

Labor News From Coast to Coast

"OUR OVERSEAS COLUMN"

Secretariat Notices

Bureau Meeting of the International Federation of Trade Unions on Feb. 28-29 and March 1, 1924.

At the Bureau Meeting of the I.F.T.U. held on 28th and 29th of February and the 1st of March, the chief resolutions adopted were the following:

1. A new draft rules are to be submitted to the International Trade Union Congress of Vienna, the wording of these rules was discussed and fixed. Jounaux and Oudegeest were instructed to negotiate with the Labor and Socialist International on the subject of further action with regard to the question of the eight-hour day, international social legislation, and the mutual guarantee agreement. It was also decided that, on the occasion of the International Trade Union Congress, instead of as formerly, holding a conference of the International Trade Secretariats, the International Trade Secretariats shall be convened, with the reservation that no secretariat shall send more than three representatives. The agenda was fixed for the International Conference of Working Women, which is to take place in Vienna immediately before the International Congress of Trade Unions.

Negotiations are to be opened up with the National Federations for securing legal protection for foreign workers. The question of social attaches is to be added to the agenda of the Congress, and a British delegate is to be appointed rapporteur. A short report is to be published of the proceedings of the International Conference of Working Women at Vienna in 1923. Sassenbach is to be delegated to the Lettish Trade Union Congress of the 5th and 9th of March, and to the Yugoslavian Trade Union Congress on the 27th and 28th of April; and Jounaux to the World Congress of Bakery Workers, which will take place at Berno on the 23rd and 24th of April. The reply of the All-Russian Federation of Trade Unions on the subject of the united front was discussed. No answer is to be sent by the I.F.T.U.; the question will be referred to the next meeting of the Management Committee.

From the Intern'l. Congress at Vienna

The International Trade Union Congress, which meets at Vienna from the 2nd to the 7th of June next, will be held in the Penzerhaus, 20, Lothringenstrasse.

From the Intern'l. Trade Union M'v'm't.

Congress of Furriers/International. The Seventeenth Congress of the Furriers International will be held at Berlin from Monday, the 28th to Wednesday the 30th of June next. The most important subject coming up for discussion is amalgamation with the International Clothing Workers' Federation.

News From the Various Trades

BUILDING WORKERS

Germany.—After March 31st next, the building industry of Germany will be without any collective agreement. As seventy to eighty per cent. of the building workers are unemployed, the employers' demands are such that their acceptance would throw the unions back thirty years. They include, in fact, the lengthening of working hours being made up by 12 hours work in summer, the loss of holidays, the exclusion of apprentices from the agreement, no restriction on piece-work, etc. If the employers insist on their demands, there is a prospect of fierce conflict in the German building industry.

MINERS

Austria.—After months of struggle the Styrian miners have won a complete victory, with the exception of the Karl Colliery of the Alpine Mountain Company, where the strike is still going on. The adjustment to the cost of living index has been obtained, and also an increase in the children's bonus. The wage rates per shift are also to be revised. No reprisals will be taken on the strikers.

WOODWORKERS

Germany.—On February 15th the national wage agreement for the German wood industry expired. The negotiations for the conclusion of a new agreement provide for a working week of 45 hours. The employers originally demanded 54 hours per week, and 6 hours of overtime without any higher rate of pay.

News From the Various Countries

CUBA

In Cuba there is a Labor Movement which, although small so far as numbers are concerned, yet consists of class-conscious members. One of the strongest unions is the railwaymen's organization. The movement in general would gain in fighting capacity if there were more concentration. The fact that Cuba was represented only by a Government delegate at the previous International Labor Conferences at Geneva, is due to the local character of the organizations.

The Socialist Party and the trade unions issue an official journal jointly. The Labor Movement in the island adopts the standpoint of the I.F.T.U. and the Socialist Labor International.

GERMANY

After the introduction of the new currency, the gold basis was at once re-established when new wages agreements were concluded. Wages agreements on a gold basis have now been made for almost every branch of industry. With very few exceptions, these wages are not equal to those of pre-war days, and in some cases they show a very considerable reduction. Yet official statistics show that the most important foodstuffs have increased in price one-third since 1913-14. In the case of other articles (such as light, heating and clothing), the increase is even greater.

In three trades there has been a slight increase, namely painter, leather-workers and book-binders, but even in these cases the real wages of pre-war times have not been attained. Even those workers who are most favorably situated have suffered a reduction in the purchasing power of their wages of about one-third. It has been unfortunate for the workers that wages should have been fixed on a gold basis at a time when, owing to the terrible depreciation of the paper mark, the capacity of the trade unions to offer resistance has been reduced to its lowest point.

SWITZERLAND

The Executive Committee of the Swiss Federation of Trade Unions will meet at Olten on the 5th and 6th of March. It will discuss the program of activities for 1924, the Congress of the International Federation of Trade Unions at Vienna on June 2nd, the next International Labor Conference at Geneva, and also the budget for 1924 and the financial report for 1923.

SPAIN

Urged by the Labor representatives of the Institute for Social Reforms, the Spanish Directory has adopted a resolution to appoint a commission to study new Labor legislation. The Commission will first of all study legislation dealing with workmen's accidents, factory inspection, labor conflicts and the State authorities and public services which are concerned with Labor questions. The Commission consists of one representative of the employers, one representative of Labor and one representative of the other members of the Council of Administration of the Institute for Social Reforms. The Director of the Institute and two officials of the Ministry of War and the Admiralty will assist the Commission with technical information on questions concerning their departments.

The Compensation Act Stands

The provincial government has decided to drop for the present its Workmen's Compensation Board bill, which provided for a board of review to deal with "problem cases." This action is taken in deference to the views of Labor representatives, although the premier is still convinced that the proposed amendments are in the interests of the workers. He points out the great expansion of business done by the board, and the consequent enlargement of its organization will be imperative before any prolonged lapse of time. In the meantime, however, the act will be administered as in the past, without change.

This will be welcome news to the workers. Rightly or wrongly, they were suspicious of the new proposals, fearing the encroachments of politics and the possibility of legal entanglements. The board should be kept as free from complications of this kind as possible. Though there have been cases of dissatisfaction with past decisions, they have been comparatively few, and the agitation aroused by the prospect of any alteration in methods is sufficient to establish the popularity of the board with those whom it is especially intended to benefit.

Workers Present Legislative Program

Ontario Executive of Trades Congress of Canada and Executive of Labor Educational Association Meet Premier and Cabinet Ministers

The provincial executive committee of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, and the executive committee of the Labor Educational Association of Ontario, interviewed the Ontario government recently and laid before the cabinet council the program of desired legislation, based upon the decisions of the annual conventions of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada and the Labor Educational Association of Ontario.

The workers' delegation comprised James A. Sullivan of Hamilton; Jas. M. O'Brien, of Windsor; E. Ingles, of London; James P. Marsh, Joseph Marks, Wm. Varley and W. T. Powlesland of Toronto; and E. W. A. O'Dell, of Hamilton. They were received by Hon. T. Howard Ferguson, premier; Hon. W. H. Nickle, attorney-general; Hon. John Martin, minister of agriculture; Hon. J. Lyons and Hon. C. McCrea.

1. Definite action to give effect to such decisions of the annual conferences of the international labor organizations as have been considered to come within the jurisdiction of the provincial legislature.

This includes:—

(a) Enactment of an eight-hour day law for industrial and commercial undertakings.
(b) Legislation for the further protection of women and children in industrial and commercial undertakings and agriculture.
(c) Co-operation with other provinces so as to make possible ratification, by Canada, of these draft conventions and recommendations.

(d) Bringing of all young persons, irrespective of sex, under the minimum wage act.

2. Enactment of legislation making compulsory the insertion of fair wage clause in all contracts given by the government or any commission under its direction or in works aided by government funds, and, in the meantime, the fair wage resolution of the legislation, passed in the year 1906, be put in effect.

Immigration and Colonization

3. (a) All placements of immigrants to be made through the provincial government employment service.

(b) Canadian citizens be given equal opportunity in any provincial colonization scheme.

Unemployment

4. That immediate steps be taken to relieve the existing unemployment.

Workmen's Compensation Act

5. To so amend said act that all workers, no matter for whom they may be employed, shall be allowed the benefit of compensation.

Mothers' Allowance Act

6. Amend said act to include widows with one child.

Election Act

7. (a) Proportional representation.

(b) Election day a public holiday.

(c) One man, one vote.

(d) Abolition of property qualifications for voting on money by-law.

Stationary and Hoisting Engineers' Act

8. For the appointment of more inspectors, and that section of the act dealing with the registration of steam plant owners be enforced as a means of revenue for the department and a check on the operators of said plants.

Factory Act

9. That the government of Ontario be asked to appoint enough inspectors so that the Factory act can be properly enforced in the planing mills, woodworking plants and various other factories.

One Man Cars

10. That the government be requested to enact legislation requiring a motorman and conductor on all cars.

Act to Define the Vocation of Barbers

11. Stated period of apprenticeship. Standard of sanitation as desired by the barbers in the interest of public health and sanitation.

Juvenile Employment

12. Request the government and school authorities to provide for the appointment of vocational officers with junior divisions, officers of the employment service of Canada, to furnish the fullest possible vocational guidance to those leaving school to become wage earners.

Municipal Act

13. Municipal act be amended so that the practice of competition between the various towns and cities of location of industries by granting a fixed assessment, and subsidies be done away with.

Ontario Savings Office

14. The Ontario Savings Office has met a long-felt want of the working people of this province, who have invested their savings knowing that it

is secure. We request the government to continue with the Ontario Savings Office.

Other Matters

That the federal and provincial governments make provisions for the care of those unemployed so the municipalities shall not be expected to maintain persons who have been induced to come to Canada by alluring advertisements of the government.

In addition to the above, we request legislation of the following subjects.

Amendments to Factory act, reducing the maximum hours for women and children to forty-eight hours per week.

Provisions for the rehabilitation of injured industrial workers under the Workmen's Compensation Board authority.

The enforcement of the Building Trade Protection act.

Regulation of electric wiring construction.

Labor representation on appointed commissions, and especially the Hydro Electric commission.

Reiteration of our demands for public ownership and operation of all public utilities.

We strongly support the present Adolescent School Attendance act and request its fullest application.

Toronto St. R'ly. Men Sign Contract

Provision for Continuation of Present Wage Scale for Two Years

Toronto, Ont.—The Transportation Commission and the street railway employees have reached an agreement which provides for the continuation of the present scale of wages for the next two years. The demands of the men that they be given two weeks vacation a year with pay, that each crew taking out a car be guaranteed a full eight hours pay, and the shop repair and shed men be given an increase of five cents per hour was not conceded. The only change in the agreement provides that "extra" men will be able to earn a minimum of \$29.50 per month.

Head of Union for 15 Years; Resigns

Mr. J. Valentine Quits as Holders' President—May Get \$2,000 Pension

Hamilton, Ont.—Mr. Joseph F. Valentine, for upward of fifteen years president of the International Molders' Union of North America, has resigned on account of failing health. 1st Vice-president Michael Keough has been named by the Executive Council to succeed Mr. Valentine. J. H. Barnett, of Toronto, for many years 2nd International Vice-president now becomes 2nd Vice-president. Mr. Valentine, who succeeded the late Mr. Martin Fox as president of the I.M.U., has not had good health for some years. A referendum of the entire membership will be taken, the executive having recommended that Mr. Valentine be given a retiring pension of \$2,000 per year.

New Contract at Indian Cove Mine

Sydney Mines, N.S.—Robert Baxter and Dalrymple, U.M.W. of A. officers, were in town recently in connection with labor questions concerning the employees of the Indian Cove Coal Company. It is understood the miners of the Indian Cove Company have signed a new contract with the U.M.W. along similar lines to that drawn up at the wage conference at Montreal recently. The new wage contract has been accepted by about 125 miners employed with the Indian Cove Company.

Living Cost Considered by Wage Board

(Continued from page 1)

Members of the board were anxious that an agreement might be reached that would be recognized by all parties concerned.

In Other Cities

Mr. Jennings pointed to the fact that in agreements made by the street railwaymen's union with the cities of Edmonton, Calgary, Windsor, Guelph and other municipalities only the union was recognized in the agreement and, but two parties were mentioned.

Reference was made to an agreement between the street railwaymen and the city of Port Arthur, which brought the reply from Mr. Jennings that the association did not have any agreement with Port Arthur.

Mr. Jennings declared emphatically that he was not advocating the closed shop.

Some discussion occurred as to which agreement was actually being considered by the board of arbitration, and it was suggested that the board adjourn to such time that all parties were supplied with copies from the department of the minister of labor. This course was not favored, however, and various agreements and proposed agreements were submitted, including exhibit number 1, being the original demands of the men; exhibit number 2, the existing agreement between the city of Fort William and between number 966; number 3, agreement known as number 24025 and number 4 as agreement 24028.

Several clauses were under discussion from the standpoint of the men. The proposed agreement was submitted by Mr. Jennings, and reference was made to clauses which were duplicated by clauses in the various agreements under consideration.

Tend to Dishonesty

Mr. Jennings dealt at some length with the question of the privilege granted employees to ride on street cars free of charge, when said employees were not in uniform. The management, he stated, were unwilling that this concession should be enjoyed any longer. He thought the move was the first step toward dishonesty and in view of the clause permitting such privilege having existed in previous contracts, he thought that it should be continued in the new agreement. It was everywhere recognized on the North American continent, he contended.

Uniform suits should be issued each year on or before the first of May, and overcoats every second year on or before November 1st, it was stated.

The board then adjourned until the next afternoon.



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Jas. H. H. Ballantyne
Deputy Minister

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Confer on New Scale Fair Wage

Representatives of Various Labor Unions Discuss Question With Executive Council

Montreal.—Representatives of National, International and Catholic and National Labor unions waited on the executive committee of this city and discussed a new scale wage that was recently fixed by the city. It was pointed out by representatives of the unions whose members were affected by the scale, that the one estab-

lished by the city did not agree with the minimum wage agreements the unions had made with outside contractors.

Mr. Achille Latrielle, fair wage officer, pointed out to the delegation that they did not keep their agreements as regards keeping him posted regarding wage changes. If city contractors were not paying the wage agreed upon, the city authorities should be notified at once.

The executive committee agreed to revise the wage scale in collaboration with the union men and a new scale will be drawn up in a few days.

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