

Ontario Government Sessional Programme

FEDERATION PRESIDENT SAYS UNEMPLOYMENT IS CONTROLLABLE

Announcing himself as unqualifiedly opposed to any form of compulsory insurance, Samuel Gompers, veteran president of the American Federation of Labor, branded unemployment as a "hand made" and "premeditated." He voiced this belief in an address at the second day's sessions of the National Federation. President Gompers said unemployment is a "controllable problem" and declared the workers wanted employment and not insurance. "If we were to have compulsory employment insurance," he said, "the working people would be subjected to rules and regulations and investigations and supervision of almost every act of their lives. It would open the door to the government agents and agencies who would spy and pry into the very innermost recesses of the home life."

Prof. Paul N. Milsoyk, former minister of foreign affairs in the Russian provisional government, was applauded by the delegates when he declared in a speech earlier in the day against United States participation in the proposed international economic conference at Genoa. His opposition, he stated, is based on the fact that Bolshevist delegates have been invited to the conference. United States participation, he declared, would tend to strengthen the Bolshevist power and mitigate against the quick return to "economic normalcy" on both sides of the Atlantic.

GLACE BAY VENUE FOR HOT RESOLUTIONS

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The Harbor Local, 4,525, hereby declares that if Bolshevism spreads and gets a firm hold in the mining regions of Nova Scotia the blame can be directly placed upon Hon. W. L. Mackenzie King, Premier of Canada, and upon the Minister of Labor, Hon. James Murdoch, because of their hostility to the welfare of the people of Canada in their servile obedience to frenzied financiers of the British Empire Steel Corporation.

On February 10 a referendum of the 12,000 coal miners of Nova Scotia will be taken on the question of accepting or rejecting the award made by the Gillen conciliation board.

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WINNIPEG HAS POSTAL MEN IN SESSION

Elected representatives of Postal Service organizations meet in Winnipeg on Feb. 6 to discuss a Dominion-wide Federation of postal employees. Mr. W. E. B. Mann and Mr. R. S. Bartlett (Toronto) represents the Dominion Postal Clerks' Association. The other organizations, each of which had three delegates, are the Dominion Federation of Letter Carriers, the Railway Mail Clerks' Federation, and the Amalgamated Postal Workers. The proposed amalgamation is called the Canadian Federation of Postal Employees. It has been approved in a tentative scheme, and more concrete affiliation principles will be determined at the meeting.

Representatives of the Dominion Trade and Labor Congress expect to meet Federal Government members next week with their annual request for desirable labor legislation. The main items of this year's request are the enactment of legislation carrying out the decisions of the International Labor organization. Unemployment insurance will also be asked.

A Johannesburg despatch to Reuters says that the general council of miners' union at Germiston is now considering the action of the committee of the striking gold miners of that city in demanding the appointment of new leaders as well as the appointment by the government of a court of arbitration to settle the dispute. A proposed visit to Premier Smuts has consequently been postponed. Meanwhile, the new position is overshadowing every other phase of the strike.

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ANTICIPATED LEGISLATION INCLUDES ANTI-COMBINED LAW HYDRO-RADIAL MATTERS TO BE ALSO FEATURED

Anti-combine legislation will be included in the Drury government program at the coming session of the legislature. An outline of the proposed bill was submitted to the pre-session caucus of government members at the parliament building and the general principle endorsed.

During war years and especially after the appearance of the board of commerce the rights of the province of Ontario to act through the department of the attorney general in instances of restraint of trade or palpable extortion, have been in doubt. The rights and the responsibilities of the federal authorities to deal with such matters were advanced as overriding those of the province. It is understood that the legislation tentatively submitted to the caucus places beyond dispute the rights of the province attorney general to act.

Hydro-radial legislation it is understood, was submitted in general outline, and approved by the caucus, although the matter was not definitely disposed of, and will be discussed again at a later gathering of government forces. In effect the proposed bill is drafted along the lines intimated by Premier Drury at Gloucester last summer when he stated that the municipalities would be given the authority to go ahead on their own responsibility and construct hydro-radial railways, without government endorsement of bonds.

In connection with the same legislation, the government will, it is said, permit of operation of municipal radials by the present provincial hydro commission, only the commission must not be named as such. When the municipalities appoint their operating commissioners they must name them individually. They can select part or all of the present hydro commission, including the chairman, Sir Adam Beck, and appoint outsiders to sit with them on the permanent board.

Hon. Manning Doherty, minister of agriculture, outlined various legislative proposals from his department including minor amendments to the rural credits act, details of which have already been published.

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When the attempt to reduce costs, including wages, resulted in numerous strikes, one of which, that of the shipyard joiners, lasted nine months. Whether these strikes represent the views of both sides in the dispute to the urgent necessity of introducing godwills instead of strife into their mutual relations in order to save their industry, or whether the loss of contracts to the continent and great unemployment demonstrated the necessity of lower costs, it is a fact that there is a new spirit of give-and-take in this industry as well as in others. Wages have been substantially reduced, the cost of steel is lower, but it is said there is even yet too wide a margin between quotations and the prices which shipping companies can pay and earn dividends.

CANADIAN MADE BOOTS HAVE THE CALL

and shoe industry of this country that should be of great satisfaction to Canadians," remarked H. R. Ponssette, director, commercial intelligence section of the Department of Trade and Commerce at Ottawa, in addressing the third annual meeting of the Shoe Manufacturers' Association of Canada, "and that is that it is almost entirely Canadian; in fact, I understand that it is entirely so, and that the only American factories which have been established in this country in recent years have both passed under Canadian control."

Mr. Ponssette went on to tell of investigations he had made among retailers recently as to where they were purchasing boots and shoes being one of the particular commodities looked into. The result of that investigation should be gratifying, he said, to boot and shoe manufacturers of this country, for he found very generally that there had been an abandonment of American-made goods in favor of Canadian-made articles. Twenty years ago apparently about 50 or 60 per cent., or even 70 per cent of requirements of the trade were purchased in the United States, whereas today 90 per cent of shoes handled were said to be Canadian.

Boston.—Despite the business depression, the Boot and Shoe Workers' union has been making gains in membership in the last three months, reports Secretary-Treasurer Baine. Through the union has been under heavy expense in resisting attempts of manufacturers to destroy the organization. "In certain parts of the United States and Canada, the treasury shows a substantial balance.

Made Prisoners. The Poplar board of guardians—local officials responsible for levying and distributing relief for the poor in the metropolitan borough of Poplar—were locked in their board room by a crowd of unemployed persons who demanded larger doles. A number of newspapermen shared the imprisonment of the guardians. The captors effectually prevented the use of the telephone or other means of communication to summon relief. The guardians recently cancelled their doles, but the Ministry of Health promptly notified them that this was illegal, and they reverted to their former rate of payments. Their plea of Government pressure was rejected by the unemployed, who seized the entire room, and hoisted a red flag on the roof, declaring they would not give up until their demands were granted.

Poplar is a remote section of East London, and it has not yet been learned how the release of the board was effected.

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ALBERTA TO ESTABLISH LABOR BUREAU

An act to establish a Bureau of Labor in the Provincial Government is one of the pieces of legislation to be brought before this session of the legislature. The bill will be introduced by Hon. Alex. Ross, minister of public works, under whose direction the new department will be administered.

The new department will fill a long-felt need of Labor and is one of the measures that has been sought by Labor for a number of years, as it was felt that no social legislation could be successfully administered without such a department. The act, as prepared for introduction by Mr. Ross reads as follows:

An Act to Establish a Bureau of Labor.

HIS MAJESTY, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Alberta, enacts as follows:

1. This Act may be cited as "The Bureau of Labor."

2. There shall be a Labor Bureau, consisting of a Commissioner of Labor and such other officers, clerks and employees as may be necessary for the proper conduct of the Branch.

3. The Commissioner of Labor and the said officers, clerks and employees shall be appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council and shall be under the immediate control of the Minister of Public Works.

4. The salaries of the officials of the Branch and the expenses of the administration thereof shall be paid out of such moneys as may from time to time be appropriated by the Legislature for that purpose.

5. The Commissioner—

- shall perform or superintend the performance of such work relating to the collection, assortment, systematization and publication of information and statistics affecting labor as may be directed by the Minister of Public Works;
- shall have the administration of such Acts as may be assigned to the Branch by Order in Council and
- shall discharge such other duties as may be from time to time delegated to him by the Minister of Public Works.

NOVA SCOTIA MINERS TO RESUME WORK

Following a conference of the general superintendents, including those from Sydney Mines and the mainland here, it was announced that all the collieries of the British Empire Steel Corporation would resume active production.

These will include the collieries which had been closed down for an indefinite period before the end of the year. It would also include the mainland collieries in the Springhill and Acadia districts.

With the opening of the mines on full time there will also be a resumption of work at the forges, foundries and shops of the company at Glace Bay. Most of the coal will be banked.

This announcement of the company was no less gratifying than surprising, and will go a long way towards clearing up the situation. It is not probable that the company and the United Mine Workers may yet get together for the purpose of drawing up a new wage scale which will be satisfactory, at least, as a working basis for all concerned.

The output of the Cape Breton collieries of the Dominion Coal Co. for the month of January was only 129,086 tons, the smallest since anti-bellum days. The days the company put a thirty-three and a third per cent wage cut into effect, the output of the mines dropped about one-third and the decrease has been assisted by many idle days due to the lack of demand for coal.

Neil MacKinnon, one of eight men arrested as alleged ring leaders of the recent New Aberdeen riots, was granted an honorable discharge by Judge A. G. MacLean, the Crown authorities admitting a mistake of mistaken identity.

Leroy Thompson, a 14-year-old boy who is also charged with inciting the riot, was released by the judge on his own recognizance, in custody with his mother.

Edward White, Wm. Tarbot, Fred Tarbot, John Doucette, and Dan MacKinnon were all released on \$600 bail, each to appear for preliminary hearing on Wednesday next.

Conditions are slowly but surely improving in wholesale and retail circles throughout Canada. The movement, although slight, has been noticeable in many lines since the middle of December and there are those who forecast a steady improvement from now on, states the Weekly Trade Report of the Canadian Credit Men's Trust Association.

Eastern advices, including those from Montreal, Quebec, Toronto and Brampton say that wholesalers are, as a whole, receiving more orders from country points. Little change is noticeable in retail trade in large cities.

Collections are still somewhat slow. Assignments and compositions are on the decrease.

Reports from Winnipeg, the west indicate that wholesalers, while seeing hopeful signs in increased orders, say that if the improvement is to take concrete shape, business must pick up faster than at present. In Manitoba and Saskatchewan, although conditions are improving, business is still poor compared with a year ago. Retail trade has been slow during the past week. In Manitoba considerable alarm is manifested in business circles on account of the probable imposition of a provincial income tax said likely to amount to one-half that demanded by the provincial government. A movement is on foot to bring such pressure upon the Government as may induce such legislation to be abandoned.

British Columbia reports indicate a better business outlook with wholesalers, manufacturers and retailers all optimistic regarding the 1922 outlook.

It is evident that the King government does not intend to have recourse to the Mounted Police where difficulties with labor arise. Illustration of this policy is the fact that in recent labor troubles at Glace Bay, the government was bombarded with requests to dispatch a squadron of the police force. The answer was that, if the civil authorities were inadequate to the situation, they could have recourse to the local militia, though, in such an event, the cost would be on the municipality. The decision in this case as regards the use of the police is likely to be a precedent which will be followed.

The workers' representatives say that under the former system, grievances were adjusted amicably without loss of time and without expense and legal formalities. Under the new plan, they say, they have made it so plain that the workers desire the restoration of the former system of discussion of industrial matters through regional or national boards composed of workers and employers that the plan has been practically agreed to.

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BASIC WAGES FROM THE MONTREAL STAR

The attempt to establish a basic wage in Australia seems to be ending in failure. New South Wales, which was the leader in the experiment, fixed the basic wage for male adults at \$5 a week. The example was followed by Queensland, but South Australia never legalized the finding of its basic wage tribunal, while Western Victoria passed an act, although such measures were introduced in the legislatures.

It was found that under the fixed basic wage costs of manufacture were much higher in New South Wales than in Victoria. The States which failed to establish the basic wage could send cheaper goods into other States and also an advantage in export. Moreover the basic wage system materially increased the cost of living by increasing the cost of production and aggravated unemployment by reducing the purchasing power of unskilled labor. Even the New South Wales Parliamentary Labor party and the United Laborers' Union have demanded repeal of the legislation. It is admitted that many mines have been closed by high basic wages. The situation became so serious that the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth refused to give effect to the recommendations of a Federal Appeal Tribunal on the ground that the industries could not give the wages prescribed and remain solvent.

It is explained that the industrial unions, when dissatisfied with a State award, arranged by federating with inland inter-State bodies to have the dispute extended beyond the borders of the State in which it arose and thus sought under federal jurisdiction. From these manoeuvres such difficulty arose that the Prime Minister of the Commonwealth and the State Premier have agreed to abolition of the New South Wales Board of Trade and Queensland and South Australian wage fixing tribunals. In place of the State Boards a Federal Industrial Court will be established to determine the basic wage and standard hours of labor in all industries, but will take no authority over State employees and State undertakings. It is believed that when such federal legislation is enacted the whole basic wage system will be abandoned and that the new tribunal will be content to fix such wages as industries can afford.

Australia goes from experiment to experiment in Labor legislation, and a regulation of industries, but never finds the perfect system. Compulsory arbitration has failed again and again. Wage courts have been defied after-ly by workers and employers. Measures which seemed to promise industrial peace have backfired, aggravated industrial warfare and widened

the area of conflict. There is something human in nature which resists coercion even by governments and when workers are determined to resist an award the resources of civilization are never exhausted. When all is said, the Lemoine Act of Canada has produced as good results as any measure of industrial legislation that ever was enacted. And that Act secures its results as any measure of industrial legislation that ever was enacted. And that Act secures its results primarily and chiefly by conciliation and conference. One is reluctant to admit that a whole community must suffer by a prolonged quarrel between miners and mine owners and their employees, or through the interruption of any service which vitally affects the daily lives of multitudes of people. But at least no dependable machinery to compel industrial peace has yet been discovered. There are evidences, however, that the costs of industrial conflict are being more clearly realized alike by employers and workers, and that all are setting a higher value upon the human relation in industry. What is gained by conference and conciliation is generally more lasting than any victory achieved by compulsion and in increasing recognition of the fact lies perhaps the best hope of a more stable and a happier relation between employers and employed in the future.

DOMINION COAL CO. WILL ACCEPT AWARD

The Dominion Coal Company stands prepared to accept the award of the Gillen conciliation board which recently investigated the wage dispute between the Nova Scotia Coal Company and their employees, and make the rates of pay therein retroactive to January 2, General Manager E. P. Merrill, notified the United Mine Workers.

Mr. Merrill's letter, which has been delivered to President Robert Baxter and Secretary J. B. McLachlan of the United Mine Workers, provides, as the only condition, that the miners shall signify their acceptance of the Gillen award on or before February 5.

As the miners' referendum on acceptance or rejection of the Gillen award is to be held on February 10 ample time for the miners to reach a decision is provided.

The wage cut imposed by the company on January 1, 1922, was raised by thirty-three per cent. The award of the Gillen board abates this reduction by five to ten per cent.

The company, in order to close contracts for the sale of coal, desires to enter into a new contract with its employees by February 15, the same to be final until November 30, 1922, Mr. Merrill states.

Items of Interest from Overseas

CLYNE'S REVIEW. Personalities continue to be a feature of the present political oratory in the United Kingdom.

Replying to a statement attributed to Lord Rickenhead, the top high chancellor, last week, that Labor ignored such tendencies as have been revealed in financial methods of the Poplar borough of London when their councillors, defying all higher authority, went to prison rather than levy county rates in their area, on the ground that poor-law relief was the local burden to the breaking-point, Right Hon. J. R. Clynes, chairman of the parliamentary Labor party and former food controller, declared that "Poplar finance is Christian care for the poor-law relief, which is the spending of public money lavishly on wicked objects abroad, and paying some totally useless ministers at home. Poplar councillors may be wrong, but they did do to jail for their beliefs, though the lord chancellor escaped, despite his resistance to disloyalty in organizing breaches of the law in resistance to the Crown forces."

Touching on the Labor party's extensive program for municipalities in the London council elections, Mr. Clynes remarked that some of these ideas may be ahead of time, but they did not forebode a revolution so terrible as to scare people who had submitted to conditions of profiteering, overcrowding and bad service which the government had tolerated.

Continuing the Labor leader said: "The post of lord high chancellor is an ancient, exalted office, but it is now held by a person who is determined not to waste his gifts for security in dealing with his Labor opponents. In a high degree he displays the professional attitude of abusing the other side when he has no case."

RECONSIDERS RATES. The Municipal Guardians of the London Borough at Poplar, at a hastily convened meeting, decided to postpone the payment to unemployed men of 4s 6d a week for men and wife and six shillings for each child, together with one hundredweight of coal or the equivalent in cash. The board will reconsider its position. The step was prompted by the receipt of a warning from the Ministry of Health to the effect that the scale being paid was unlawful. The scale decided upon caused a sensation when it was announced by the board. It was considerably more than allowed by the Ministry of Health and even greater than the sum demanded by unemployed men in Poplar.

GOSSIPING ELECTED. In the newly-formed British Transport and General Workers Union, Harry Gosling was elected president with 23,724 votes. His closest competitor was T. McLean, who had 24,337 votes. The other candidates for the position were W. J. Stone, 24,945; C. Bird, 23,885; L. T. Nelson, 668.

Ernest Bevin was elected general secretary, with 24,842 votes. P.

Thompson received 7,672, and G. Porter 2,489.

Stanley Hirst topped the poll for the financial secretariatship with 47,278 votes. Others who went to the polls were H. W. Kay, 13,552; Sam Marsh, 17,256; J. McCarthy, 2,936; F. H. Whitfield, 1,733; and J. J. Powlesland, 1,486.

UNEMPLOYED ACTIVE. Fifty unemployed men rushed a meeting of Woolwich Guardians and barricaded the room. The police were called and were forced to use a battering ram before they could gain entrance to the room. The invaders were chased around the room and finally dispersed.

RAILWAY DISPUTE. The Irish railway managements and employes have failed to reach an agreement, and the Ulster Minister of Labor, J. M. Andrews, has been urged to return to Dublin to renew the efforts for a settlement with Joseph McGrath, minister of labor in the Dail cabinet. If the negotiations definitely collapse a general strike throughout Ireland will go into effect on Feb. 15.

Sixty-nine passengers on the steamship Coedig who were laded at Queenstown are unable to depart, as no trains are running from either Queenstown or Cork.

TREATED UNFAIRLY. Reuters' Melbourne correspondent says that the British members of the crew of the Commonwealth higer Moreton Bay are complaining of unfair treatment at the hands of the Australian Seamen's Union. Because many Australian seamen are unemployed, the union refused the Britishers admission to membership, and they were replaced on the Moreton Bay by an Australian crew. They have been granted free passages home, but will not draw wages during their enforced period of idleness.

LABOR SUPPORTS. P. F. Loughlin, Minister of Lands for the State of New South Wales, told a meeting that the full weight of the Labor party was behind the movement to organize the Australian Commonwealth into 16 new states, says a Reuters cable from Sydney.

PLANS SURVEY. The Labor Council has appointed a committee of inquiry to consider the cause which are declared to be impeding the maximum production in the United Kingdom from the standpoint of the interests of the community. The committee will also suggest a Labor policy for those industries to which nationalization could not for the present be applied, such a policy to have regard to the efficiency of the industry, the welfare of the producers, and the best interests of the consumers.

FARMING LESSONS. The dominions want brains, and a farming course should be introduced in the curriculum of all public schools, said William Hamilton Fyfe, headmaster of Christ's Hospital, at West Hoveham, in offering a solution

of the emigration problem as it exists in the United Kingdom. He advocated a wider copying of the example set at Horsham, where boys had a chance to attend 50 pig, the only solution to the unemployment problem. With this sort of training, he said, the dominions would get the type of emigrant desired, and an easy way would be provided to one of the few callings not overcrowded either at home or in the dominions.

FORGET SENIORITY. In dealing with discharges which are expected to be frequent with the application of the Washington agreement suspending naval construction, the authorities at the national dockyard at Portsmouth have decided to ignore the seniority rule, making retention in the service depend upon efficiency. The workmen, however, have decided to demand that the treasury grant a gratuity to all long-service men who are discharged.

SHIPBUILDING SLACK. The world-renowned shipbuilding industry on the Clyde has suffered a period of stagnation during 1921, from which there seems to be no immediate escape, says G. R. Johnson in a review of Scotland's industry and trade in 1921. As one expert says, it has been a year of clearing off old contracts, and new work has been very slow in coming forward.

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CHANCES POOR. Right Hon. J. H. Thomas, parliamentary secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, who recently secured £5,000 damages for libel against the Commercial Weekly Journal published in the interests of the Third Internationalist party by the executive of the Communist party in Great Britain, has applied to the courts for a receivership, but as the hands of a receiver for the debtors holders, Mr. Thomas's chances for setting anything are remote.

English and Welsh railway companies are applying to the National Wages Board for a reduction in wages and a variation in the working hours of their employes. A meeting of the railwaymen's union has been called, and it is anticipated that any moderate proposals will be acceptable to the members.

HAMILTON WAGE CUTTERS ACTIVE. The clothing manufacturers of Hamilton have notified their employes of a ten per cent reduction in wages, effective this week.