

BLAMES RAILROADS FOR PUNITIVE OVERTIME PAY

Chairman Enoch of General Grievance Committee, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Declares the Carriers Can Provide the Remedy.

This is the second of a series of articles on the demands of the railway brotherhood for "punitive overtime" rate and the "Red Cross" for all night work.

Next Sunday, March 5, the third article, by a former railroad employee, entitled "The Brotherhood of the Railroad Payroll," will appear. It opposes the men's demands. In the first of the series Prof. William Z. Ripley, Charles E. Van Hise and William M. Middle showed the seriousness of the situation and its immense possibilities for disaster.

"PUNITIVE" OVERTIME: A HUMAN DOCUMENT OF THE RAILROADS

By H. A. ENOCH, Chairman of the General Grievance Committee, Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, Pennsylvania Lines East.

I have read an editorial in an Eastern newspaper wherein it is suggested that the railroad employes withdraw their demand for time and a half pay for overtime.

If the Federal Congress is willing to enact a law providing an eight hour day for railroad men, providing that no railroad man shall be worked longer than eight hours within any twenty-four hour period, with a proper penalty for violation, there is no doubt in my mind but that the railroad men would be very glad to withdraw the time and a half demand.

Until such a law as that enacted there is no feasible means of preventing the companies from working men to the points indicated by the instructions in time table, namely, sixteen hours, and the pocketbook never is touched by requiring the payment of time and one-half for overtime.

No reasonable man who understands the railroad game will ever dispute the statement that "there is always a certain amount of work to be done each day by each railroad, and if it is not accomplished in regular time it must be done in overtime." It is the aim of these organizations to eliminate the "must" part of it; in other words, make the need for "must" unnecessary, which can undoubtedly be done in the same way in the future as in the past.

Overtime a luxury. Once let a thing be charged at double price, and it will become such a luxury that people who now think they have to have it will find that they can very readily do without it. In the judgment of the men—which judgment is founded on experience and contact—the entire notion of overtime is one of administrative efficiency, can be controlled and will be eliminated if the practice is made luxuriously expensive or prohibited by law.

I quote another clause in the same editorial: "And experience shows that many men will do as little work as possible during the short working day in order to create overtime work and get the 50 per cent. higher pay." If this be true it only goes to support the charge made by Mr. Brandeis a few years ago before the Interstate Commerce Commission that the railroads were wasting by inefficient operating methods \$1,000,000 a day.

Surely the brainy talent that is now operating and directing American railroads and fostering such inefficient methods as permit men to malingering, "padding" or to "lay down on their jobs" in order to get time and one-half for overtime or in order to get any overtime whatsoever. No operating official would swear to this statement; moreover, the Pennsylvania Railroad has a committee here the Industrial Relations Committee.

The rules of this company governing railroad operation are the most approved rules known to the railroad art. As a means of ascertaining the seriousness of the men and the care with which rules are obeyed surprise tests of conditions such as would be encountered during a day's work, with particular reference to the men, are systematically made and their results carefully recorded. The record of 2,561,962 tests and observations made during the year 1914 showed slightly more than 99.9 per cent. efficiency, or practically perfect obedience to the rules.

There was considerable opposition on the part of the men and the practice was first inaugurated, but they have come to recognize its wisdom as keeping them constantly alive to their duty and proper supervision.

On the larger divisions, where the number of employees warrants, experienced persons are appointed to act as efficiency inspectors, deciding during one time to this work. The various officials whose duties frequently take them over the road and the inspectors by making observations, and at the same time in conducting tests. On the smaller divisions all the tests and observations are conducted by officials. Each division keeps a record of all the tests and observations made during each month to see that each individual is tested at regular intervals. In addition to making the reports required by the general manager an individual record is kept for each employee, who is given credit for proper observance and is charged with his failures.

Extra Supervision.

In the annual report for last year of a large trunk line where the stockholders were advised respecting expenditure for operation, and in explaining the disposal of \$500,000, it was frankly stated that it was expended for extra supervision, which extra supervision, interpreted as the men on the property know it, means nothing more nor less than every movement they make as employees in engine and train service is tabbed and watched to see that the highest state of efficiency is developed out of and by each individual who is employed in that service.

Moreover, the railroad companies have taken exceptional pains and trouble to carry into the newspaper offices details of the number of efficiency tests that they are periodically making on their lines, which efficiency tests seek to demonstrate to the layman that the companies are operating their plants at the highest state of efficient productivity, and in that way they are trying to refute such statements as were made by Mr. Brandeis.

We declare as employees that the companies have in their own hands an operating experts the full and complete remedy for the control of overtime, a remedy that contains economy and better service for the public, the company and the employee.

Prior to the time of the sixteen hour law, or about 1901, our organizations asked the company to grant us a rule reading: "No trainmen will be expected to go out after a continuous service of twenty-four hours without at least eight hours rest, except in cases of washouts or similar emergencies." The men felt that they had to draw a line somewhere, and on account of the low hourly rate, which meant that men had to be almost continuously employed if they wanted to earn enough money to live, they were willing to draw the line at twenty-four hours continuous service. The will of the men to work

twenty-four hours in order to live was discounted by the Federal Government in 1907, the Congress passing a law prohibiting train men employees from working more than sixteen hours within any twenty-four hour period; and naturally men being deprived of the right to make time, though they killed themselves and every one with whom they worked from time to time, and slaughtered the travelling public in order that they might live, had to take steps to increase their hourly rates, which was done.

Earning Power Decreased. No change in the Federal law has been made by Congress since its original enactment. The courts have interpreted the law as questions arose under it, and out of these interpretations men again found their earning power decreased without any relief from the onerous hours exacted at places other than their homes, not necessarily on duty, but taking rest under conditions which produced fatigue.

In other words, the sixteen hour law is not an unmitigated blessing, as under it the men found and do find to-day that the tendency is toward keeping men on continuous duty for sixteen hours, tying freight crews up on the road between the fourteenth and sixteenth hour wherever it is possible, that compels such men when so tired as to take their rest in cabin cars, on the floor of the engine or no place at all, just so long as the law is satisfied by showing that the man has been physically released from duty for eight or ten hours, as the case might be.

But the law does not require that the man so released from duty be permitted to lay his tired body in a bed, take off his clothing and wash or do things which are absolutely requisite and necessary in order that men can be rested and refreshed and be put in proper condition to perform the responsible duties required.

One of the demands of our organization at this present session of Congress is that the sixteen hour law be amended so as to make the minimum penalty for each violation of that law \$100 instead of the \$2 or \$2.50 which some of the courts have been imposing. Why do we seek this amendment? Because it is our fundamental desire to cut off excess hours from a man's employment, all of which go far toward fastening on that man occupational diseases, causing in due time occupational disability.

In no other occupation are employees confronted with the rigid and constant physical examinations as are men employed in engine and train service. Engine and train men are periodically required to undergo most rigid physical tests.

Every man who is off duty on account of sickness is given a rigid test before he is permitted to return to active duty. These tests consist of eye examinations, heart examinations, kidney tests, blood pressure tests and any other tests which the doctor deems essential or necessary in order to lay bare the man's physical qualifications required in the performance of his duty in the engine or train service.

Occupational Diseases. Slight affections of the heart or kidneys, high blood pressure, defective hearing or defective color perception will effectively debilitate engine or train men from returning to active service. The government has seen fit to investigate occupational diseases in many other walks of human endeavor, but up to the present time no rigid test or investigation has been made by any governmental authority of occupational disabilities overtaking men in engine and train service.

I want to revert again to the efficiency tester, the man watching the performance of the men in train service to see that the highest state of productive effort on the part of each individual is fully developed, and I want to link with this efficiency tester the question of discipline.

I say with all the pride at my command that the discipline existing on the American railroads is second to none in the world. It is more rigid than the discipline in any other business or undertaking, and justly so, because lives and property are at stake. But in the very rigidity of discipline none of us can overlook the fact that when men are constantly employed beyond the powers of human endurance the mental faculties become and their perceptions are blurred as between the right and wrong way of doing things.

Nobody can tell the story of the tired railroad man's exhaustion due to long hours and overwork better than that man can tell it himself. Nobody can tell the story of the muscular nervousness coming from long hours of overwork better than the man who has experienced it.

No man can tell of the physical and mental torture of the tired engineer, who becomes so tired as not to realize a mistake until it is too late better than the man who experiences it. No one can tell of that intense muscular pain in the lower limbs of the railroad man's body, when the only alleviation he can find is in having a pillow placed under his legs and his legs rubbed with ointment of some kind, better than the man who experiences such pain.

This pain does not come from working short hours; it comes from working long hours, the vibration of the rough freight cars, vibration of the locomotive and tender, climbing over and under cars, loaded and empty, jumping on and off cars in some districts where the tracks are littered with broken stone and such like, as turns the man's feet and makes the muscles of his legs quiver when they alight.

The newspaper articles all over the country have covered the story of the companies' side of the question fairly well, and have raised many points, all of which will be covered in due time.

Insincerity Charge Answered.

The railroad companies charge our organization in this eight hour movement with being insincere, that what we really want is an increase in wages.

If that construction is placed upon our efforts by the railroad companies, evidently the wish is father to the thought, because undoubtedly the railroad companies have it now in their power so to control and arrange their service that no man will exceed ten hours work if they desire to do it that way.

On the other hand, it is more convenient for them to work the men to the sixteenth hour, and the whole contention in our organization is that instead of one man working the sixteen hours that two men shall do it, each man to be paid the same for the eight hours work as he now receives for the ten hours work, thus making the companies pay a higher hourly rate for the sixteen hours work, and this is done now under present conditions in some instances. The luxury of overtime is something that the companies can buy or not, as they see fit.

We contend that overtime in both road and yard service is absolutely controllable, and we are not ready to believe that the American railroad managers, with all their magnificent administrative powers, are ready to confess that their control over their employees in seeing that they perform their allotted tasks promptly and efficiently is absolutely null and void.

SUFFS AND RED CROSS OUSTED AMID TEARS

Lose Their Happy Homes and Free Rent in Fifth Avenue Buildings.

The suffragists, who have occupied the huge store at 662 Fifth avenue for many months rent free, and the Red Cross, which has had the store at 661, also rent free, mingled their lamentations yesterday. For the buildings, which are owned by Mrs. Henry Phipps, have been rented, and as both organizations got their use only until they should be ousted, it follows that both must leave at once.

Mrs. John Blair, who has been man-

aging the Suffrage Shop at 662 for the New York State Woman Suffrage Party, couldn't help dropping a few tears on Norman de R. Whitehouse's fine Newport chairs. Mr. Whitehouse, being the husband of the chairman of the party, gave the furniture he had bought for his villa at Newport to make the Suffrage Shop comfortable. A friend of the cause served tea there every afternoon, and altogether 662 Fifth avenue has made votes for women extremely attractive.

Poor little Miss Equality Right felt worst of all about the dispossession. She is only a doll, who is to be used by the suffra for advertising purposes, but she seemed to feel it rather hard that just as a snug window in the Suffrage Shop was promised to her she should be put out on the sidewalk. Equality Right can say "votes for women" and raise her hand in a salute to the suffrage flag, but her rights weren't equal to any stunts yesterday.

Mrs. Anne O'Hagan Shinn was mourning because she now has no place for the April Fool rhymes she has been gathering and meant to put up in the window there. She read the rhymes to the sad faced suffs yesterday, one rhyme for each letter in the alphabet, as: A is for argument. Ah, suffice. Amiable, also. Which none can refute. The suffs will be permitted to remain until March 7, that they may do the committee work and advertising for their ball in Madison Square Garden on that date. The Red Cross will move at once.

LAYS WEDDED WOE TO 18TH BIRTHDAY SPREE

Cabaret Dancer Says He Married Manicure During Celebration.

A warning against celebrating a birthday too strenuously was given by George R. Hoffmeister, son of well to do parents and now a professional dancer in an uptown cabaret, in his papers submitted to Supreme Court Justice Cohan in opposition to an application for alimony made by Mrs. Louise V. Hoffmeister.

She presented his objections, he stated, and said she "didn't see why she couldn't have as much fun as she had before she married her." She told him she cared for a certain travelling salesman for him, Hoffmeister told the court she receives \$75 a week as a cabaret dancer and only gets \$5 a week from her mother. The court awarded \$15 a week from his dancing in addition to re-



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