreement, with the exception of the closed shop, with a reduction in wages of 15 per cent.

The minority report recommends that the basic rate be that of the 1915-1917 agreement with an increase of 25 per cent. to contract miners over the terms of that agreement and an increase of 40 per cent. over that agreement on underground day wages.

It is intimated that there are too many mines operating in Alberta in comparison with the demand and that this is the main cause of seasonal employment. With so many mines working the production for part of the year will meet all demands. During the hearings one suggestion made was that there be federal control of the mines to obviate this difficulty and reference is made to this in the report.

The flooding of the Manitoba market with American coal is another reason for part time work in Alberta's mines.

SIGNALMEN TO REMAIN ON DUTY AWAITING CONFERENCE

Chicago.—A threatened extension of the strike of railway shopmen to include 12,000 signalmen was prevented Friday by members of the United States Railroad Labor Board, when D. W. Holt, head of the Brotherhood of Railroad Signalmen, which has been taking a strike vote, promised to maintain the status quo pending further conferences.

Meanwhile, railway circles expressed strong hopes of a quick settlement of the shopmen's strike. M. M. Jewell, head of the shopmen, reiterated former statements that the shopmen were willing to consider a settlement proposition submitted by any authoritative body.

The situation is improving so far as the strike is concerned, Mr. Jewell said, asserting that he had received reports from several points that "what few men did remain at work last Saturday and Monday joined the walkout Wednesday."

Mr. Jewell said he had received a telegram from J. F. Valentine of Cincinnati, head of the International Moulders' Union, authorizing a walkout of 2,500 moulders employed on the railroads. He also exhibited telegrams from heads of the ladies' auxiliaries of the shopmen's organizations in which it was stated that the women were doing picket duty.

Mr. Jewell did not reply to the letter of Chairman Ben W. Hooper of the labor board, which was considered conciliatory in some quarters, but said he expected to make reply after studying it closely. Mr. Hooper in his letter advised the shopmen to co-operate with the labor board.

The sixth day of the shopmen's strike was marked by little violence except for a few sporadic outbreaks in widely scattered sections.

LABOR INTERESTS TO BE ASSISTED

Calgary.—Walter Smitten, of Calgary, secretary of the Alberta Federation of Labor, will be commissioner of labor for the province, an appointment having been made by the government under the terms of the act passed at the last session of legislature for the establishment of a labor bureau. The name of Mr. Smitten has been freely mentioned for some time past as a likely appointee for the office and he is spoken of by many of the organized labor men as well qualified for it. He will take up his new duties, it is expected, within a few days.

The act provides that the commissioner of labor shall be the head of the bureau, the other members and officers of which will be appointed later, as may be found necessary.

For the first Mr. Smitten will be engaged upon the collection and tabulation of data regarding labor interests within the province, and this will occupy a large part of his time, it is believed, for some months. Some of the information gathered in this way will probably be published in due course.

There will later follow, as an outcome of the investigations thus carried on, recommendations to the government for new legislation affecting labor in Alberta or the consolidation and revision of the existing laws. It is also provided in the act that the commissioner and his bureau may be entrusted with the administration of certain acts. It is proposed, however, that for the present Mr. Smitten shall give his attention mainly to a survey of the labor field in this province and the compilation of information and statistics as to conditions therein. Other officers and clerks of the bureau will be appointed by order-in-council when such action is found necessary.

STRIKE SHOPMEN OFF PAY—ROLLS OF EASTERN ROADS

New York.—On the heels of the United States labor board's ultimatum at Chicago, outlawing unions participating in the National Shop-Crafts strike, executives of eastern railroads decreed that the strikers had automatically forfeited all "rights," including pensions and priority of promotion.

"Union men who decide to return to their jobs will henceforth be enrolled as new employees and will be considered on the same basis as men employed to replace the strikers who continue in the services of the railroads," the executives declared.

The strikers declared they were not daunted by this action nor by the action of the labor board in defining their unions as "outlaws." After a conference of their New York district "strike conduct committee" they announced that:

"The strike was called when the railway employees department decided to outlaw the United States Railroad Labor Board. As far as the men on strike are concerned, the United States Labor Board does not exist."

Local offices of the Brotherhood of Railway and Steamship Clerks, Freight Handlers and Express and Station Employees today received orders from President E. J. Fitzgerald at Cincinnati, directing distribution of strike ballots among 19,500 employees of the New York Central, the Lehigh Valley and the New York, New Haven and Hartford. Ballots were made returnable July 15.

ACTION BY MANAGERS.

New York.—The Railway Managers' Association of New York announced after a meeting, a decision to strike the names of all striking shopmen from payrolls of eastern roads entering this city, thereby depriving them of their seniority rights. The action follows the declaration of the railroad labor board outlawing the strikers.

E. M. Rine, chairman of the association, in making the announcement, said the managers also had agreed to refuse further to recognize the unions now on strike. New unions will be formed among men employed to replace the strikers, he said.

UNIONS HIT HARD IN THE DOMINION

Unemployment, wage reductions and decisions of the International Labor Office, will be among the important problems dealt with at the thirty-eighth annual convention of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada. The convention will be held in Montreal, commencing Monday, August 21, and will continue in session until business is completed.

The call to the convention, issued by Tom Moore, President of the Congress, and P. M. Draper, Secretary, Treasurer, declares that "the effects of the long-continued trade depression and consequent unemployment are undoubtedly being severely felt by our affiliated unions."

The convention call says: "Arbitrary wage reductions, in some cases in direct violation of the Industrial Disputes Act; the removal of immigration restrictions in face of the continued serious unemployment; the delay of the Dominion and Provincial Governments in implementing their obligations under the covenant of the League of Nations to give legislative effect to the eight-hour day; unemployment insurance and other decisions of the International Labor Office, and other equally important problems are subjects the convention will be called upon to consider."

LESS UNEMPLOYMENT SHOWN BY FIGURES

Employment figures for the first of June show a continued betterment of conditions throughout the Dominion, according to information available at the employment service branch of the department of labor. From the first of the year, it is stated, the improvement in conditions has been steadily maintained, until now there is considerably less unemployment than in June, last year.

The number of employees actually at work on June 1, according to reports received from 6,352 employers, was 723,157, as against 675,421 on May 1. These figures, it was stated, do not take into account the number of people employed in agricultural work throughout the Dominion.

Seasonal employment has of course, taken care of a great majority of the unemployed throughout the agricultural areas, and from some sections it is being reported there are more jobs open than there are men to fill them.

Present indications, according to officers of the labor department, are that employment conditions will continue to show the steady improvement, which has been maintained since the first of the year.

DEATH OF A LABOR M.P.

The Daily Herald regrets to announce the death of John Williams, Labour M.P. for Gower (East Glamorgan), which occurred at Sketty, near Swansea, recently. Mr. Williams had been seriously ill for the past 12 months.

John Williams started life in a colliery in the Rhondda Valley, and later became a checkweighman. He was then appointed a miners' agent, and came to the Western district, being first stationed at Neath, and afterwards at Swansea.

On the retirement from Parliament of Mr. J. Aaron Thomas, then Liberal M.P. for Gower, John Williams contested and won the seat for Labor, and on each succeeding occasion he held it by large majorities.

Twelve months ago, owing to failing health, he decided not to seek re-election, and Labour adopted R. H. Greenleaf, the present miners' agent, as its candidate.

Mr. Williams was a lay minister of the Baptist Connection. Among his many public offices he was a governor of the University College of Wales.

Europe's efforts to solve problems reminds us of the way the neighbor cleans up: He throws the trash over into our yard.

Fixed Period of Grace

New York.—At the end of the sixth day of the shop crafts strike, railroads entering New York reported shops and roundhouses were working with 35 to 60 per cent. normal forces, while union leaders continued to claim new gains in the ranks of the strikers. Rail executives united in a statement that all men engaged to fill strikers' places from this time forward will be considered permanent employees.

Three roads fixed a period of grace after which strikers will not be rehired. The Pennsylvania announced its men would retain their pension and seniority rights if they returned by tomorrow night. The Central Railroad of New Jersey set the "deadline" at noon, Sunday, and the Lehigh Valley at midnight tomorrow.

Other roads maintained previously adopted policies, viz., that returning strikers would only get the "rights" of new employees.

Canadians May Strike.

Moose Jaw.—James Somerville, international vice-president of the Machinists' Union, who returned to Moose Jaw from a tour of Canadian railways from Montreal to Vancouver, declared that shopmen throughout Canada are prepared to go on strike if railway companies persist in their attempt to impose the terms announced during May upon the men. The men, declared Mr. Somerville, are determined that they are not going to submit to the conditions which the railways are attempting to impose on them, especially with regard to Sunday work.

"The proposal of the railways is that the men should accept straight time for Sunday work and holidays. We established the payment of overtime for Sundays and holidays 25 years ago to eliminate, as far as possible, work on Sundays. If the companies' proposal to pay straight time for Sunday work is accepted, we will debase Sunday the same as the United States and conditions which we believed we had overcome years ago will be back," he said.

TRADE UNION DECLINE

In announcing a decrease of 211,424 members from last year's high-water mark of 1,583,058, the annual report of the General Federation of Trade Unions says—

"It was not to be expected that the General Federation of Trade Unions would escape the effect of losses in membership suffered by individual trade unions. This loss is serious, but as yet not so serious as has been anticipated."

"There were very few unions which did not enjoy what may be termed war-time inluxes."

"Many who came into industry joined the unions because they were forced, not because they were influenced by trade union conviction."

"Many, and this applies particularly to women, no longer find employment in occupations which lend themselves to trade union organization, and so, though the number of nominal trade unionists is reduced, the actual trade unionists may remain even in greater numbers than in 1914."

The great problem for the future to work out is not whether the dead can come back, but whether the dead broke can come back.

REQUEST BOARD OF CONCILIATION

The Fire Fighters' Union of Calgary has applied to the minister of labor for a board of conciliation in regard to the dispute between themselves and the city of Calgary. If the city agrees to the appointment of a board, this will make the second board called into being by differences between civic firemen and western cities. The policy of the department of labor in disputes between municipalities and their employees is to set up boards only with the consent of the municipality concerned. Moosejaw agreed to the appointment of such a board, and the labor department is now in communication with the city of Calgary on the subject.

Calgary, Alta.—The Calgary Firemen's Union is one of a minority of the locals belonging to the Calgary Federation of Civic Employees which has consistently declined to accept wage reductions passed by the commissioners and the city council. The commissioners declined to agree to an arbitration with those dissenting locals separately, asserting that the city wage agreement provides for arbitration with the federation as a whole. The federation officials will not ask for arbitration between the city and the federation, but demand separate arbitrations for each local dissenting from the wage awards of the commissioners. As a result of the deadlock, the local firemen applied to Ottawa for intervention.

MAKE BIG CUT IN RAILWAY WAGES

Stationary employees of the Canadian National Railways have been notified that on July 15th next, their wages will be reduced by some six per cent. About 400 men are affected in Ottawa and the classes in which the reductions will be made are the clerks, station employees, roundhouse men, shop men, dining and sleeping car attendants, trackmen, maintenance of way men, repair men, car cleaners and others of the less highly paid groups. The wages of "the big four," that is the engineers, conductors, trainmen and telegraphers, will not be affected.

While so far only the Canadian National employees have been notified, it is certain that the movement comes from the Canadian Railway Association, which embraces all the important railways in Canada, and there is little doubt that the cut in wages will also extend to the C.P.R.

One man employed in Ottawa, with a wife and five children, related how the cut affects him. Before July 16, 1921, the date when the 12 per cent. cut became effective, he was getting \$126 per month. That cut brought his salary down to \$111 per month. The present cut reduces him another eight dollars per month and brings his salary to \$103.

DENOUNCES RULING OF U. S. LABOR BOARD

Washington.—The ruling of the United States Labor Board "outlawing" the railroad unions now on strike was denounced by Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, in a statement, as "utterly Bolshevik in character," and as "a blow to the hand of the hand unions at will." The ruling, Mr. Gompers added, was papably too ridiculous and fatuous to be accepted as permanent American government policy.

"If anything could have been calculated to inspire the workers with determination to win a victory for democratic methods and for justice in their employment, this action of the board will have that result, unnecessary though it may be."

WANT AN AGREEMENT COMPLETED AT ONCE

Local Union 24, Electrical Workers, at a largely attended special meeting went on record unanimously as being in favor of having an immediate agreement with the electrical contractors of the city, with a minimum wage rate of eighty cents an hour.

It was decided to communicate with the contractors, and request that a committee be appointed to meet the executive of the union in order to consider a satisfactory agreement at an early date.

ARE NEGOTIATING NEW WAGE SCALE

Winnipeg.—Through the medium of the Council of Industry negotiating of a wage scale by the Bridge and Structural Iron Workers' Union with their employers has begun, and a statement from the council tonight intimates that a settlement may be reached in a day or two. The employers sought to have the old rate of \$1.10 per hour cut to 85 cents. The union proposed \$1.05 as a basis of negotiation, and both parties today have submitted new offers, that of a substantial reduction in wages on certain conditions.

Argument is to be heard on an application to make permanent an interim injunction granted by Mr. Justice Adams restraining the union from picketing jobs being carried on in Winnipeg by men brought in from outside points.

DENY RECOGNITION TO TRACTION UNION

Buffalo, N.Y.—The deadlock in the strike of the International Railway Company's traction lines in Buffalo and other western New York towns is unbroken. The men at meetings reiterated their determination to fight for recognition of the union, while company officials continued to declare such recognition would not be granted.

No attempt was made to run cars and none will be made it was said.

Four thousand automobiles have been licensed to carry passengers in the emergency and principal streets today were filled from curb to curb with the hurrying "jitneys."

ASKS RESIGNATION RT. HON. J. H. THOMAS

London.—A resolution demanding that Rt. Hon. J. H. Thomas, Parliamentary Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, resign either his privy councillorship or his secretaryship of the union, was moved at a conference of the National Union of Railwaymen at Bradford and was defeated by a vote of 76 to 3.

W. Hetherington, representing the Carlisle branch of the union, who moved the resolution, declared that the Privy Council was like a star chamber, and the Privy Councillor's oath was aimed at the working class. The Privy Council, he said, was composed of princes and archbishops and railway magistrates, and Mr. Thomas, by his oath of office, was bound to inform the King of any seditious which he might hear of.

Mr. Thomas was present and replied. He declared that Hetherington did not represent the Carlisle branch of the union of railwaymen, four-fifths of whose members repudiated this action. The question of the Privy Councillorship was based on the question of the country and the con-

Items of Interest from Overseas

stitution. Mr. Thomas charged the supporters of the resolution with being Republicans, who dared not speak plainly.

The session closed in an uproar.

BRITISH COAL MINERS NOTIFIED OF WAGE CUT

Following the coal mine owners' recent intimation of a coming reduction of wages, notices of the reduction coming into force on August 1, are now being posted in the collieries in accordance with the industrial disputes prevention act.

The wages of employees receiving 24 shillings and upwards per shift will be reduced by two shillings per shift, and those receiving less will suffer a proportionate reduction.

CONFIDENCE IN LEADERS

London.—Speaking at the annual conference of railwaymen, J. H. Thomas, M.P., the railwaymen's leader, declared that during the past 12 months machinery had been established by which all labor disputes were capable of adjustment.

He declared that disputes during the previous 18 months would have been better handled and better results would have been attained if laborers had placed more confidence in their leaders. There were men in the working class movement, he maintained, who thought it was only necessary to call a strike for their masters to fall at their feet. He warned all trades unionists against the parrot cry, "watch your leader."

THE POLITICAL LEVY

Resolutions of protest against the Trade Union Act (1913) Amendment Bill, now before a Standing Committee of the House of Commons, continue to pour in from trade unions and labor organizations, and Members of Parliament are being inundated with demands that they shall vote against the measure.

The Bill strikes at the very foundation of trade unions participating in politics, even for the sake of industrial improvement, says Frank Hodges in a letter to lodges of the Miners' Federation.

In the opinion of the Executive of the M.F.G.B. he adds, it represents an attempt to destroy the political effectiveness of the trade unions.

The Executive of the National Union of General Workers declares that the Bill would institute class discrimination and infringe the legal rights of trade unions.

Other bodies to protest against the measure include the Chesnut and Grantham Trades Councils, Dorchester Trades Council, Drake (Plymouth) Divisional Labor Party, Walthamstow and Westminster branches of the N.U.G.W.

LABOR GAIN IN S. AFRICA

London.—By a narrow majority, the leader of the labor party in South Africa, Colonel Creswell, was victorious over Gen. Wylie, candidate for the South African party in the parliamentary by-election at Stamford Hill, according to a Beeser despatch from Durban. The vote was 827 to 814. The result is a labor gain. The vacancy was caused by the death of W. Hunter.

CARPENTERS ELECT

The annual meeting and election of officers of Local 93, of the Brotherhood of Carpenters resulted in J. J. Halpin, one of the oldest members in the craft, being unanimously chosen president. The other officers for the coming year will be: Vice-Pres., T. Brady; recording secretary, J. P. Macdonald; financial secretary, J. A. Tapp; treasurer, E. Bellair; delegates to Trades and Labor Council, Tom Moore, Pat Green, E. Bellair and J. J. Halpin.

A report of the recent Ontario provincial council of carpenters was read by the delegate, J. A. V. McCaffrey, vice-president of the council, who was tendered a vote of appreciation, thanks and congratulation upon his election to the office. His resignation as financial secretary of the local was accepted with regret, owing to his having to leave the city in the near future.

EMPLOYMENT FIGURES SHOW BETTER TIMES

Employment figures for the first of June show a continued betterment of conditions throughout the Dominion, according to information available at the employment service branch of the Department of Labor. From the first of the year, it is stated, the improvement in conditions has been steadily maintained, until now there is considerably less unemployment than in June last year. The number of employees actually at work on June 1, according to reports received from 6,352 employers, was 723,157, as against 675,421 on May 1. These figures, it was stated, do not take into account the number of people employed in agricultural work throughout the Dominion.

DEADLOCK IN COAL MINE NEGOTIATIONS

Washington.—Deadlocked over a basis of negotiating a settlement of the bituminous coal strike, the conference of operators and United Mine Workers' officials accepted the suggestion of government representatives and adjourned until next Monday.

When the adjournment was taken at 1:10 o'clock this afternoon after two joint sessions and an intermediate separate session of operators and miners, Secretary of Labor Davis, one of the government representatives, said that no agreement had been reached, no committee to continue the discussions in the meantime appointed and no specific programme for the future proposed.

The adjournment, it was said, in government circles, will allow both the operators and the miners an opportunity to talk with their colleagues in the field. John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, will remain in Washington, and it is considered likely that Alfred E. Ogle, president of the National Coal Association and head of the operators, will do likewise.

APPLY FOR BOARD

Winnipeg.—Application for a board of conciliation has been made to Hon. James Murdock, federal minister of labor, by the Canadian Pacific Railway section of the Order of Railroad Telegraphers, following the breaking off of negotiations between the men and the Railway Association of Canada. A chairman has not yet been appointed, but the men have named David Campbell, of Winnipeg, to represent them. U. D. Gilpin, of Toronto, will be the railway company's representative. Failure to reach an agreement on working conditions resulted in the application for a board.