

Labor News From Coast to Coast

"OUR OVERSEAS COLUMN"

AUSTRIA
Unemployment Insurance—Insurance against unemployment, which is compulsory for all laborers and employees with the exception of state employees, servants and agricultural laborers, is now said to be in full effect in Austria. Forty-two per cent. of the principal is contributed by the employer, forty-two per cent. by the employee, twelve per cent. by the Federal government and four per cent. by the municipality.

CANADA
Finland Immigration—It is reported by the Canadian press and the Finnish vice-consul at Fort William and Port Arthur, that by the end of the present calendar year there will have come to Canada 10,000 Finlanders, half of whom have already arrived.

CHILE
Railway Strike Averted—In order to avoid the threatened strike of certain railway employees, the threatened strike of certain railway employees, the administration of the Chilean State Railways has recommended to the Minister of Communications the granting of a total wage increase of twelve million pesos to several classes of railway workers.

To Handle Elections on the Changed Date

Hamilton Civic Departments Are Making Necessary Preparations

Hamilton, Ont.—Civic departments are now making the necessary preparations to hold municipal elections on Monday, December 7, instead of on New Year's Day. The elections carried the by-law providing for the new date last year and the City Council at a recent meeting carried out the wishes of the people. Very little difficulty is expected. It will be necessary to re-arrange some of the polling booths, however. No trouble is expected in filling the different positions at the booths, it was stated. The new voting date will mean an increased expenditure to this city, it is thought, as schools used as polling subdivisions will not be available on the December date.

Fifty are Retained

About fifty of the 120 men engaged to handle the mails during the postal strike have been retained. Postmaster Webber stated recently. Many of the men quit their jobs and the number now at work all passed the necessary examination. It is expected that some transfers will be made as the office is now overmanned. The local men who were on strike but 24 hours have been reinstated in their old positions by the Government. They had no comment to make on the action today. Postmaster Webber intimated that the Government would shortly ask the men to sign a pledge that they would not go out on strike in future. Mr. Webber regards the present oath of office as sufficient. He admitted that he had heard nothing officially regarding the rumors of a new pledge.

Fur Workers to Ask Minimum Scale

Montreal.—Decision to ask for a minimum wage scale for fur workers in Montreal and preferential union shops when the present wage agreement expires in January next, was reached at the semi-annual conference of Canadian locals of the International Fur Workers Union of the United States and Canada. The conference opened here and was attended by delegates from Montreal, Toronto, Ottawa and the International Union headquarters. Its purpose was to formulate organization plans for these localities and to decide upon what basis negotiations should take place for the renewal of agreements in Toronto and Montreal.

Say That Big Rail Officials Be Reduced

of Amalgamated Unions in Labor Temple
 B.—That it was time officials had their men had endured tions and cuts in few years, was President J. the Monc Labor

DENMARK
Public Relief Figures—Of the 88,969 persons who received "old age pensions" during the fiscal year 1922-23, 15,907 were under 65 years of age, while 73,062 were 65 years of age or over.

GREECE
Eight-Hour Day—The Workmen's Exchange, representing twenty trade unions, has protested to the central authorities at Athens against any adjournment in applying the eight-hour day for working men. On the other hand, the heads of industry have protested to the Government against the applying of the eight-hour day, claiming that this measure will injure industrial efforts in the Athens district.

Refugee Cottages—A German company is said to have obtained a contract for the construction of 10,000 cottages to house the refugees in the Saloniki district.

SWEDEN
Little Unemployment—According to the last report of the Unemployment Commission, unemployment continues to decrease in Sweden. There were reported 5,600 unemployed on July 1, 1924, as compared with 7,900 on June 1st, and 9,300 on May 1st, 1924.

staff at Campbellton and Truro. At those two centres the men had refused to accept the cut in the number of hours per week and there had been consequent reduction in staff. In this city, while there had been a general acceptance of the reduced hours, the staff has also suffered numerically.

He stated that there were now not many more than a thousand men working in the shops here and declared that further reductions would so cripple them as to practically close them.

With regard to wages, the Labor Gazette, the speaker stated, announced that a living wage for a family of five was \$1,600. As it was at present, the shophen here, by working every hour that they were permitted, could only earn at the most \$1,500. Their hours were now considerably reduced and in consequence their wage earning ability.

The meeting when opened was presided over by Mr. E. Savage, vice-president, and later by the President, J. A. Godfrey. The committee appointed to report into the enlargement of the sphere of unionism reported progress.

At the preceding meeting credentials has been received and accepted from the following:

Glad Tidings Lodge, No. 223, Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Enginemen—J. F. Caine, C. O. Vincent, J. A. Wilson, Geo. McKee, A. P. Bell.

Local Union 558, United Association of Journeymen Plumbers and Steamfitters—H. Rhodes, C. F. Chevarle, H. McFarlane, G. Rawlins, A. Cleveland. Lodge 106, International Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees—A. H. West, W. D. Killam, D. McGee, Gordon McWilliam, Duncan Steeves.

Reduce Working Day and Make More Jobs

This Is One Solution of Unemployment Problems Advanced to the Trades Council

Calgary, Alta.—A two-hour reduction in the working day was advocated by Frank Wheatley, president of the Alberta Federation of Labor, as one means of alleviating unemployment in Canada, when he addressed a meeting of the Calgary Trades and Labor Council recently. Mr. Wheatley also commented upon the miners' strike situation. He said that the miners were resolved not to recognize any agreement which would call for a reduction. The operators were equally firm, and that is how the matter stands at the present time.

"This is the real test," he said. "If the United Mine Workers in this district goes out of business, something decided worse will come in its place." Mr. Murdoch's remark about buying coal in the United States being good business sunk in deep. The National Railway's apparently prefer to buy coal in the United States, mined by Alabama convicts, just because it is a little cheaper, rather than buy coal in Canada. In face of what is facing the coal mining industry of the west to-day, the remark of the Labor Minister to Labor men sounded rather brazen to me."

Quoted Rail Men

At this juncture, Mr. Parkyn has said to assure Mr. Wheatley that Mr. had quoted the railway officials making the statement about business, and that he statement person question of

a two-hour-a-day reduction. Mr. Wheatley contended that an adjustment of industry is needed first before the unemployment situation can be intelligently handled. "We have an example of it right here," he said. "The contractor on the Banff road works his men ten hours a day when there are hundreds of men who would be glad of a chance to get a job and who would be able to get a job if the number of hours was reduced." The matter was then debated by the members for a short time.

Painters' Union Hear Organizer

Ottawa, Ont.—The Painters' Union, Local 290, held a very successful meeting at St. George's Hall recently. General Organizer Holmeaux, who was present, gave an interesting address on conditions throughout the Dominion in the building and painting trades. Mr. Holmeaux said that the organization had made progress of late, and despite the slowness of business in the construction trades the future was very promising. Very few of the workers who had gone to the United States had returned as yet, he said.

The question of apprenticeship in the building trades was of vital interest, and the organization is at present in agreement with the proposed organization known as the Pigott Clan, which will be brought into actual operation at no distant date.

He stated that the total membership of the Painters' Union is over 120,000 in America, and the finances are in excellent shape.

Laborers Advised to Become Organized

Ottawa, Ont.—An open meeting of men employed on the E. K. Eddy construction work at Hull was held at the headquarters of the National Catholic Unions, at which there was a large attendance, and there was some trenchant criticism of the attitude adopted by the contractors in refusing to grant the laborers more than thirty cents an hour for a ten-hour day. Mr. Achille Morin, who presided, gave a condensed report of the result of the delegation to the contractors and said that they had adopted an attitude of indifference to the demands made, stating that if the men did not like to work for thirty cents an hour, they could find plenty who would and that if there was any difficulty, the contractors would break the agreement with the city whereby they were to employ as many Hull residents as possible. Mr. Morin warned his audience that if the employers were allowed to get away with the low scale of wages upon which it was impossible for a married man to live in decency, it would create a precedent, and other employers of labor would not be slow to follow their example. He regretted that the construction employees were not organized.

Rev. Father Bonhomme declared that it was impossible for any employer of labor to conceive that a working man with a family could support himself and family on the starvation salary of thirty cents an hour. He pointed out that most of the men were married men with two or three, and sometimes as high as five children. He, too, expressed regret that the men had not taken the precaution of joining a union.

"If you were properly organized, and were a unit in your demands, you could take legitimate means as a body to secure justice," said the speaker, "even to applying to the Federal government for a board of arbitration to adjudicate your cause, but you cannot as individuals."

Dr. J. E. Fontaine, M.P., regretted that the contractors had held out no hope of paying a higher wage rate than thirty cents an hour, which, he said, was an impossible wage for a working man and his family to subsist on. Capital was strongly organized, and he could not understand why Labor did not adopt a similar course, for it was their only medium for meeting their employer on anything like equal grounds.

After considerable discussion it was decided to form a committee to canvass the employees to impress upon them the necessity of becoming organized.

Costly Strike

Typographical Union Expended \$15,291,242

Toronto, Ont.—According to the report of C. F. Howard, president of the International Typographical Union, presented to the convention held in this city recently, during the four years ending May 31st, 1924, the international union expended \$15,291,242 in strike benefits and special assistance to local unions throughout Canada and the United States.

Secretary-Treasurer J. W. Hayes in his report to the convention showed a balance in three funds of \$5,158,984.

Labor Party Split in Australia

Sydney, N.S.W.—In New South Wales the political and industrial wings of the Labor Party are drifting toward a break. The issue is whether the Labor Party is to function as a reform party or swing to the left on definite Socialist lines.

Two years ago the Australian Labor Party adopted as its objective the socialization of production and exchange. Up-to-date, nothing has been done save to re-affirm this at annual conferences.

The militants in the Labor Party, who desired to vitalize the objective, have been gradually hedged out of responsible positions in the Labor executive, and in a number of cases expelled.

Many Labor politicians give scant publicity to the party's objective, and when campaigning at election time explain that it really doesn't mean anything. This is done to catch middle-class votes.

A healthy section of the Labor movement demands something more than lip service to advance socialization. This section is getting stronger. Some idea of the strength of this militant section can be gathered from the fact that during July at a trade union congress, held at Sydney, a motion was carried demanding the removal from office of the present Labor parliamentary leader and the appointment of a leader with enough backbone to keep the Labor objective in the forefront of the movement's activities.

While the trouble is confined to the New South Wales branch of the Labor Party, there are signs that it is beginning to spread to the other states. The militant section comprises the industrial wing of the party, which provides the bulk of the finance for the party and the leading speakers and campaigners. The next few months should mark important developments in the situation.

U.S. Heavy Buyers of Canadian Securities

Montreal, Que.—The conquests of Canadian industry by American investors proceeds apace. Once again the target for their attack is the blue ribbon of the market—the C.P.R.

A few weeks ago it was announced that \$10,000,000 first debenture shares of the railroad were sold in the United States. This has been followed by the announcement that another block of C.P.R. shares has been purchased south of the line.

The latest sale of 35,000 shares for \$5,500,000 has been made by the Dominion Government itself. Since the Great War it has held these shares as the custodian of alien property.

From reliable quarters it is learnt that the predominance of control has passed out of the hands of the British investors.

Alleges Assault

Sam Kruger, Toronto business agent of the Cloakmakers' Union, was discharged following a complaint that he had committed an assault upon a scab. It was stated that the complainant had been placed in a union job after having joined the union. He quit this to go strike-breaking.

Following this Kruger made an appeal that the persecutor live up to his promises. In the disturbance which followed an ugly butcher's knife was flourished by the scab and he now has a "cauliflower" ear. This formed the basis of the assault charge. In spite of the copious weeping of the strike-breaker while in the witness box, the bench decided that he had no case and Kruger was dismissed.



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