

N. Y. CENTRAL WAGE HEARING TO START TO-DAY PROBABLY

Decision by Rail Board in First Test Case Will Have Wide Influence.

CALL IS UNEXPECTED

Road Prepares Data Contending Unskilled Labor's Pay Is Too High.

COMPROMISE LOOKED FOR

Board Not Likely to Abolish at One Time Its Increase of Last July.

The New York Central Railroad will apply to-day to the United States Railroad Labor Board to be heard on behalf of its contention that the wages of common railroad labor should be reduced beginning April 1.

This announcement was made yesterday and so unexpectedly that those labor leaders and railroad officials who secretly hoped that there would not be too much speed to the settlement of the wage controversy were sent scurrying to telegraph offices notifying personal and general representatives to get busy in Chicago at once.

The New York Central's case will be the first heard by the board and presumably the first decided. On the verdict of the board in this case will depend the strength and weakness of many similar cases, because the New York Central is typical.

But by indulging in overtime work the statistical bureau of the New York Central completed the briefs and tables that will constitute the literature the board will be asked to digest.

The statistical data were telegraphed to Chicago yesterday over one of the railroad's wires and along with that went instructions to the company's attorneys to appear before the board this morning.

As the railroads are the framework of the country's industry and a settlement of the carrier problems is a settlement of general commercial problems it is believed that the board will clear decks for action at once.

Arguments by New York Central. In the brief the New York Central will set forth its present state of financial health, review the deplorable traffic situation, contend that the cost of living has declined, and seek to show that it pays its unskilled labor at a rate of the going rate for the same brand of labor in every community through which the road operates.

The Central's appeal is in the shape required by the board. Numerous railroad men believe that it will turn out to be a test case by which all other roads will be guided. Of course, two other cases have received the attention of the board—the Erie Railroad and the Atlanta, Birmingham and Atlantic—but neither of these followed the prescribed procedure, and could not be considered test cases or models to be followed.

In short, this will be the board's first opportunity to delve into the cost of living problem, and the relation of the current living costs to prevailing rates of pay.

A decision is looked for before April 1. The New York Central purposes cutting wages before the end of April. As other roads complete their prescribed conferences with their employees and receive the final negative from the latter their cases will be taken before the board. Should the New York Central fail to carry its case the next case will be contested all the more bitterly by the railroads. Should the Central's contention be upheld a general rally of railroad labor (exclusive of the four great brotherhoods) is expected, and the union men will increase their efforts to prevent the decision from being general.

The opinion seems to be that the board will either decide upon a compromise between the prevailing wage and that existing immediately before the present rates went into effect—July 29, 1920—or decide in favor of the men. It is not the consensus that the board will abolish, at a clip, the entire increase it authorized last July.

As the New York Central will contend, freight rates must be diminished before freight traffic will begin to revive. But while the bulk of the stress has been put upon freight traffic, the railroad officials are not neglecting to show the demoralizing effect upon industry, especially passenger rates, have. It will contend that passenger earnings are to-day 25 per cent. below those of March, 1920.

Tourist Travel Declines. The tourist travel, generally expected to fill the gap between January dullness and early spring business, has not come up to expectations, with the possible exception of the Florida traffic.

Railroad executives, although they do not say so formally, are almost a unit for a lowering of passenger fares and the complete elimination of the 50 per cent. surcharge on Pullman tickets.

These advances, which have meant little in added revenues to the roads, have re-awakened a feeling of resentment against the roads by the general public, the executives say.

All sorts of methods are being tried out by the roads to revive the flagging passenger traffic and to repopulate their lines. The Southern Pacific has just created a solicitation bureau, in charge of M. A. Peck, in which the road purposes to go after passenger business as it did in the pre-war days.

Mr. Peck has just sent a circular to every employee of the Southern Pacific asking him to recall any acquaintance who is planning to take a railroad trip and to forward this information to the bureau, which will get directly in touch with the prospect.

Leslie Miller, official representative of the United Brotherhood of Maintenance of Way Employees and Railroad Shop Laborers, at the meeting Tuesday between officials and employees of the New York and Long Branch division of the Central Railroad of New Jersey, denied yesterday that the men he represented accepted a decrease in wages suggested by the Jersey Central.

Mr. Miller said that the New York and Long Branch workers merely agreed with Les W. Berry, general manager for the line, that the wise thing to do would be to wait for the verdict (if any) reached at the general conference between the New Jersey Central and its men on March 24.

The employees of the Railroad Labor Board, which will materialize if the conference fails to produce an agreement.

Agree With Marine Workers. The railroad general managers and the marine forces of the roads running into this port held their second wage conference yesterday. J. E. Fairbanks, secretary of the General Managers Association, announced that at least the Railroad of New Jersey and its marine forces will come to an agreement that will make unnecessary a resort to the United States Railroad Labor Board.

"At the conference," Mr. Fairbanks said, "the schedule of wages which the road desired to put into effect April 20 was presented to the men. The employees were told that the purpose of the meeting was to endeavor to arrive at a mutual understanding."

"The men have taken the proposition under advisement and expect to meet the officers of the company to-morrow. The men expressed themselves as convinced that the company intended to give them a square deal and that it would pay the going rate of wages as actually being paid in the community in which the Labor Board. The company agreed on its part that an acceptance of its proposition would not be allowed to militate in any manner to the detriment of the employees."

The marine workers for the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad and their employers will confer on wages on Monday. Other roads will announce, probably to-day, the conference dates with their marine workers.

NEW HAVEN ROAD CALLED 'WEAKEST'

President of Boston and Maine Admits His Own Company Also Needs Money.

HEARING ON INCREASE

New England Lines United in Request for 10 Per Cent. Raise in Rates.

BOSTON, March 16.—James H. Hustis, president of the Boston and Maine Railroad, declined to-day to say whether the purpose of the request of the New England railroads for a 10 per cent. rate increase was to have the New York, New Haven and Hartford road from going into the hands of a receiver.

Mr. Hustis appeared before the special commission which is investigating the railroad situation in New England, and the question was asked by George H. Nutter, who presided. Mr. Hustis said he could not answer because of his position.

The New Haven, he said, was the weakest spot in the New England Railroad system, and the Rutland, Bangor and Aroostook, Boston and Albany and Maine Central lines would not have asked for the increase on their own initiative.

Asked who did take the initiative, Mr. Hustis answered: "All the New England railroads, through the Association of Railroad Executives."

Mr. Hustis asserted that the Boston and Maine did not request the increase because of the New Haven's condition but because of its own, although he added that the Boston and Maine had left to itself could survive until a settlement of the wage dispute is made."

In reply to questions Mr. Hustis said his railroad "is on the edge of a receivership again, but an attempt is being made to keep the road off the rocks."

Immediate relief was necessary, he told the commission. Fixed charges probably could be met without the proposed increase, he said, but it was needed for repairs to the road. He estimated that a wage reduction of 20 per cent. would mean a saving of \$20,000,000 a year.

"Unless the credit of the roads is established there is only one alternative, and that is Government ownership," Mr. Hustis declared.

UNION PACKING MEN TO AID MEAT CUTTERS

Will Stand Together on Wages and Hours.

CHICAGO, March 16.—International officers of every packing plant union under the American Federation of Labor today pledged their organizations to go to any extent in support of the Amalgamated Order of Meat Cutters and Butcher Workers of North America in its dealings with the packers over wages and working hours.

A resolution adopted at a conference of the officials to-day pledged "full moral and financial support" and the officials announced that they had agreed to go to the extent of calling a sympathetic strike, provided the meat cutters walked out and their own organizations authorized a strike.

At the same time it was decided to place the matter before Samuel Gompers at a conference of presidents of the eleven allied unions to be held in Washington Sunday. A telegram asking Mr. Gompers to be present was sent to Frank Morrison, secretary of the American Federation of Labor, to-night.

Dennis Lane, secretary of the meat cutters' organization, and Redmond S. Brennan of Kansas City, its attorney, were chosen to represent the workers at the conference with Secretary of Labor Davis in Washington Monday. To-day's meeting adopted a resolution authorizing Mr. Brennan and Mr. Lane to act for all of the unions.

NIGHT FORCE IS LAID OFF. SPRINGFIELD, Mass., March 16.—The Gilbert & Barker Manufacturing Company, makers of gasoline tanks and pumps, to-day announced that its night force of about 100 men would be discontinued Monday indefinitely. This force was put on about two months ago. It is expected the normal day force will cure for present business.

CUTS CLOSE PAPER MILLS. LAWRENCE, Mass., March 16.—Most of the departments of the Merrimack Paper Mills have been shut down indefinitely as a result of a strike of employees, who refuse to accept a 20 per cent. cut in wages. About 250 are affected.

DAYLIGHT SAVING BLOCKED. Connecticut Legislature Denies It to Cities and Towns. HARTFORD, Conn., March 16.—Daylight saving time in Connecticut, to be fixed by local ordinance, was denied all the cities and towns by the General Assembly to-day. The Senate adopted, 19 to 14, the bill of the Agricultural Committee, which reaffirms that standard time must be the only time in Connecticut.

The bill now goes to Gov. Lake. It takes the daylight saving question out of the hands of the cities and towns, many of which have adopted ordinances providing for turning the clocks ahead either this month or next.

MILK PLANT REOPENS. TREBO, N. S., March 16.—The Borden milk plant here, which closed January 1, because of "overproduction and general depression," to-day reopened.

EXPRESS LOOTERS OPERATED STORES

Jobless in Nation Increase 1 Per Ct.

February Figures Show More Motor, Textile and Leather Workers Busy.

WASHINGTON, March 16.—The number of persons employed in the United States continued to decrease during February, the Department of Labor's employment service announced to-night in its monthly survey of the unemployed. The decrease for last month as compared with January was estimated at 1 per cent.

The reports from New York city, Boston and St. Louis showed an increase in the percentage of employed, while figures for Chicago, Baltimore, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Los Angeles and Pittsburgh gave a decrease in the number of workers able to maintain a hold on their jobs.

The employment service made no attempt to estimate the size of the nation's army of jobless workers, but its figures showed that 1,423 firms, located in the sixty-five principal industrial centers of the country, had in their employ February 28, a total of 1,626,958 workers, as compared with 1,643,263 on January 31. This was a net decrease of 16,305.

Reports to the service showed decided increases in the number employed in the manufacture of automobiles and electrical machinery, and in the production of chemicals, in iron and steel industries, in railroad repair shops, in chemical plants and in producers of liquor and beverages.

Denver, with a decrease of 24.9 per cent. on the basis of the service's reports, led thirty-six cities in which the number of employed was less at the end of February than at the close of the preceding month. On the same percentage basis Youngstown, Ohio, Indianapolis, San Francisco and Grand Rapids followed in the order named.

The percentage of employed showed the greatest increase in Chattanooga, amounting to 67.6 over January. Detroit also was shown to be recovering from the general depression so far as labor was concerned, the percentage of increased employed in that city at the close of February amounting to 24.7 per cent. over the end of January. Other cities showing heavily increased percentage of employed were announced as Peoria, Johnston and Bridgeport.

New England reports showed improvement generally in business and labor conditions, unemployment and part time employment being most prevalent in the textile, shoe, machinery, metal and building trades industries. The New England textile mills, however, were said to be recovering from the period of inactivity.

Reports from New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania varied in accordance with the wide range of industries in those States. Little demand was reported for unskilled workers in New York city, while Pittsburgh reported 22,300 unemployed.

Labor conditions generally in Ohio, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Wisconsin indicated improvement, with prospects of further betterment, the service's reports said.

The northwest central district, composed of Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, Nebraska, Kansas and the Dakotas, also reported an improvement, public works and building activities giving employment to many of those discharged in other industries.

STRIKE HITS LUMBER YARDS. BOSTON, March 16.—The building trades labor troubles were extended to-day when lumber teamsters, handlers and tallymen, numbering 400, walked out in most of the lumber yards of the city. A reduction in wages and refusal by the dealers to treat with a union committee were said to be causes of the strike action. Virtually every branch of the building trades now is involved in the disturbed situation.

S. P. CUTS IN SOUTHERN STATES. NEW ORLEANS, March 16.—Announcement was made here to-day that effective April 15 there would be a reduction of wages of unskilled employees and clerical and station forces and return to the working conditions of December 31, 1917, by the Southern Pacific lines in Louisiana and Texas.

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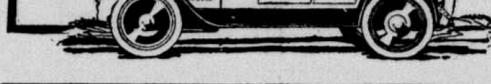
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TO ALL AMERICANS A SUMMONS TO SERVICE

TO-DAY, the Seventeenth of March, the gracious, gentle and appealing figure of the great missionary, teacher and apostle of the Irish race looms before us against the background of sixteen centuries. He came not as a warrior or a conqueror, not as an Alexander or a Caesar, not in military pomp or splendor, but in the meek and lowly garb of a follower and preacher of the gospel of Christianity.

Sixteen hundred years have come and gone since Saint Patrick, without fire or fagot, without rack or rope, but solely with the gentle suasion of the Word of God converted a whole people. The light of his benign mission of mercy and love still shines down the centuries with high hopes of ultimate brotherhood for all mankind. It is in this spirit that the American Committee for Relief in Ireland announces the initiation of the nation wide campaign for Irish Relief on the anniversary of Saint Patrick. Trustworthy information from all sources shows that the people of Ireland are drinking the dregs of human suffering to a still greater degree even than Belgium during the great war. Property is being everywhere destroyed, houses and homes wrecked and devastated, and the aged and the infirm, the women and the children, are the chief sufferers. We are not concerned with the causes of this suffering, our appeal is solely humanitarian, absolutely non-sectarian, and strictly non-political.

We confidently appeal, therefore, to the great heart of the American people. As America succored Belgium so will she come to the aid of stricken Ireland. Our cause is the cause of humanity, our sole purpose to alleviate human suffering. Our faith is in the American people. Ten millions of dollars must be raised within the next few weeks to meet the conditions we have just described. We call upon the American people to contribute to this great cause to the end that want and famine and disease, the fearful aftermath of war, may not overwhelm a whole people.

Signed: Executive Committee: MORGAN J. O'BRIEN, Chairman; Hon. Lee M. Russell, Governor of Mississippi; Hon. Edwin P. Morrow, Governor of Kentucky; Charles G. Dawes, David Starr Jordan, Bernard M. Baruch, Henry Morgenthau, Charles Nagel, Medill McCormick, Honorary Vice-Chairmen; Senator Thomas J. Walsh, Senator David I. Walsh, Senator James D. Phelan, Thomas E. Ryan, Nicholas F. Brady, John D. Ryan, Edward L. Doheny, James J. Phelan, Lawrence Godkin, John Quinn, Martin J. Gillen, Thomas J. Maloney, J. W. McConaughy, William F. Larkin, James A. Flaherty, Joseph C. Pelletier, Bishop Michael J. Gallagher, John F. Lucey, National Director; John J. Pulleyn, Treasurer; Richard Campbell, Secretary. Make Checks Payable to JOHN J. PULLEYN, Treasurer AMERICAN COMMITTEE for RELIEF IN IRELAND 1 West 34th Street New York City Help Wanted Advertisements in The New York Herald are productive of the best kind of commercial and domestic help. Telephone Fitz Roy 6000

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Light Tuxedo Sweaters for Spring—\$13.50 THE word "sensible" applied to clothes has come to mean severity without style. Yet there is nothing more sensible than a light wool sweater for spring and nothing more attractive than Peck & Peck's new Tuxedo model. It is shown in black, white, navy, henna, beige, camel, brown, burnt orange and French gray and has a narrow sash, \$13.50. PECK & PECK 386 Fifth Avenue 501 Fifth Avenue ALSO AT 4 NO. MICHIGAN BOULEVARD, CHICAGO At Palm Beach in Winter At Newport in Summer