

# "Scientific Management" Railroads Spend Thousands Is a Trick Term

"Efficiency Systems," So-called Preparedness and Bogus Patriotism, Are Devices to Fool the Public.

By PRESIDENT GOMPERS in American Federationist.

The case for scientific management has one great advantage. Those who devised the system selected their nomenclature. They have been mindful of the principle laid down by Ivy Lee—the Machiavelli of publicity—they have been very careful of the terms that were lodged in the public mind. They have named devices "scientific management" and "efficiency systems" and then assumed because the systems bore such names, they necessarily resulted in greater production and better methods. Those who knew the devices as names only hastily concluded that opposition to them was opposition to progress greater efficiency and production; so-called preparedness and bogus patriotism.

We must insist that those who propose revolutionary changes shall prove their case. But these proponents of "scientific" methods applied to labor power have dogmatically asserted that their regulations are scientific, that stop-watch studies are scientific, that the bonus system provides a scientific basis for wage payments, that such "efficiency" promotes industrial and commercial development. To hide their hypocrisy and rapacity scientific management experts have coined a vocabulary bristling with suggestive noble thoughts and purposes.

The proponents of scientific management have rallied for desperate defense of their cause. Congress has been bombarded with pronouncements, appeals, denunciations from employers, boards of trade, chambers of commerce, and those professionally interested in scientific management. An investigation was made of scientific management for the federal commission on indus-

trial relations. This investigation was conducted by Prof. Robert F. Hoxie of the University of Chicago, with the advice and assistance of Mr. John P. Frey, editor of the Molders' Journal and Mr. Robert G. Valentine, representing the employers' interests. The report, which was signed by all of these investigators, points out the following defects that were observed:

- (a) Failure to carry into effect with any degree of thoroughness the general elements involved in the system.
- (b) Failure to adopt the full system of "functional foremanship."
- (c) Lack of uniformity in the method of selecting and hiring help.
- (d) Failure to substantiate claims of scientific management with reference to the adaptation, instruction and training of workers.
- (e) Lack of scientific accuracy, uniformity and justice in time study and task-setting.
- (f) Failure to substantiate the claim of having established a scientific and equitable method of determining wages.
- (g) Failure to protect the workers from over-exertion and exhaustion.
- (h) Failure to substantiate the claim that scientific management offers exceptional opportunities for advancement and promotion on a basis of individual merit.
- (i) With reference to the alleged methods and severity of discipline under scientific management the "acrimonious criticism" from trade unions does not seem to be warranted.
- (j) Failure to substantiate the claim that workers are discharged only on just grounds and have an effective appeal to the highest managerial authority.
- (k) Lack of democracy under scientific management.

Asking Support of the Public Through the Daily Press. The Railroads Were Represented By Counsel and Experts at the New York Conference.

CLEVELAND, O., July 7, 1916.

Anything for delay, is the plan of the railroads in dealing with the demand of the employes for an eight-hour day is charged in a statement issued today by the Transportation Brotherhoods.

Railroads are spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to ask the public for their support on a proposition to refer the controversy to the Interstate Commerce Commission.

The public should know that the Interstate Commerce Commission only very recently and on two different occasions, have reported at some length and in considerable detail upon this very question. Its reports comprehend two wide spread investigations since 1910 and are the result of attempts on the part of the railroads to make use of increases in wages to induce the Commission to give its consent to increases in freight rates.

The whole subject of wages was gone into by the Commission with much care and in great detail.

The railways were fully represented by counsel and large numbers of witnesses testified in their behalf.

Eminent counsel appeared in behalf of the opposition to the roads. The attorney of the Commission also participated in the proceedings and prepared and presented for consideration, a great mass of statistical information.

After a full hearing of the investigation upon all the facts and circumstances, the Commission held that there was no evidence before it which established the necessity for high rates.

And again in 1914 the same elaborate and thorough investigation into the subject of wages as having a bearing on the necessity for increased rates, was held.

This federal tribunal said, "it is interesting to note that notwithstanding, wages constitute a large part of the Transportation expense, this item of expense has shown a relatively small advance as compared with other groups."

The Commission called attention to the fact that efficiency of operation and management are the most important things in the reduction of operating ex-

penses, and, as an illustration, the Commission cited the statement of the General Superintendent of Motive Power of the Pennsylvania Railroad, who lessened the cost of building locomotives between 1903 and 1913, although the rate of wages increased nearly 40 per cent.

The official utterances of the Interstate Commerce Commission answer authoritatively, questions raised by the railroads in their opposition to the present movement of the railway Brotherhoods for an eight-hour work day for employes in freight train service.

These questions have been raised by the railroads and, by the roads through the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, solely to confuse and perplex the public mind and in an endeavor to prevent the American people from securing a clear perspective of the social and economic significance of the establishment of a shorter work day, for some 350,000 train employes.

Railroad officials well know that the Interstate Commerce Commission has no power to fix the rate of wages after an investigation of the subject and the whole controversy would, after an investigation, be in the same condition as it is at the present moment.

Should however, the Interstate Commerce Commission recommend the granting of the demands of the employes, the Commission would automatically be held responsible for any increase in operating expenses resulting from the granting of the demands; therefore, would be compelled to assent to an increased freight rate which is perhaps the very thing that the railroads are trying to secure out of this controversy.

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**WORKERS MAKING HISTORY.**

Washington.—Last Monday Dr. Ad and Luis N. Morones, representing Mexican workers, telegraphed from Eagle Pass, Texas, to President Gompers that a delegation of Mexican trade unionists would be in Washington the following Saturday, July 1, to meet with President Gompers and the A. F. of L. executive council, which has been in session all week.

This meeting will be the result of a suggestion by President Gompers, several weeks ago, that representatives of A. F. of L. and the Mexican organized movement meet in El Paso, Texas, at a date to be decided later for the purpose of exchanging matters of mutual interest. After correspondence between the parties, it was decided that the meeting be held in Washington.

It is the first time that a meeting of this character has been held and indicates the increasing solidarity between organized workers on the North American continent.

**RAILWAY CLERKS WIN STRIKE.**

Maybrook, N. Y.—The Brotherhood of Railway Clerks has won a 15 days strike against the Central New England railroad. The company attempted to construe an agreement that would force these employes to work nine hours a day instead of eight and one-half hours.

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**STOP WATCH SYSTEM REJECTED BY HOUSE**

Washington.—After a spirited debate last week, the house, on a roll call vote, accepted Congressman Tavenner's bill which prohibits any money in this budget being used for "stop watch," speeding up or premium systems. The vote was 197 to 117.

Friends of the amendment insisted that the proposal is not intended to prevent extra compensation for superior service, and that only bonus and premium systems are attacked.

Congressman Van Dyke called attention to the order of May 25, 1915, signed by J. P. Johnston, general superintendent of the railway mail service, in which speed tests were discontinued as a part of "our efficiency rating system."

Despite these statements, petitions of both skilled and unskilled workers against the system, and the published records of hearings held on this question, several congressmen made strong objection.

In the opinion of these patriots, the Tavenner amendment was fraught with evil possibilities. Congressman Madden of Illinois said the amendment would place all men on a level, and in an eloquent outburst he declared that workers would be sent back "to the Paleozoic age, where everybody was a savage, where civilization was unknown, and where progress was never thought of."

Congressman Moore was also alarmed at industrial prospects if the amendment passed. The Pennsylvania law maker believed it would "reduce workmen to a common level and prevent any one from rising above that level in compensation."

Congressmen Tavenner, Nolan and Keating insisted that the amendment was only intended to check "stop watch" practices. The two first named representatives read petitions from skilled and unskilled employes of the Watertown arsenal to prove their point, and Congressman Keating declared that those who oppose the amendment "want to use the 'stop watch' on other men and those that are supporting the amendment had the 'stop watch' used on them."

Later, the house placed the "stop watch" amendment in the army appropriation bill.

**SHIP CAULKERS WANT MORE.**

Portland, Ore.—The Ship Caulkers' union has notified all ship concerns in this city that beginning today wages shall be \$5 a day.

**COTTON INDUSTRY EXPOSED.**

Atlanta, Ga.—Henry M. Stanley, commissioner of commerce and labor of this State, has published the first complete and thorough report of the condition of Georgia textile mills last year.

In the 166 mills 37,305 operatives were employed. These included 4,976 children under 16 years of age. Total wages paid by these mills was \$12,355,888.40. This includes the superintendents, managers, clerks, and all others connected with the industry. The average wage, including the children, is \$331.20 a year or \$6.34 a week.

These cotton mill owners are opposed to trade unionism and are the leading opponents in the fight against the child labor law, now pending in the United States Congress.

**ASK BETTER VENTILATION.**

Los Angeles, Cal.—The Moving Picture Operators' union has inaugurated a campaign for better ventilation for its members while working.

"It is indeed a difficult matter," says President Harden, "to explain to the layman the dangers of badly ventilated and unsanitary operating rooms, for few, if any, of the motion-picture patrons have the opportunity or inclination to visit the workshop of the man behind the gun—the man who daily sits hour after hour in a little cubby hole and causes the picture to flicker across the screen. The high rates charged us by the insurance companies, however, should be absolute proof of the hazardous nature of our work."

"Already we have had two deaths in our organization as a direct result of the confinement under which our men must labor, and we are at the present time paying sick benefits in an effort to combat further fatalities. There are also several of our members who, while being in no immediate danger, are, nevertheless, being constantly treated for affliction of the lungs, caused by the poisonous gases arising from the burning carbons of the arc lamps. It is to alleviate conditions such as these that we are pleading for better air in which to work."

**WANT DAY OF REST.**

San Francisco.—The Labor Council has instructed its officials to ask the Washington authorities to arrange for a six-day work week for engineers and firemen employed at army posts and in federal buildings in the vicinity of San Francisco.

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