

Labor News From Coast to Coast

Our Overseas Column

Many Britishers Are Emigrating

Great Britain's industrial efficiency has been lowered by the rapid emigration of her skilled workers since the world war, says T. R. Wilson, of the European division of the department of commerce. He ascribes this to the disturbed industrial situation, particularly in the engineering and building trades, and to the high unemployment.

The number of British subjects leaving permanently in 1923 for residence abroad was 256,234. The net loss by immigration was 208,695, of whom more than half were between 18 and 30. British authorities claim the building industry now requires for immediate housing projects an additional 11,709 bricklayers, 7,500 carpenters and joiners, 7,300 slaters, roofers and plasterers, 6,800 masons, painters, plumbers and gasfitters, and 25,000 building laborers.

German Cheap Labor Hurts Britain

The ability of the German firm to underbid British yards by from \$250,000 to \$450,000 per boat is still a mystery. There is evidence of collusion on the part of the British employers who are bent on undermining the wage movement and substituting a downward one. Secretary John Hill of the Boilermakers' Union points out that the winning German bid was considerably above the normal British price per ton and that the lowest British bid was inexcusably high. Hill says "It is all part of some capitalist design which is now being applied not only to shipbuilding but to shipping."

Object to Building Cruisers in U.K.

Sydney, Australia.—Strong opposition has been aroused throughout Australia by the Government's placing the contract for two cruisers, and also two submarines, in Great Britain. The Laborites are particularly objecting. An indication of their attitude on the question is the resolution adopted by the Sydney Trades and Labor Council, emphatically protesting against "spending millions in other countries with cheap labor markets for the construction of certain useless instruments required heavy taxation for their subsequent upkeep."

Wage Scale for Canal Workers

Pay in Various Branches Fixed by Federal Minister of Labor

The schedule of wages of workers on the Welland Canal, which was fixed by Hon. James Murdock, Federal Minister of Labor, when representatives of trade unions and contractors could not agree at two conferences, has been posted on the works by Fair Wage Officer E. N. Compton.

Corrections in the schedule, as published on information from trade union officers, affect carpenters, whose wage remain at 30 cents an hour, the 1923-24 rate; electrician helpers, whose rate remains at 50 cents an hour, and locomotive firemen, whose rate is also 50 cents an hour and subject to no reduction. In addition, electrician helpers are granted a nine-hour day, whereas their working hours had been ten in the previous schedule. All classes secure overtime, except stationary firemen, laborers, locomotive hostlers, pitmen and pumpmen.

The wages of laborers are fixed at 35 cents an hour. The rate was 40 cents an hour in 1924.

Forced Arbitration Is Unconstitutional

Washington, D. C.—The heart was taken out of the Kansas Court of Industrial Relations when the Supreme Court of the United States unanimously decided that the compulsory system of arbitration enacted into law by the Kansas Legislature when it created the Industrial Court violated the rights guaranteed both to employer and employee under the Federal Constitution.

In a long decision read by Associate Justice Vandevanter, the Supreme Court held that the Kansas Legislature had no authority to pass a law permitting an employer, even in an industry affected by a public interest, to remain in business whether making or losing money if he did not wish to do so, and that there was a similar lack of legal authority in the Legislature to compel an employee to work for an employer if he desired to seek employment elsewhere.

Strike for 80 Cents

Rotterdam, Holland.—Dock mechanical workers, who are affiliated with the Transport Workers' Federation in Holland, proclaimed a strike. They claim increased wages of two florins weekly and a definite arrangement concerning their holiday. Three branches of mechanical activity at the docks are idle. The value of the florin is approximately forty cents.

Radek to Be Thrown into Soviet Discard

Former Bolshevik Leader Is Condemned by Moscow Autocrats

Moscow.—Karl Radek, who has exercised an influence in the Bolshevik world second only to the influence of Trotsky, appears to be destined to follow the former Soviet War Minister into political oblivion.

The all-powerful central controlling Commission of the Communist party passed resolutions recently roundly condemning Radek's attempts to create factional strife within the German Communist party, and he is warned that if he continues to oppose the present Central Committee of the German Communist party, he will be dismissed from membership in the Russian Communist party.

Radek, Heinrich Brand and Terr Thalheimer, former leaders of the German Communist party, are forbidden to participate in the work of the Communist International, which is the medium through which the Bolshevik hope to establish world revolution.

Yesterday's decision, which was taken at the instance of the Central Committee of the German Communist party, was endorsed at a plenary sitting of the Communist International.

British Socialists Win Local Election

London.—Socialists won out by a big majority at the election of Guardians in London recently. The small polls helped them everywhere, and in the noted Socialist borough of Poplar they made a clean sweep. In Shore-ditch, where only 13 per cent. of the registered voters voted, the Socialists took 29 of the 24 borough seats.

Fergus Plant Is Enlarged

Fergus, Ont.—Beatty Bros. Limited, of Fergus, have let the contracts for additions to their two local factories, totalling 51,576 feet of floor space. These charges are made necessary on account of the fact that they are moving one of the factories from London, Ont. to Fergus this year. This plant was the one that they bought some years ago from Wortman and Ward. The building will commence at once.

As a result of these operations, Fergus is already feeling a shortage of houses, and unless a large number are built this summer the housing situation is likely to become acute.

Seek Higher Wage

Organizer Would Restore Scale Paid on Welland Work in 1924

Acting for 25 machinists employed by contractors on the Welland Canal, Harry Kerwin, General Organizer of the International Association of Machinists, has asked the Federal Minister of Labor to restore the wage paid to machinists on canal work in 1924.

When representatives of contractors and of unions failed to agree upon wages for the season, Hon. Mr. Murdock assumed the task of striking a fair wage for the men to be employed on the job, and reduced the wages of machinists 5 cents an hour. The Minister made his findings upon data gathered from industrial plants of the locality.

The machinists are asking for the railroad rate, which is 70 cents an hour, claiming their work is really railroad work. The contention of the department is said to be that 65 cents an hour is the rate being paid to machinists in the district.

Mr. Kerwin claims that if the contractors have agreed to pay 70 cents an hour, while four firms have accepted the departmental decision and are paying 65 cents an hour.

To Pave Six Miles

Simcoe, Ont.—The Highways Department will pave six miles of the Norfolk portion of the Southern Highway this summer, about two miles easterly from Tillsonburg and four miles westerly from Jarvis.

Recalls Days When Labor Fared Badly

London, Eng.—Lorn Haldane recently visited his mother, who is 100 years old. Her health is as good and her memory as keen as ever. She recalls the days when boys were sent up chimneys to sweep them; when poachers were caught by man traps; when, during the cholera epidemic, children were given port, ale and wine to strengthen them against infection; when children never entered a room without curtseying, and always addressed their elders as Sir or Madam.

The condition of the working classes, Mrs. Haldane says, was deplorable in those days. Agricultural laborers had to support their families on nine shillings a week, besides paying the rent of their cottages. "I am glad to testify that, on the whole, the many changes I have seen have been for the better."

See kto Reduce R.R.'s Inflated Load

Winnipeg, Man.—Reduction in the capitalization of the Canadian National Railways is urged in a resolution submitted to the membership of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees by the executive of the association. A petition has already been forwarded to Premier King urging that steps be taken accordingly and that the overcapitalization be charged to the national debt of the country.

Anthracite Miners Seek New Agreem't.

Wilkesbarre, Pa.—The Tri-District Board, composed of Anthracite Districts Nos. 1, 7 and 9, United Mine Workers of America, recently decided to call a tri-district convention at Scranton during the week of June 29 to frame a new wage agreement to be submitted to the anthracite operators.

The three district Presidents were appointed a committee to arrange for the convention with John L. Lewis, International President of the U. M. W., and other officials of the organization.

Carpenters Protest Laborers' Wages

Toronto, Ont.—Meeting in the Labor Temple, the Carpenters' District Council passed a resolution instructing Secretary Jim Cottam to enter a protest with the Minister of Labor against the wage schedule which was put into effect on the Welland Canal on April 1. While carpenters have suffered no reduction in the rate which they were receiving on the canal in 1924, laborers and other crafts have had their wages reduced from those they were earning last year.

The Carpenters' District Council contends that the reduction is not in keeping with the spirit of the Fair Wage resolution which passed the House of Commons many years ago to protect labor employed on Government work," said Mr. Cottam. "I am also instructed to protest against an amendment of recent years which gives the Minister of Labor the authority to make a final decision on all disputes on wages and conditions on Government work. There is no appeal from his decision."

Industrial Workers to Receive Holidays

Bill Introduced in British House to Give Six Days' Vacation With Pay

London, Eng.—Ben Riley, Labor member for Dewsbury, has introduced a bill in the House of Commons providing that workpeople engaged twelve months are entitled to at least six days' holiday, with pay, and those employed less than twelve months entitled to a proportionate holiday.

Admitting that in many North of England industrial towns the workpeople demand that all factories close for a week, Riley says that this custom aggravates the condition of other workers, who are unable to provide the means for a holiday by subscribing a small sum throughout the year to holiday clubs, but who suffered loss of wages through the closing of the factories.

Since 1918 the printing trade workers have enjoyed fourteen days leave, with pay, by an agreement between the employers and the unions. It is desired to extend this principle to the agricultural, mining, engineering and textile industries.

Use Ontario Stone

The Ontario Government has decided to use Ontario stone in the new east block of the Parliament Buildings, regardless of the fact that the cost is \$185,000 additional. This, however, is largely for labor, and will be distributed among workers in the province.

Block Wage Increase

Washington.—Leading building contractors and construction financiers in the nation's capital have combined to block wage increases.

Any subcontractor who grants wage increases can not secure loans.

Investigation by committees of the recent congress revealed that the reason for high rents in this city is the pyramiding of mortgages.

A senate committee discovered that 33 apartments were mortgaged for an aggregate of \$9,000,000 more than their sales price. Figures in other cases showed fictitious mortgages encumbered property from 13 to as high as 307 per cent above their sales price.

Interest on these debts, based on inflated values, are paid by tenants while the owners assure the public that "high wages" is responsible for exorbitant rentals.

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