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Civil Service Federation of Canada

Abolition of Patronage

The Executive of the Federation has discussed and no doubt will carry into effect an action of highly patriotic import. When the Prime Minister gave his pledge to the people of Canada regarding the abolition of Patronage as it affected public offices, he also promised to abolish Patronage in the purchase of Government supplies. This promise the Prime Minister also redeemed insofar as it could be done under the War Measures Act, by virtue of which the War Purchasing Commission operates. The force of the War Measures Act as it applies to the War Purchasing Commission will expire at the close of the forthcoming sitting of the House, when purchasing may, and no doubt will, revert to the Patronage system.

During the absence of the Prime Minister from the House of Commons a bill to make the War Purchasing Commission a permanent Department met with great opposition and was withdrawn. It is known that the Prime Minister desires that such an act be placed upon the Statutes, and a bill will be introduced at the ensuing session. In the meantime Sir Hormisdas Laporte, who has for years done such valuable work for the Commission, at a great personal sacrifice will continue to act as Chairman.

The task to which the Executive of the Federation is to commit itself in this connection is one which it should be well qualified to execute. During the discussions upon C. S. Merit Bill No. 53 in 1918, and upon other occasions, the Federation has carried on extensive educational programs all through the country by means of a complete newspaper mailing list and by other agencies.

The Executive proposes to utilize this machinery in order to inform public opinion as to the basic moral principles involved

in the abolition of Patronage in Government purchasing and it is hoped that this public opinion will make itself felt in the House of Commons when the bill is introduced.

Enlarging the Executive

The opinion has been expressed that the Executive of the Federation as at present constituted is numerically weak. This weakness is apparent as the time draws near to deal with superannuation, and it also has been apparent at various times when the necessity of forming strong sub-committees has arisen; leading to the grave danger of miniature and hasty action, which would be obviated by a larger advisory directorate. It has been suggested that the Executive Committee should comprise a representative of each department to be nominated by the Dominion body representative of a department and in case no such body exists to be elected by the Executive. This subject will be brought up at the convention called for the second Monday in March.

Co-operation

The important subject of a federal act legalizing Dominion-wide co-operation will no doubt receive attention at the convention in March. The possibilities of such an act as a means of reducing the cost of living are not realized except by those who have been engaged in this laudable work in the various co-operative committees in the Service. To be able to buy coal, sugar, flour, etc., for the thousands of civil servants and national railway employees suggests advantages which will appeal to all civil servants who are on a fixed salary.

Executive meeting Dec. 9

Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Board of the Civil Service Federation, Tuesday evening, Dec. 9, 1919, at 91 Rideau St. Members present:—Messrs. Grierson,

Burling, Burns, Kehoe, Ryan (representing Mr. O'Connor), Forsyth and Tulley.

The president read a statement of the situation surrounding the appointment of the Collector of Customs at Vancouver with recommendations. It was decided to take no action in this regard other than to embody in a bulletin to all affiliated organizations, the findings of the executive board in this connection.

The president also presented a statement with regard to unanswered correspondence with the Government, pertaining to resolutions of the last convention such as, Superannuation, Trial Boards, Whitley Councils and consideration of bonuses prior to April, 1919. It was decided to simply take up these matters in the ordinary routine.

It was moved by Mr. Burns, seconded by Mr. Kehoe, that the secretary be empowered to make a special levy of 15 cents per member on each one of the affiliated organizations to assist in wiping out the Federation debt.—Carried.

Other business of a disultory and routine nature was discussed.

Office Cleaners' Pay

The Office Cleaners' Association, through their president, Madame Mercier, appealed their case for remuneration to the Federation and the following correspondence will indicate the action taken by the Executive:—

December 23, 1919.

Hon. A. L. Sifton,
Minister of Public Works,
Ottawa, Ont.

Sir:—

I have a case to present to you for your consideration, concerning the Office Cleaners' Association, which I think may be best done by enclosing copies of correspondence as follows:— letter from the Hon. Mr. Carvell to Madame Mercier, dated August 1, a letter from Mr. Geo. W. Yates to Mr. Ch. J. Tulley, dated Decem-