

MINISTERS SPEEDING TO STRIKE-SWEPT CITY OF WEST

GOVERNMENT TAKES PRECAUTIONS TO MAINTAIN ORDER IN WINNIPEG

Ministers of Labor and Interior Leave Canadian Capital for Scene of the Vast Strike—Minister of Militia States Troops Are Ready to Protect Life and Property, but No Serious Disturbances Are Reported.

IS WESTERN CITY UNDER SWAY OF WORKERS' SOVIET COUNCIL?

Absolutely Contradictory Reports as to Situation Within the "Lost Metropolis"—Assurances in All Despatches That Order and Quiet Prevail—Industrial Unrest Said to be Spreading, and Strikes in Other Centres Feared to be Imminent.

(Staff Correspondent of The Globe.)

OTTAWA, May 19.—Senator Robertson and Hon. Arthur Meighen are leaving for Winnipeg early to-morrow morning to view at close quarters the situation created by the great strike there. Before leaving for his train Senator Robertson said that there was nothing new reported to him as to the situation, and it was the very difficulty of getting reliable information which had determined them to go to the city themselves.

"What have you the power to do when you get there?" he was asked.

"I cannot say until I get there. It is always a foolish thing to prejudge the situation. We will go there to see what the state of affairs is and to do whatever seems to be called for."

ORDER TO BE MAINTAINED.

It was learned here to-night that the Government considers every necessary military precaution has been taken. The Mounted Police are in Winnipeg in strength, and a considerable force of militia is in readiness. There are, however, no reports of trouble either at the Department of Labor or the Department of Militia.

NO CALL FOR TROOPS.

General Mewburn, Minister of Militia, informed The Globe that no request had reached the Government for troops, adding that in the event of trouble breaking out there are several detachments of the Royal Northwest Mounted Police and strong militia forces on the ground. The latter include the 79th Cameron Highlanders and the 90th Winnipeg Rifles (the "Little Black Devils").

DO NOT FEAR DISTURBANCE.

Mr. R. L. Richardson, member for Springfield, and editor of The Winnipeg Tribune, whose publication was stopped by

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about thirty men all told, went on strike this morning for higher wages. Teamsters are receiving \$85 per month and day laborers \$2.50 per day at present.

Trouble at Midland Smelter.

Midland, May 19.—One hundred and forty employees of the Midland Iron & Steel Co. quit work at noon on Saturday. In an effort to avoid trouble the management sent representatives of the men to Hamilton and other points to ascertain the wages and conditions there, agreeing beforehand to meet any scale being paid elsewhere. The delegates learned that the local plant was paying from one to five cents an hour more than was being paid at the plants visited, but the men demand an eight-hour day. This the management has declined to grant, and though representatives of the men have examined the company's books to verify the impracticability of their demands no agreement has yet been reached, and the firms at the smelter have been banked. A meeting of the men has been called for to-night, a number of the older hands not being in sympathy with the strike.

Hope to Avoid Trouble.

Brantford, May 19.—[Hope is expressed here that conferences to be held this week between employers and employees would result successfully in a compromise on the demands being made. These conferences will be held throughout the week, and there will be nothing doing except the matter of negotiations. "It is hoped to reconcile the big majority of the men in any compromise which may be reached, although there are always a few radicals who cannot be satisfied," was the statement on the situation by a metal trades representative. Every effort, it is understood, will be made to avoid any labor trouble in Brantford, and if such a happy culmination ensues it will be a strong point in favor of this city in the campaign which every centre is making just at present for new industries.

Tense Situation in London.

London, Ont., May 19.—Secretary James Hussey of the Trades and Labor Council revealed this afternoon that plans are well laid for the general strike procedure here if Toronto Labor officials order London out.

The situation, according to Mr.

Hussey, is tense in London, and if the need arises he states that a general strike will be ordered throughout Canada. London is looking for the call hourly. In that event the same regulations as adopted by the strikers in Winnipeg are to be followed here, he says. That will mean that special provision will be made for a food supply and for the operation of the electric light and water-works systems.

Drug Clerks Threaten Strike.

Quebec, May 19.—The latest in strikes threatens Upper Town druggists in Quebec city. Their clerks may walk out if they do not obtain better hours.

THE GOVERNMENT TAKES PRECAUTIONS

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the strikers, is optimistic that the situation will soon straighten out.

Sir Thomas White is also quoted as "not apprehensive," and as believing that "the thing will peter out."

Major Andrews, member for Centre Winnipeg, expects order to prevail, and says that the strike would never have happened if certain employers had been willing to recognize the necessity of acceding to the demands for collective bargaining.

(Special Despatch to The Globe, via train to Brandon and wire to The Chicago Tribune.)

A Soviet Government.

Brandon, Man., May 19.—So far as 30,000 strikers and their sympathizers are concerned a "Soviet Government" exists in Winnipeg. It was instituted without any particular formality at midnight Saturday on the river front within a stone's throw of the police station and a few blocks removed from the City Hall. There was no violence, but considerable cheering by about 3,000 strikers.

Preacher the "Dictator."

The Rev. W. Ivens, Editor of The Labor News and generally recognized as the brain centre of the trades union cause in the city, was the principal speaker and several members of the Strike Executive followed.

The speakers with as much calmness as if they were discussing an academic thesis, declared that from now on the Soviet Government, under the direction of the Trades Council, would administer the affairs of the city. Mr. Ivens said that the new form of Government would soon regulate all the cities of Canada.

Mr. Ivens added that two representatives from the City Council would be invited to Trades Hall to sit on the Soviet Directory with the members selected by the Strike Executive.

No Protest From Authorities.

This was all done without protest from the authorities and, with a few policemen standing around the stage was set for the next phase of the industrial siege which has paralyzed Western Canada's largest city. In fact, the news that a Soviet Government would be proclaimed Saturday at midnight had been announced at Labor Temple Friday night, and generally discussed over the city. It provoked much ridicule, but some very serious comment, and the strikers and their friends seemed to see nothing unusual in the process.

The new scheme of Government had been discussed for weeks by Socialist organs circulated, some openly and others surreptitiously, through the streets of Winnipeg with some protests from returned soldiers, but apparently without provoking energetic action, though numerous wires of protest were sent by citizen bodies to Ottawa urging that the mounted police be instructed to act.

But in spite of this grim proceeding by the strikers, Winnipeg has not become excited; in fact the feeling that bloodshed will be avoided was actually more general yesterday than in the earlier days of the strike.

While the Soviet Government was being proclaimed at St. James Park, the Citizens' Committee of one thousand, was in session at the Industrial Bureau, with probably 500 automobiles stretched along Main street on both sides for blocks. Both sides are abundantly supplied with spies and constant reports are coming.

"Soviet" Rumors a Foke.

Rumors that a Soviet Government had been instituted in Winnipeg are utterly false. These reports have not only been denounced by city officials and leading members of Citizens' Vigilance Committees, but by union officials. Two high union officials told the Associated Press this afternoon that they felt much embarrassed by "fake stories of Soviet Government," which, they said, had been sent to the United States by men who yesterday went from Winnipeg to border cities and filed despatches to American newspapers.

Railwaymen Ready to Go Out.

R. B. Russell, Business Agent for the Machinists' Union, issued the following announcement at union headquarters to-day:

"The engineers, firemen, switchmen and trainmen on the Government roads have taken a vote, which was unanimous. They are ready to strike at the call of the Central Strike Committee. Canadian Pacific Railwaymen of the same department are voting."

Winnipeg Still Quiet.

Ottawa, May 19.—Word received by the Minister of Labor to-day from Winnipeg is to the effect that the city is still quiet. The threatened clash between the authorities and strikers, which was foreshadowed in a message received at the department last night, did not materialize.

Saskatoon Workers Voted.

The Minister has been informed that the workers of Saskatoon yesterday took a vote as to whether they would strike in sympathy with the Winnipeg strikers. He has not yet been advised of the result of the vote.

Strike at Brandon To-day.

Winnipeg, May 19.—President Baker of the Brandon, Man., Trades Council, announced at union headquarters here that a general strike would be declared to-morrow at Brandon. The strike presumably will be in sympathy with the general strike in progress here. The situation here to-day was practically unchanged.

Strike Proves Unsuccessful.

Sydney, N.S., May 19.—After an unsuccessful strike lasting over two weeks union carpenters employed by the Bate-Mahon Company on construction for the Dominion Steel Corporation this morning went back to work at the scale of time and wages in vogue before the walkout. The carpenters demanded an increase from 65 to 70 cents an hour and an eight-hour instead of a nine-hour day. The company offered 65

cents an hour for an eight-hour day.

Toronto Firemen Ask Board.

Ottawa, May 19.—The firemen of the city of Toronto have applied to the Minister of Labor for a Board of Conciliation to deal with the dispute between them and the corporation on a question of wages. As the employer is a municipality the Minister cannot appoint a board save by concurrence of the disputing parties, and he has so advised the applicants. He has also informed the Mayor to this effect.

Strike at O. A. C.

Quebec, May 19.—Practically all the teamsters and day laborers at the Ontario Agricultural College