

Industrial Review From Many Sources

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NEW INDUSTRIAL POLICY BRITISH LIBERAL PARTY

Suggest Establishment of Industrial Councils With Chairman a Minister of Crown.

LONDON, England.—Every fresh event reveals that the economic and industrial fabric is strained to breaking point. The most recent indication of the impending change is the issue by the executive of the National Liberal Federation of its outline proposals for a new economic and industrial policy.

In the preamble to the main resolutions, of which there are 11, it is stated that they represent a consistent statement of the new Liberal policy which aims in economic and industrial affairs at the removal of disabilities and the restraint of tyrannical powers. Rigid and mechanical industrial machinery, in which individual choice and initiative are reduced to a minimum, forms no part in the intentions of these proposals, which aim rather at "the development of a flexible and living society, in which all men are free to make the most of their own powers, whilst no man is free to do what is harmful to others."

The most arresting proposal is that relating to the establishment by Parliament of a National Industrial Council consisting of representatives of the employers and workers in each industry, with a chairman who shall be a minister responsible to Parliament. Joint committees or councils representing employers and workers of all grades, would be set up for each industry and be responsible to the National Industrial Council. These committees or councils could fix standard hours of work and rates of pay. Less desirable, but scarcely less important, is the suggestion that the proposed council should promote increased production, full and proportionate reward of labor, and the fair division of the product of industry.

Nationalization of State Works. The growing consciousness that no man or woman who is capable and willing to serve the community should be allowed to remain idle, is recognized in the proposals for dealing with unemployment, providing the necessary funds with the aid of state contributions. In addition to this, the Government should provide suitable machinery for absorbing unemployed labor created through extraordinary trade fluctuations, by adjusting the supply of public and local works as far as possible to meet this need.

Nationalization is shyly dealt with in a vague proposal to supply the scheme only to such industries and services which "tend to exclude free competition," each case to be considered on its merits. Taxes and combines are to be summarily brought to book under this Liberal programme of reforms. A special tribunal is to be established to which the Board of Trade may apply for powers to compel information, or to make public the results of his investigations. Combines to fix unreasonable prices for commodities, or to withhold supplies are to be made illegal.

Repayment of War Debts. Draconic proposals are made for the repayment of war debts, without recourse to additional income tax or the imposition of import duties, by a graduated tax on the

values of property above the limit of \$5,000. For this purpose the estate valuation of land, made under the Finance Act, 1910, is to be amended and brought up to date. Under this new valuation, mineral and mining rights, it is proposed, should be included, and a uniform national tax imposed on the capital site value of the whole country. In the event of the state buying out mineral rights, the value at which they are taken over would be the value agreed upon for the purpose of rating and taxation. National expenditure is to be reduced by one-fourth.

Finally, proposals are made to render simpler and less expensive the transfer of land and buildings compulsorily acquired for public purposes, and for ready assessment of any compensation awarded under such transfers. All these proposals will be considered by the Liberal association, and then, with any amendments sent up, will be discussed and voted upon by the general committee of the National Liberal Federation at Nottingham.

CANADIAN INDUSTRIES INCREASE IN NUMBER

At End of 1918 There Were in Canada 35,797 Manufactories.

OTTAWA.—Statistics of manufacturing industries, in view of the time taken to compile them and the continual expansion of activities, must at all times be somewhat out of date, and the latest published survey of Canada's industries carried out by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics covers only the period up to the end of 1918. Since that time there has been a considerable development, the period subsequent to the war having seen the establishment of hundreds of United States industries induced to this foreign expansion by the adverse exchange on Canadian money. The figures are, however, useful for purposes of comparison, as illustrating industrial growth over the years prior to that time.

At the end of December, 1918, there were in Canada 35,797 manufacturing establishments, compared with 15,796 existing in 1905, and 21,306 in 1915. The capital invested in these industries in 1918 aggregated \$3,024,302,913, compared with \$1,846,582,923 in 1905, and \$1,941,103,272 in 1915. The number of employees engaged had risen from 392,539 in 1905 and 514,883 in 1915 to 877,737 in 1918. The output of all factories at the last survey was valued at \$3,458,036,975, whilst in 1915 it was \$1,807,187,149 and in 1905 only \$718,352,602. Over the previous year, 1917, there was an increase during the twelve months of \$247,652,000 in the capital investment, an increase of \$56,788,900 in the wages paid, and an increase of \$442,459,935 in the value of products.

Ontario led in the number of manufacturing plants with 15,365 to her credit; Quebec came next with 40,540; then in order Nova Scotia, 2,125; British Columbia, 1,786; Manitoba, 1,444; Saskatchewan, 1,422; New Brunswick, 1,364; Alberta, 1,252; Prince Edward Island, 484, and the Yukon, 15.

In the matter of capital investment, Ontario also led with a total of \$1,598,011,000, or nearly one-half of the aggregate. Investment in the other provinces was as follows: Quebec, \$880,468,786; British Columbia, \$244,897,241; Nova Scotia, \$132,522,649; Manitoba, \$105,981,159; Alberta, \$61,405,933; New Brunswick, \$24,470,878; Saskatchewan, \$29,476,269; Prince Edward Island, \$2,886,862, and the Yukon, \$3,633,929.

SEVEN DAY WEEK STILL EXISTS IN THE STEEL MILLS

U.S. Steel Officials State Evil Will Be Abolished But Few Believe Statement.

NEW YORK, New York.—The statement by Judge E. H. Gary, chairman of the United States Steel Corporation, that the seven-day week and the long turn in changing shifts have been "entirely eliminated" by all our companies, and that a committee of presidents of subsidiary companies might be expected to report the result of their investigations of the 12-hour day question in the near future, was received with interest by those who have been waiting to see what effect the Interchurch World Movement's report on the steel strike might have on the corporation.

Heber Blankenhorn, secretary of the commission, whose inquiry resulted in that report, said to your representative that the announcement that the seven-day week had been eliminated should be compared with similar statements made by steel officials during the past 19 years; such a comparison would show that it was eliminated before the war, but was quite done away with by 1919. The report further states that the president of the Carnegie Steel Company and of the Illinois Steel Company, subsidiaries of the corporation, assured the commission that seven-day week work was a thing of the past.

A letter from Mr. Gary to the commission, printed in the report, states that prior to the war the seven-day week had been entirely eliminated except as to maintenance and repair crews on infrequent occasions; that during the war there was considerable continuous seven-day work, due to the request of the

Government for more production, but that this was changed with the close of the war.

The report also quotes Judge Gary as having testified before the Senate committee: "We decided to eliminate the seven-day week if we possibly could, and we practically eliminated it."

The commission investigating the steel strike found that the facts did not bear out the statements of the corporation; the seven-day week had not been eliminated. Thus, since he thinks that the steel companies have already convicted themselves out of their own mouths by coming out again with an assertion that the seven-day week has been abolished, Mr. Blankenhorn is not inclined to pin much faith to the statements.

This report seems to come out every so often," he said, "and the public is always surprised to learn that the seven-day week still exists. The point is that the public has no reason to believe that this announcement means any change in conditions in the mills or that it even indicates that there will be any such changes."

As to the announcement by Mr. Gary that a committee has been appointed to consider the 12-hour day question, and that its report is expected, perhaps within 30 days, this is so indefinite that the 12-hour day will be abolished, Mr. Blankenhorn added; the only thing to do was to wait and see.

U. S. STANDING ARMY IS SMALLEST IN WORLD.

WASHINGTON.—The United States has a smaller standing army, in proportion to population, than any country in Europe, and only three countries in the world—Brazil, Paraguay and Colombia—have a relatively smaller armed force, according to statistics issued by the war department.

In absolute figures, Bolshevik Russia, with 1,500,000 soldiers under arms, heads the list, and China, with 1,362,000, is second though in proportion to their population they are exceeded by many other countries.

On a percentage basis Switzerland, with a population of 4,000,000 and a regular army of 170,000, or 4.25 per cent. of the total, is first; Greece, with 7,500,000 population and an army of 240,000, or 3.20 per cent., is second, and Estonia, with 1,200,000 population and an army of 36,500, or 3.04 per cent., is third.

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