

their purpose. Shortening of hours would reduce export possibilities at a time when more export was needed.

Walter C. Betts, representing about 300 Montreal manufacturers, who had joined for the purpose of expressing their views before the commission, presented the following recommendations:—

1. That any scheme of industrial councils depending on highly organized employers and employees was inapplicable to many Canadian industries, owing to decentralization and diverse conditions, but that various schemes existed in Great Britain which might with advantage be partially applied in Canada.

2. Recognizing the need for better relations between employers and employees, they suggested that the Royal Commission recommend to the government the establishment by every employer of a system within his plant for bettering such relations by friendly and intimate discussion; that where such discussion proved inadequate to settle difficulties, district courts of appeal be formed for either side, whose decisions should be final, such courts to be composed of two representatives of each side and a Judge of the Superior Court; that a national industrial board be established, whose functions should be advisory to the district courts in matters of national importance.

3. That as this would provide adequate means for settling all industrial disputes and automatically end the necessity for strikes or lockouts which were detrimental to the whole community, legislation should be enacted making these illegal.

4. That in order to make a continuous survey of industrial conditions, the government from time to time send out questionnaires to employers to secure data for such survey, and the same with labor unions, each to be held responsible for the accuracy of their reports. To make this effective it was submitted that all labor organizations should be incorporated.

5. The committee was unalterably opposed to strikes amongst federal, provincial or civic employees, especially those engaged in protection of life, health and property, which would create intolerable conditions, while recommending arrangements for hearing and redressing any grievances.

Maritime Provinces

A session of the commission, which was held in Moncton, N.B., on June 2nd, was characterized by lack of interest on the part of both employees and employers. Four labor representatives and three manufacturers appeared before the commission. Conditions were described as being satisfactory. There was no opposition to organization of labor and no strike troubles.

In St. John, N.B., on June 3rd, the principal complaint was against the conditions of labor on government contracts at the Courtenay Bay docks. The local labor council was represented by its secretary. It was alleged that large numbers of aliens were employed at this and at other work in the city, and that wages as low as 25 cents per hour were paid. The following recommendations were made by the council: All foreigners should be dismissed from public works and returned soldiers and citizens employed; the eight-hour day should be made the law throughout Canada; a federal minimum wage law should be introduced for male and female labor; an old-age pension should be established; better housing should be provided for the people and slum life should be done away with; all subsidies to steamship lines should be abolished, and an embargo placed on the export of food products until such a time as living became normal in Canada; foreigners should be barred from entry into Canada except those taking up farms and signing an agreement to continue at this work.

At the meeting in Halifax, on June 4th, the witnesses included J. E. McClurg, manager of the Halifax Shipyards. He contended that the employee did not do as much in a day now as he did five years ago. His company is contemplating the expenditure of \$500,000 in a housing scheme for its employees. F. B. Bligh, ex-mayor of Halifax, said that too much stress was being laid on the building up of an export trade.

In Sydney, N.S., on June 6th, the president of the Nova Scotia branch of the United Mine Workers of America said that ultimately the miners hoped to get a six-hour day in addition to a substantial increase in wages. He also complained of unfairness on the part of mine operators, who frequently maintained that profits did not warrant additional expense, and at the same time dividends were being paid. Evidence was also given by David Rees, organizer of the United Mine Workers of America and vice-president of the Trades and Labor Congress; Alfred J. Tonge, manager of the Dominion Coal Co., and W. F. Way, representing the Trades and Labor Council of Sydney Mines, N.S.

The final meeting was held in Quebec on Monday, June 9th. The members will remain there and prepare their report, which is expected by the government in the course of a few days.

BANKS IN THE BOND BUSINESS

The Home Bank of Canada has just completed the organization of a bond department under the management of Mr. W. R. Fleming, formerly secretary of the Bond Dealers' Association. It is the intention, Mr. Fleming says, to deal in government and municipal bonds and tenders have already been entered for a number of municipal issues.

Other banks which operate active bond departments are the Imperial Bank and the Sterling Bank. The banks have a good opportunity to sell bonds in those towns in which their managers are located and, on the other hand, the handling of business of this kind may bring accounts of municipalities.

RADICAL TAX PROPOSALS

A conference of secretaries of grain growers' associations in Manitoba was held in Winnipeg a few days ago. Public finance was the principal subject under discussion. G. F. Chipman gave an address on the taxation projects advanced in the farmers' platform. It was owing to the pressure of the farmers, he said, that the income tax had been put through, though it was weakly administered. The inheritance tax and the tax on unimproved land values was discussed by Mr. Chipman. The fallacy of the argument that the latter tax would discriminate against the farmers was shown, he said, in the relative value of land in the city of Winnipeg and in the country. The tariff tax was vastly heavier on the farmers than on city people, he said, because as well as buying their food and clothing they had to buy their implements of industry. The present inheritance tax was light, and he advocated the Dominion government levying an inheritance tax on top of the provincial tax. History proved, he said, that it was not good for the development of civilization for huge fortunes to be amassed by individuals.

J. R. Murray, in speaking on "The Reason Why of the Farmers' Platform," declared that farmers to-day were more affected by the conditions of Canadian political life than by various abuses which the association had remedied. Politics defined as the science of the government had been more a science of grab, he said, but there was no reason that this should continue. The high protective tariff represented the few benefiting at the expense of the many. The merging of big companies and forming of combines and the consequent killing of competition had, when aided by the protective tariff, greatly raised prices, he said. The products of the Dominion Cannery Co., the Canada Cement Co., the Canada Consolidated Rubber Co., were sold in competition with American goods on which freight rates and a high tariff had to be paid.

The present strike illustrates the need of a new policy, Mr. Murray said. The unrest in Canada was widespread and was not confined to the people who labored with their hands. The unrest should be recognized. Instead of getting after the profiteer or the cold storage man, said the speaker, the people should get after the protective tariff. Prices should be fixed not on the basis of consumption, but on the power of the people to pay.