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BRANTFORD M.P.P. TALKS BACK

"I don't know what Mr. Halcrow means, playing fair with him," comments M. M. MacBride, M.P.P. for Brantford, in a reply to recent statements of the member for East Hamilton.

"I moved for his appointment as leaders of the Labor Party, and I have supported, both by vote and voice, every measure of legislation for labor in the platform of the labor party. I made it plain time and again that I could not support the Drury Government on its Hydro policy or on the Bacchus deal. The object in naming Mr. Halcrow leader was that the Labor party might hold consultations from time to time called by a leader who would not be subservient to any party other than the Labor party. The next thing I knew I received a letter from Mr. Rollo telling me that Mr. Halcrow had asked him (Rollo) to call a meeting of the Labor members. Of course, I did not attend. I knew such a meeting could only result in the old story of disagreement, and I then decided to cross the floor of the House. Perhaps I should have advised Mr. Halcrow. If that is the point upon which he bases I was not fair, we have a difference of opinion only, and not a difference in any matter of policy. I felt that the Toronto element had so often misrepresented my stand before, that I determined to take the step alone without an ythought of trying to influence any other member. Halcrow is the leader of the Labor Party.

"If he asserts his right to leadership, and calls a meeting of the real Labor forces of Ontario (entirely independent of that Toronto element), he will find labor all over Ontario practically solid behind him in support of Hydro and public ownership. If I were in his shoes, I would call such a meeting mighty quick. The other outfit have all but ruined the Labor party. Mr. Halcrow can bring back his prestige if he wishes to do so.

"If the Labor party had stood four-square in the recent Federal elections for protection and for public ownership o four national railways, we could have elected at least twenty members to Ottawa. The Government was unpopular, and the people were ready to vote for a change of any kind. The labor men who supported the Government did not do so because they were in favor of all the things the Government had done, but solely for fear of a free trade policy, for the danger to public ownership from Montreal capitalists desring to control our railways. Mr. Halcrow has the chance of his life to solidify the political labor movement. It is up to him.

"I am going to back Hydro to the limit, certainly. I prefer to do so through the Labor party, but if the Labor party persists n falling down on its own principles, then I shall have to support Hydro through whatever other means I may."

TORONTO HAS SOME STRIKES ON

Approximately 500 men, members of the Sheet Metal Workers' Union, the Plasterers and Plasterers' Helpers' Union have gone on strike Tuesday because of wage disputes.

The sheet metal workers have rejected the offer of 75 cents an hour made by the Sheet Metal Section of the Builders' Exchange. The 1921 rate was 90 cents and while the men do not demand a retention of this scale, they consider the reduction to 75 cents is too great for the present.

The plasterers' scale for 1921 was $1.00 an hour with 75 cents for plasterer's laborers. The plasterers' section of the Builders' Exchange have proposed reductions to 90 cents and 60 cents, respectively, and these proposals the unions have not only spurned, but are standing out for a continuance of last year's scale.

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ONTARIO COMPENSATION BOARD SHOWS ACCIDENT DECREASE

There were 45,121 accidents reported to the Ontario Workmen's Compensation Board in 1921, as against 54,851 in 1920, a decrease of 9,660. The number of fatal accidents decreased from 452 to 386. The daily average was 151 accidents reported in 1921, as against 183 in 1920.

The compensation awarded during 1921 amounted to $5,526,519 as against $7,076,439 in 1920, a decrease of $1,549,919. The high figures for 1920 were partly owing to the retroactive increase in death pensions under the amendments of that year.

The amount paid by the board for medical aid during 1921 was $662,793, as against $703,705 in 1920. This made the total benefits awarded during 1921, $6,189,313, as against a total of $7,780,145 in 1920. The average daily number of checks issued by the board during the year was 485 and the benefits awarded averaged $20,631 per day.

ONTARIO MINIMUM WAGE BOARD NEW ORDERS

New orders with respect to the institution of the minimum wage for female employees have been announced by the Minimum Wage Board.

Order No. 7, dealing with cities of more than 50,000, except Toronto, placed the minimum wage for experienced workers at $11.50 per week. Inexperienced adults start at $9.50, and after six months get $10.50. Young girls start at $8.00, and after six months $9, after 12 months, $10, and after 18 months, $11.

Order No. 8, which deals with cities and towns over 5,000, and less than 50,000, places the experienced worker's minimum wage at $11 per week. Inexperienced adults start at $9, after six months they get $10. Young girls start at $7, after six months $8.50, after 12 months, $10, and after 18 months $11.

Order No. 9 applies to all the province except in cities of more than 5,000. Experienced adults receive $10 to start, and inexperienced $8, after six months $9, and after 12 months $10. Young girls start at $6, and after the second six months, $7.50, after third six months, $9, and after that period $10.

The new regulations will come into effect on January 17.

NEW YORK HAS NEW YEAR'S STRIKE

There was little delay in starting New York's labor troubles of 1922. Employees of two towing and lighterage firms were idle today, following a rejection of wage reductions, and it was reported four other concerns faced a similar situation.

Declarations were made by leaders of boatmen's unions that relations between them and their employers might be broken at any time, and it was asserted in some quarters the situation might easily result in a general walkout of the workers manning harbor craft.

LIMA, PERU, UNEMPLOYMENT

The temporary closing of several factories in Lima has increased the already grave problem of unemployment. In recognition of this condition, the government has undertaken to furnish passage at the expense of the state to workers now lacking employment, who wish to move from Lima to other industrial centers of the country.

OTTAWA LABOR CONTROLLER INSTALS OFFICERS

Controller John Cameron was a visitor to the meeting of Ottawa Local 162, Ottawa Fire Fighters' Union. After making a brief address he installed the officers, recently elected, for the ensuing year. He was extended the congratulations of the firefighters on his success in his re-election. The officers installed were: President, Arthur Lee; vice-pres., Wm. Taggart; secretary, Donald Dear; treasurer, J. Archambault.

TORONTO BUILDING TRADES ARRANGING NEW SCHEDULE

Negotiations are no win progress between several of the Toronto building trades unions and their employers respecting ararngements for the coming year. The present agreements expire December 31. Progress o far has not been very rapid, but local union officials are satisfied to have negotiations proceed slowly and smoothly and predict no trouble. Up to date no move has been made by either side to alter the wage rates and working conditions existing under the present agreements.

OTTAWA EMPLOYS WOMAN DEPUTY

"It isn't an easy job," the only woman deputy returning officer in the last Municipal election confessed to a reporter. "I was so anxious to do everything correctly that I scarcely watched the election."

Mrs. Zoe Bratton carried her ballot box to the City Hall, Mr. Norman Lett, City Clerk, pronounced her a first-class returning officer.

Many men lacked enthusiasm in receiving their ballots from a woman's hands, and one was even heard to remark that "it wasn't a woman's job."

City Hall officials were more broad-minded, however, and appointed Mrs. Bratton, who is a widow, because of her good record in the last federal election, when she was also a deputy returning officer.

There were 270 voters on the list at the poll in Mrs. Bratton's home, and she found most of them old timers in the business of voting, compared with the number of new voters in other elections. A few of them were women, but the deputy returning officer was so busy attending to her duties that she had not yet observed whether most of the women entitled to vote came to the poll.

"There is no reason why women cannot act as deputy returning officers, provided they have confidence in themselves and do their work with proper care," Mrs. Bratton said. "I have enjoyed the experience."

BREAD PRICE GOES UP

Washington.—Following Attorney General Daugherty's announcement that profiteers would be probed, wholesale bakers in the nation's capital raised bread prices 1 to 2 cents a loaf. The cost of flour is blamed.

TORONTO POSTAL DISMISSALS TO BE REVIEWED

Word was received at Toronto that the question of retaining 200 ex-service postal workers of Toronto who were dismissed some time ago, is being looked into by Mackenzie King government as one of their first official acts.

On December 29, J. F. Marsh, secretary of the G.A.U.V. wired Mr. King and also Hon. Charles Murphy, the new postmaster-general, informing them of the fact that 200 temporary postal employees, all ex-service men, had been given notice that they would be laid off after the first of January. He asked that, in view of the present unemployment crisis, their services might still be retained.

Mr. Marsh has received a reply from Mr. Murphy, in the following words: "Regarding your telegram of the 29th relating to the laying off of temporary men in the postal service in Toronto, the question of retaining the services of temporary postal employees is being enquired into at once."

VANCOUVER LOOKS GOOD FOR BUILDING TRADES

Buildings permits for 1921 in the municipality of Point Grey, a residential suburb of Vancouver, amounted in value to $3,5516,800. This amount is $32,505 greater than for the combined totals for 1919 and 1920. Seven hundred and eighteen new dwellings were erected during the year.

"FAIR" PROFITS ARE MADE.

Washington.—In a wrangle in the house over the American valuation plan that some tariff advocates favor, Congressman Fordney, who is supporting the plan scored importers for profiteering. He said one Chicago department store charged $5 for a knite which can be bought in Germany for 9.6 cents.

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