

CITY PAID 86 PER CENT. MATRON'S SALARY, BUT HAD NO SAY IN "FIRING"

Algermen Would Like Explanation From U. F. O. Government For Action. Over 30 Years' Service AND NO PENSION GIVEN. Host of Minnie Harris Will Dog Government," Says Alderman Drake.

Whatever reasons may have prompted Mayor Graham in discharging Miss Minnie Harris, who for 34 years served as matron of the county jail, members of the London City Council are preparing to demand an explanation in view of the fact that the City of London, according to Mayor Wilson, pays about 86 per cent of the maintenance cost of that institution. Miss Harris was given notice on March 30, she was told to leave by to-day, April 1. Mayor Wilson expressed his profound surprise on being informed that Miss Harris had been summarily discharged. And while in the discharge of Deputy Sheriff Waterworth the city was informed that its sole interest in the administration of the jail was the payment of over 80 per cent of maintenance costs, the mayor and aldermen feel that even the most ardent partisans that the system in force is not justly tenable.

"It is a crying shame," Ald. Drake states, with regard to the discharge of a woman employee past 50 years of age, who has worked in the interest of women prisoners for over a third of a century. "It only goes to show what a rotten Government we have." Mr. Drake continued, to have a woman fired out of her job for giving page locally all of her life. The political host of Minnie Harris will dog the U. F. O. out of existence.

"I don't know what reasons they give for discharging her. There may have been good reasons. But London will want to know those reasons, and we will take more than one page in support to make citizens believe that gross acts of injustice has not been perpetrated.

"All they want London to do is to pass the bill. We pay 86 per cent of the costs of the county jail and we have no say as to how it shall be run and we have in the hands of the American consulate in this city. "We should have a county building commission, consisting of a board appointed from the city, and the City Council should be at least one there, who will be discharged and who, as it is, we are all in the Ald. Ashplant, however, refused to make any comment on the matter. "I am not yet in full possession of the facts," he stated, "until then I will not make any statement."

HALF HOLIDAY FOR LORD BYNG'S VISIT Saturday, April 15, Is Proclaimed By Mayor. In honor of the visit of Their Excellencies, General the Right Honorable Lord Byng, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., O.C., and Lady Byng, of Vimy, on Friday, April 15, a half holiday has been declared on that day by Mayor Wilson with the approval of the City Council. All citizens are called upon to decorate their residences and offices, and business men are urged to give the Governor-General of Canada and Lady Byng a royal welcome in London.

The city buildings will be well decorated with flags and bunting and the streets as a whole will present a gala appearance on that day. Business men are urged to give the Governor-General of Canada and Lady Byng a royal welcome in London.

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NATION WIDE COAL STRIKE IS IN EFFECT

Every Union Coal Mine in United States Will Be Idle To-Day. STOCKS ON HAND ARE LARGEST EVER KNOWN. Vanguard of 526,000 Union Miners Called Out Laid Down Tools Early Last Night. INDIANAPOLIS, Ind., March 31.—The vanguard of 526,000 union coal miners called upon to quit work at midnight were laying down their tools and leaving the mines in both bituminous and anthracite fields early to-night, according to reports received at United Mine Workers' headquarters here. The first announcement that union miners were heading the strike call came from Ohio, where, according to figures given out at headquarters here 17,800 men in 194 mines in Harrison, Jefferson and Belmont counties quit work.

This announcement was followed by reports that bituminous and anthracite miners in the Denna fields were laying down their tools. Officials had no available figures. It was also announced that a large number of union miners in the West Virginia fields had gone out. Despite reports of breaks in union ranks from Western Kentucky and several other Western union officials are confident that virtually every union mine in the country will shut down at midnight.

BRITAIN WILL SUPPORT. LONDON, March 31.—The British miners' union is going to give its support to the American miners in their national strike. The British coal miners, however, will not take any action to stop the shipment of coal to the United States unless the United Mine Workers of America request it. This information comes from Vernon Harrison, M. P., head of the South Wales Miners' Federation, and a member of the executive committee of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain.

LABOR MEN AFTER ALD. J. ASHTON. Colbert Refuses To Sign Conciliation Board Papers. President Colbert, acting with the approval of the majority of the other members of the executive committee of the London Street Railway Men's Association, has refused to sign the papers asking for a board of conciliation until Ald. Ashton has cleared himself on the charges that he has been working for a 10 per cent reduction of the wages of civic employees. Mr. Colbert stated that the papers would be sent away the next day, but after further consideration he refused to sign the application.

The question will be thoroughly threshed out at the meeting of the board of conciliation of the Canadian Labor Party to-morrow afternoon. Ald. Ashton will be present to explain his stand in reference to all civic questions. Whether the board for the street railway men will be asked to depend on the action taken by this meeting, Mr. Colbert contends that the question is not one of asking for a board of conciliation to see that his own wages are not reduced six per cent, while he apparently is assisting in a movement to cut the civic employees 10 per cent.

HEWITT FAILS TO APPEAR IN COURT. Charged With Breach O. T. A. Reported To Have Decamped. Allan Hewitt, for whom a warrant was issued yesterday, failed to appear in police court to-day to answer the charge against him of a breach of the O. T. A. Albert Judd, his counsel, did not believe that his client had left the city, although this was the inference taken by the court. If he is apprehended he will be tried next week. "I saw Mr. Hewitt last night at 5:30, when he told me that he would appear in court this morning," stated Mr. Judd. "He admits the serving of the warrant and I don't think that you could drive him away from town. Of course, he might be sent away."

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FORD MAKES NEW OFFER IN MUSKELS PLAN

Includes Building of Huge Reservoir to Increase the Available Power at Muscle Shoals. ONE MILLION HORSEPOWER THE CAPACITY AIMED AT. Will Ask U. S. Congress for Appropriation of Money for Surveys of Project. WASHINGTON, D. C., March 31.—(Special to The Free Press.)—Henry Ford on Friday submitted to the Government an amended plan for the acquisition of the great nitrate plants and water power project at Muscle Shoals. The new offer includes the building of an immense storage reservoir in East Tennessee to provide a large amount of electric energy at sites of the storage dams to increase the power at Muscle Shoals and other dams in the middle section of the Tennessee River. Ford's attorney, J. W. Worthington, confidentially advised the secretary of Commerce Houston and a committee of leading citizens of Nashville, Tenn. Enthusiasm for Henry Ford's project is widespread. The Ford engineers have been authorized to conduct a preliminary survey of the project. The Ford engineers have been authorized to conduct a preliminary survey of the project.

Twins' Death Raises Fine Legal Point. \$100,000 Estate Turns on Which of Siamese Twins Is Mother of 11-Year-Old Son. ARE SISTERS ONE ENTITY? Legal Problem Which Cook County Probate Court Must Decide. CHICAGO, March 31.—The death of Rosa and Josefa Blazek, the Siamese twins, has left Cook County probate court with a legal problem which apparently is unprecedented. In determining the disposition of the \$100,000 estate of the twins the court must decide if 11-year-old Franz is the son of one or both of the twins.

CONSERVATIVES AND PROGRESSIVES UNITE TO CUT ESTIMATES. MURDOCK UNDER FIRE. By W. E. ELLIOTT, Free Press Staff Correspondent. OTTAWA, March 31.—A real step towards economy in Federal expenditures was taken to-night when the House of Commons voted to reduce the estimates of the labor department, \$2,000,000. The action was naturally not initiated by the Government, but taken on a motion by Hon. H. H. Stevens, Conservative (Vancouver), and the vote resulted in one of the most curious scenes the House has ever witnessed.

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MILES MORE OF WIRE FELL IN CITY AND DISTRICT AS RESULT OF THE WIND AND RAIN LAST EVENING

What Wind and Sleet Did to Western Ontario. Wind and ice in two days have caused nearly \$2,000,000 damage in Western Ontario and the State of Michigan. This district is practically isolated from the outside world. Lines of communication have been ruthlessly struck down and will not be repaired for several days. London is still locked up tight with the exception of a couple of wires to Windsor. The city's homes and places of business last night were in darkness. It is expected heavy power will again be turned on in some sections of the city to-day. London's loss totals thousands of dollars, exclusive of the \$100,000 damage to Bell Telephone lines. Industries in towns and cities in the hydro belt are suffering as a result of breaks in the power lines. Thousands of dollars' damage has been wrought in St. Thomas. Crippled street cars were towed to the barns by automobiles. Between \$10,000 and \$15,000 is the estimated loss to the London & Port Stanley Railway. Galt, Thamesville and intervening points have had hard hit by the ice king. Practically the whole eastern section of Michigan has been caught in the grip of the storm. Nearly all lines of communication to Detroit yesterday were severed.

TELEPHONE COMPANY THREATENS WITH CUTTING OFF SERVICE, SECURES ELECTRIC POWER. The situation which has developed in London and district following the storm of Thursday and the wind and rainstorm yesterday afternoon and last night is without precedent in Western Ontario. The district is without hydro service, and in order to reach Toronto by telegraph, messages have to be relayed via Detroit, Cleveland and Buffalo. All other telegraph lines are temporarily out of commission. Shortly before noon the Bell Telephone Company announced that it had secured sufficient power from the Helena Company to take care of London telephones. Had arrangements of this kind not been practically made, the company might have had to cut off a large number of local phones owing to no hydro power being available. More than 1,100 London telephones are still out of commission owing to broken wires. For many hours the city was cut off completely from the outside world by wire, the only communication being by means of the telegraph, which was unable to maintain their schedules without interruption. SUSPENDED INDEFINITELY. Owing to breaks in the hydro lines between Dundas and Hamilton the service is suspended indefinitely. It will be weeks before much of damage can be repaired and several days before even partial electric restoration is possible. The situation is the worst that has ever occurred in London and the every phase of communication and the city is completely isolated from thousands of people inconvenienced. One of the most remarkable features of the entire situation is that in spite of the enormous damage there has not been a single loss of life or anyone seriously injured. The losses and damage in London and district will be much heavier than at first estimated. Every hour brings new reports of harm done and as the repair work proceeds officials of the telephone, electric and railway companies find their damage figures mounting. YESTERDAY'S STORM. The second storm of wind and rain which developed yesterday afternoon added greatly to the previous damage. The last of the long-distance telegraph lines connecting London with the outside world came down, and to-day the city is completely isolated as far as telephone connection is concerned. The storm yesterday afternoon and through the night also brought down the telegraph lines. The Canadian Press wires were working. When the telegraph companies will get started again will probably be until late to-night and possibly not before Sunday. Manager C. H. Beard, of the Bell Telephone Company, stated to The Free Press that the company's loss will probably run as high as \$200,000. WORST STORM EVER. "This is easily the worst storm I have ever seen," said a telephone official. Continued on Page 15.

CITIZENS PAY TRIBUTE TO COURAGE OF MAYOR IN CUTTING TAX RATE. Men in Factories and Stores Will Be Benefited, Says T. F. Kingsmill. DONE MAGNIFICENTLY, SAYS MAJOR INGRAM. City Must Economize, Says James Gray, of Hospital Trust.

CITIZENS PAY TRIBUTE TO COURAGE OF MAYOR IN CUTTING TAX RATE. Men in Factories and Stores Will Be Benefited, Says T. F. Kingsmill. DONE MAGNIFICENTLY, SAYS MAJOR INGRAM. City Must Economize, Says James Gray, of Hospital Trust. "Mayor Wilson is a marvelous man," said Mr. Kingsmill. "It took a great deal of courage to do what he has accomplished. It is especially remarkable that one of his age had sufficient courage to undertake a campaign of economy at this time. It is always easy to increase salaries, but it is infinitely harder to cut down salaries. "But the men who will feel the result of the mayor's economy plan the most are those who are trying to pay for their homes," continued Mr. Kingsmill. "The men in the factories, the stores and other places of employment, who are laying aside a little each month on their homes will appreciate the lower tax rate than any other class can. Referring to the Board of Education, Mr. Kingsmill stated that the members should be ashamed of themselves. "Mayor Wilson cannot be too strongly commended for keeping the tax rate down," was Major Gordon Ingram's comment. "Mayor Wilson is to be highly commended, he has done magnificently in lowering the tax rate. Words fail in expressing the feelings of the average taxpayer towards the mayor for the courageous stand he has taken at this time." Mr. Kingsmill, who has announced his own appreciation of the work that has been accomplished in cutting the expenditures "to the bone" this year, and he is certain the majority of ratepayers are of the same opinion. The aldermen also are unqualifiedly commended for backing the mayor in his fight for economy. Major Gordon Ingram, James Gray and George Wesley also were unstinted in their praise for Mayor Wilson. Labor men are equally strong in their expressions of approval of the mayor and Council for their economy platform. "The labor men do not agree with a general salary and wage reduction, but the majority have confidence that Mayor Wilson will not reduce the salaries of the small salaried men to the limit. MEANS MUCH TO WORKERS. Mr. Kingsmill stressed the point that this reduction in the tax rate means infinitely more to the worker than it does to the men of money. He also was as free in his condemnation of the Board of Education as he was in his commendation for the Council. The former body cannot be too strongly censured, nor can the latter be too highly praised, he asserted in the course of an interview. The Council and other civic bodies should keep the expenditures down to the lowest possible point without adopting any cheese-paring methods. It would be disastrous if the city's growth were to be retarded by too stringent economy, but Mayor Wilson has taken the proper course. He has not cut out any expenditures that are absolutely essential, while he has done his best to reduce any extravagance. He deserves much credit for his stand."

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