

WILL COMMENCE AT ONCE ORGANIZATION OF LABOUR BUREAUS

Official Statement is made of National system of Employment Offices throughout the Dominion.

PLANS ARE COMPLETED

Canada is to have a national system of employment offices, co-ordinated through the Federal Department of Labour, and the Minister of Labour, Hon. Gideon Robertson, proposes to undertake the work of organization at once. At the conference of premiers and employment officials questions as to policy were dealt with by the premiers and their ministers, while the employment officials and representatives of the Department of Labour worked out together the plan of organization for the system and the details of office routine, forms and records. Employment work on a national basis has been undertaken in very few countries as yet, and the work of organization presents formidable though not insuperable difficulties, especially in a country of Canada's extent. The new system will have a very good basis in the employment work that has already been done in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, as well as in the agricultural employment work of the western provinces. Quebec was the pioneer in this field in Canada, and for some years has had employment offices in the cities of Montreal, Quebec, and Sherbrooke. In the last two years Ontario has opened offices in about ten of the more important industrial centres, while the prairie provinces have been doing some employment work, chiefly with regard to farm labour. British Columbia has a difficult problem in distributing the floating labour in the shipping, lumbering, and mining industries, but the work is being taken in hand seriously by the provincial government, and an office has already been opened in Vancouver.

EXPERTS WHO ATTENDED.

Mr. McCoy, of the Department of Industries and Immigration of Nova Scotia, was the representative of his province at the employment conference. Ex-Controller Ainey, of Montreal, general superintendent of employment offices in Quebec province, was present, accompanied by Mr. Francis Payette, of the Montreal employment office. Dr. W. A. Riddell, Superintendent of Trades and Labour in Ontario, whose department is charged with employment work in that province, was also a delegate to the conference. The delegation from the West included Mr. Thomas Mulloy, Secretary of the Bureau of Labour of Saskatchewan, one of the foremost authorities on the labour situation in the western provinces, who also spoke for Manitoba; ex-Mayor Mitchell of Calgary, recently appointed superintendent of employment offices for Alberta, represented his province; and Deputy Minister of Labour McNiven represented British Columbia.

SHOWS INCREASE IN DOMINION POTATO CROP

The Census Department has just issued a statement of the comparative yields and values of potato, root and fodder crops in Canada for the years 1917 and 1918, both as for the Dominion and for the provinces. The statement shows a marked increase in 1918 over 1917, and is as follows for the whole of Canada:—

ESTIMATED AREA, YIELD, AND VALUE OF POTATO, ROOT AND FODDER CROPS, 1917 AND 1918.

Field Crops.	Area.	Yield per Acre.	Total Yield.	Average Price Per Bush.	Total Value.
	Acres.	Bush.	Bush.	\$ c.	\$
Potatoes, 1917.....	656,958	121.50	79,892,000	1 01	80,804,400
" 1918.....	735,192	143.50	105,579,700	0 98	103,636,100
Turnips, etc., 1917.....	218,233	290.75	63,451,000	0 46	29,253,000
" 1918.....	343,037	352.00	120,767,900	0 43	51,633,600
		Tons.	Tons.	Ton.	
Hay and clover, 1917.....	8,225,034	1.75	13,684,700	10 33	141,376,700
" 1918.....	10,544,625	1.50	14,595,500	16 25	238,042,800
Fodder corn, 1917.....	366,518	7.25	2,690,370	5 14	13,834,900
" 1918.....	502,069	8.25	4,203,150	6 20	26,053,125
Alfalfa, 1917.....	109,825	2.50	262,400	11 59	3,041,300
" 1918.....	196,428	2.25	445,600	17 75	7,998,800

The plan of organization drawn up by the Department of Labour was submitted to the provincial officials, and with their co-operation and criticism the whole organization scheme was outlined in the most minute detail. A local office will be opened in every important industrial centre, and in the larger cities it is proposed to have separate offices for unskilled labour and for skilled workers. These offices will report daily to a provincial clearing house the number of workers unemployed and the situations unfilled by trades, and on the clearing house personnel will fall the duty of matching up vacancies in one part of the province with unabsorbed workers in another locality. Upon the provincial organizations will be superimposed a federal system of two clearing houses, located probably at Winnipeg and Ottawa. When the provincial clearing houses have done their best to relate workers to positions in the provinces and find that there is still a deficiency or a surplus of labour in some parts, the federal clearing house will take up the work at this point and will try to locate the surplus labour or secure the labour required in other provinces. The clearing house at Winnipeg will function in this way for all the western provinces, while the Ottawa clearing house will perform a similar task in the east. By this plan the Dominion Government will have always at hand accurate information as to the demand and supply of labour in all parts of the country, the extent to which private industry is absorbing the returned soldiers and demobilized war workers, the volume of public employment that must be provided to take up any surplus, and the localities and trades in which such employment is required.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES.

In placing this machinery at the disposal of employers and employees, the Dominion and Provincial Governments are anxious that it shall be operated for the common interests of both classes, and to that end advisory committees, equally representative of employers and em-

ployees, will be connected with all the larger offices. A national advisory committee, to be called the Employment Service Council of Canada, will be organized at once to supervise the administration of the entire organization. The provincial governments will appoint one member each on this committee, and the Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment Department, the Great War Veterans, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the Trades and Labour Congress, the Railway War Board, the Railway Brotherhoods, and the Canadian Council of Agriculture will also be represented. The Department of Labour appoints three members, two of whom must be women. A provincial advisory committee to safeguard the interests of employers and employees will also be appointed in each province.

One problem which remains to be settled is the relation of the employment organization to the work of the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment and the provincial returned soldiers' commissions. There have been conferences, however, between the employment officials and the officials of the Department of Soldiers' Civil Re-establishment on this matter and the delimitation of the spheres of the two departments has been practically agreed upon. It is admitted by all who have given attention to the subject that a well-thought-out system of employment offices is indispensable in any programme of demobilization and reconstruction. The British system of labour exchanges has proven a most valuable instrument in organizing British labour to make its maximum contribution to war effort, and it is expected to play as important a part in the demobilization period. The United States Government is devoting much energy and money to the establishment of an efficient employment service. Canada, it is hoped, will soon have an employment organization that will materially assist employers and others to make the transition from a war to a peace basis with the minimum of inconvenience to all interested.

WORKING TO REPLACE EMPLOYEES FORMERLY IN MUNITION PLANTS

Department of Labour has conducted investigation through Canada Registration Board as to number of Reductions.

EXTEND LABOUR BUREAUS

The Department of Labour is rapidly preparing to assist in every possible way in placing men and women who are deprived of their employment by reason of the closing down of war industries. Weeks ago a careful survey was taken of all munition plants as to probable reductions in staff when war should cease. This investigation, conducted by the Canada Registration Board, of which Hon. Gideon Robertson, Minister of Labour, is chairman, showed that three-fourths of all the munitions workers in Canada were in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec. Outside these two provinces, the demand will probably absorb all the labour released. In Ontario and Quebec strenuous efforts are being made to cope with the situation. Conferences with representatives of the Manufacturers' Association, lumbermen, pulp and paper manufacturers, and railways have resulted in these large employers rendering all aid possible.

AGAINST WAGES REDUCTION.

Senator Robertson expresses satisfaction over the fact that employers generally endorse the suggestion and agree that there must not for the present at least be any reduction in wages. One of those large interests to-day issued notice to its affiliated firms that it had guaranteed to absorb 10,000 men and to maintain present standards of wages voluntarily. The province of Ontario has established eleven employment bureaus, and the province of Quebec three, under the provisions of the Employment Office Co-ordination Act passed at the last session of Parliament. It is planned to extend these Government bureaus to all provinces and to materially aid in assisting to find employment for both the civilian and the returned soldier. Under the legislation referred to, the Federal Government bears equally with the provinces the cost of operation and has a voice in policy and control. Each province has a direct administration, and a central clearing house is to be maintained at Ottawa under the direction of the Department of Labour.

Railways, lumbering and mining industries, manufacturing plants, banks, and large department stores are being canvassed to ascertain the number of employees enlisted overseas, whether they are to be re-employed on return, and to what extent present employees will be displaced. Thousands of our foreign labourers who have families in Europe, and were unable to return during the war, are now anxious to depart in search of their relations, from whom they have not heard for years. This exodus will further relieve the labour situation.