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## DISCUSSION OF MAXIMUM HOURS, MINIMUM WAGES

(Continued from Page One)

he not entitled to a fair proportion of leisure time, should the worker be required to suffer the burden because of lack of foresight or business initiative on the part of the employer.

**Workers Entitled to Advantages.**  
During the war, when so many of the workers were withdrawn from the field of commodity production, by a system of organization and a spirit of co-operation commodity production was kept up, now that the conflagration is over the worker should at least derive some benefit from the experience gained from the necessity for organization, we should not permit our system to go back to the haphazard methods that were previously in operation. Then again the workers should be entitled to some of the advantages that accrue from our inventions, all of the inventions are the result of effort and study on the part of workers, and when I state this I mean worker in the broadest meaning of the term, and surely some of the benefits should be derived by them, it should not be possible for the returns of the brains of the universe to be cornered by a few, the advantage of the ideas and work should be shared in by all.

How far it will be necessary for us to reduce our hours or as to what should be shared in by all.

How far it will be necessary for us to reduce our hours or as to what should be the maximum number required is problematical, but at least we can rest assured that no one will suffer on account of lack of production if the hours suggested by the representatives of labor are adopted.

This brings us to the second part of our subject, probably to quite a section of the workers the most important because in industries in which we find female labor employed to any degree there is a necessity for regulations providing the minimum wages that shall be paid.

**Minimum Wage for Women Workers.**  
Probably the principle reason that makes this necessary is that to a degree the females employed in industry are not wholly dependent upon the wages they receive. In a number of instances we find the daughters of our business men taking employment merely to obtain spending money, they are not concerned about receiving sufficient wages that will ensure them a decent living neither do they have any consideration for the other female workers in the same industry, for we who have had the experience know that these are the people who regulate the wages that shall be paid to the rest of the employees. Recognizing the fact that persons are in business for the advantages to be gained from same we will readily understand that so long as it is possible for employers to secure help at a low figure they will not be prepared to pay that which is necessary to guarantee to the worker a decent living, and realizing that we will have those persons who only require money for clothes and amusement who will be prepared to work for the amount that will provide these things we will come to the point where we will agree that definite provisions stipulating the minimum amount of wages that shall be paid are required.

Not only does the system of working for spending money affect the wages paid to workers in industries where this is in operation but it reflects itself on the position of the workers in other industries.

There is another factor to this situation, there is no intention on the part of the class of workers I have referred to to remain long in industry, they are not concerned with the conditions of employment or the success of the industry consequently it is difficult to get any kind of an organization in industries where these people are employed which means individual arrangements are made with their accompanying disadvantages. After having considered the question this far I think we will agree that legislative enactments that will guarantee to these workers at least a living wage are imperative necessities.

**Periodical Trade Depressions.**  
So far I have dealt with this question as it applies when industry is normal but this condition does not always exist, we have periodical trade depressions when large numbers of workers are not required and as in all other cases those are retained who will work for the least wages, everything else being equal. Employers should not be permitted to take advantage of a situation such as this, the service to the community and the cost of reproduction is the same during these periods, and provision should be made that would give to the worker the necessary protection.

The foregoing will deal with the situation so long as we deal with it by hours and wages but there is a step further we should take, there should be a minima established comprising education, housing and sufficiency of living that should be guaranteed to every worker so long as there is a sufficiency produced to do this, we should not be required to go without while there are stocks on hand provided we are prepared to contribute our quota to reproduction.

In my next I will discuss why labor should be represented on our Municipal Boards.

(Seventh of a series of articles contributed to the Free Press by Walter Smitten, Secretary of the Alberta Federation of Labor.)

Self-important men seldom get out of the wage-workers' class.

## IMPERIAL OIL CO. INSTALLS PRIVATE BRANCH EXCHANGE

Business Increased Greatly Since Headquarters Transferred to This City

Owing to rapid expansion of business in Northern Alberta, the Imperial Oil Company has been obliged to install a private telephone exchange. The exchange was put into operation Tuesday morning and the number for day calls is 9361. This increase in business of the Company has been more rapid since the provincial headquarters was transferred to this city, and the management looks for still further increase with the development which is bound to take place in Northern Alberta.

## TEACHERS AS MEMBERS OF SCHOOL BOARDS

Alliance Passes Resolution Asking That Teachers Be Admitted To Board Meetings:

By John W. Barnett  
General Secretary-Treasurer, Alberta Teachers' Alliance

At the last annual general meeting of the Alberta Teachers' Alliance a resolution was passed: "that local alliances be recommended to request their school boards to admit their teacher or an advisory committee of teachers employed by them to school board meetings."

The object of the resolution is to enable representatives of the local alliances to take part in school board business on much the same basis as the elected members of the board, viz., to be present at meetings of the board, to serve on committees where the real work is done, especially the school management committee, and to take part in the discussion. The teacher is now disqualified for voting in Alberta by clause 101 of the School Ordinance, but there is a growing conviction that the time has come for this disqualification to be removed. The advisory committee suggested in the above resolution is but a compromise, pending action by the Department of Education to give voting powers to teachers serving on educational committees.

It is a mistake to suppose that such a change in the school law at the present time would be a revolutionary one. Neither would it create a precedent, information at our disposal shows that in many places for a number of years teachers have been serving as full-fledged members of education boards, not merely in an advisory capacity, but possessing the same powers as all the other members to initiate business, to take part in the discussion, and to vote on all matters.

The Education Bill of 1902, for England and Wales, Clause 17 (4), provides: "Any person shall be disqualified for being a member of an education committee who, by reason of having an office or place of profit, or having any share or interest in a contract or employment, is disqualified from being a member of the council appointing the education committee, but no such disqualification shall apply to a person by reason only of his holding office in a school or college aided, provided, or maintained by the council."

The educational authority in England and Wales is the equivalent of the Board of School Trustees in Canada, the difference being that the borough or county council is the educational authority; and the education committee, instead of being directly elected, is appointed by the council, its personnel consisting of members of the council together with a small number of co-opted members. The clause was not carried by the Government of the day in face of opposition. It was adopted without dissent by all parties in the House of Commons. That Parliament attached a good deal of importance to teachers becoming members of education committees is obvious from the fact that the insertion of this clause in the Education Act constituted a considerable

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## STEEL STRIKERS ACTING IN MOST ORDERLY MANNER

Investigating Committee's Report Tends to Discredit the Workers.

The one outstanding fact in the present steel strike is the peaceful disposition of the strikers. From all the strike centers reports continue to come that the men are conducting themselves in the most orderly manner.

For ten weeks they have been idle and in all that time there has been no disorderly conduct seen among any of the strikers in any of the strike centers. The only disorder that has occurred has been the result of mal-administration by forces that wear badges of civil authority and pseudo detective agencies.

The situation has been so palpably peaceable that those agencies that are supposed to start something in order to put the strike on the toboggan slide of the law, have practically thrown up their hands in disgust.

The United States Steel Strike investigating committee has made its report which turns out to be a clean bill of health for the United States Steel Corporation. It seems that the committee has believed the statements of the corporations' emissaries, while the testimony of the strikers is classed as radicalism. It thus places every reputable labor leader connected with the American Federation of Labor in the radical category, for all agitation among the steel workers has been conducted under the direction of organizers and secretaries that have the sanction of that institution. It pictures the United States Steel Corporation as a benefactor, that it furnished good homes for its workmen and pays them well.

The whole report tends to discredit the workers by insinuating that the real cause is not for higher wages, shorter hours and better working conditions. The Amalgamated Journal says "the workers must work out their own salvation by standing together industrially and politically. They can do this only by having a National political party that represents every phase of industry."

## WHAT THE MINER GETS AND WHAT HE IS ASKING FOR

A Few Facts Compiled To Show Justice of the Mine Workers' Demands.

The average number of working days per miner per year is 200.

The average number working days per miner per year, during the peak of wartime production, was 225.

During the peak year of war production, all war demands were met and a surplus of thirty million tons of coal piled up.

Labor cost per ton of coal since 1916 has increased 40 cents.

Selling price of coal at the mine has increased about \$1.75, or about 150 per cent.

The average wage rise is about 44 per cent, compared to an increased cost of living, the lowest figure for which is 76 per cent.

Coal production for the first nine months of this year, January to August, inclusive, fell off 25 per cent, as compared with 1918, a ratio of loss in tonnage equalling sixty working days. On the basis of that showing it is estimated that the average number of working days for all districts in 1919 would be 180.

The price of bituminous coal at tide-water for 1914, 1915 and 1916 was \$2.20. On February 1, 1919, it was \$4.10. On that date the government removed control of prices. In 1917, with no control, the price went to \$6.00.

In 1918 one miner was killed for every 266,000 tons of coal mined.

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