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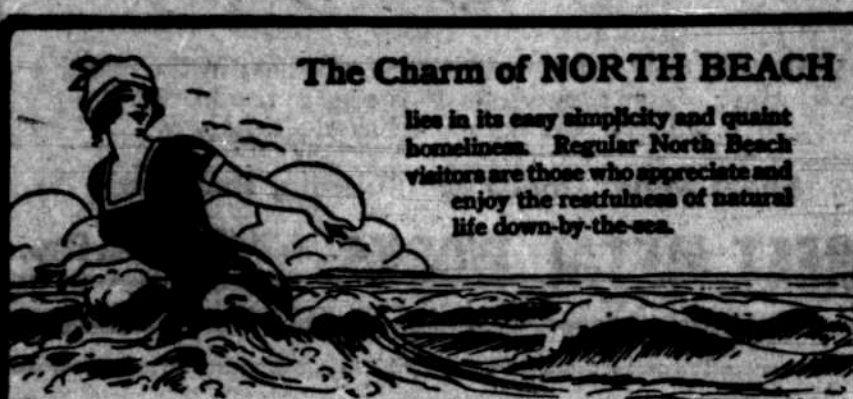
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RAILWAY MEN NOT SEEKING REAL EIGHT HOUR DAY

Actual Object is Enormous Wage Increase For No More Work, Companies Declare.

What is an eight hour day? The answer to this question is one of the main points in the wage controversy between the railroads and their employees, conductors, firemen and brakemen which will come to a head early in August, when the employees complete the nation wide strike vote they are now taking to enforce their demands.

The railroad managers say that the train employees' organizations are misleading the public when they refer to their demands as providing for an eight hour day. They declare that the eight hour "basic" day which the employees are contending for merely provides for an enormous increase in wages by increasing the rate of pay per hour without either limiting the working day to eight hours or even requiring a full eight hours work for a day's pay.

The spokesmen for the brotherhoods admit that they are not asking for a "real" or "absolute" eight hour day, but they insist that the granting of the demand for a day's wage for eight hours or less and for 50 per cent more than the regular hourly rate for all overtime will make it so expensive for the roads to work their train crews for more than eight hours that they will increase the speed of their trains and thus effect a reduction in the working hours of the train crews.

This assertion was explained recently by W. G. Lee, president of the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen, who said:

"If all terminals were 100 miles apart we would be in a position to demand an absolute eight hour day. But we recognize that the divisions vary in length, many exceeding 100 miles. As a concession to the railroads we have agreed to the twelve and one-half mile basis in lieu of the absolute eight hour day. On long divisions it permits them (the managements) to ignore the eight hour day and escape the overtime by simply making an average speed of trains equal to or exceeding twelve and one-half miles an hour."

On the other hand, the railroad managers assert that they cannot increase the average speed of their trains without decreasing the load of each train and running more trains, which would require the employment of more train crews to handle the same amount of freight they now carry. This, they say, would increase operating expenses by even more than the increase in wages would amount to.

In order to provide for a real eight hour day the railroad managers declare many changes would have to be made not only in the working of the demands as presented by the employees, but also in many of the most important of the other provisions of the present wage schedules which the brotherhoods insist shall be left unchanged. Most of the present schedules applying to freight and switching service provide for a day's wage for each 100 miles or less their trains run or for each ten hours or less of work, thus guaranteeing a day's pay to any man who is called for any work during the day. They also provide for extra payment for hours in excess of ten or miles in excess of 100. In passenger service the basis for a day's pay is even less. In the case of engineers and firemen it is five hours in eastern territory and six hours and forty minutes in western territory. The demands provide for a day's pay for eight hours or less or 100 miles or less and do not apply to the passenger service, which is already on a basis more favorable to the employees than an eight hour day.

The demand for time and one-half for overtime would therefore penalize the railroads, they say, for time required to complete a train run in excess of eight hours or for any delay, while the employees would still continue to draw a full day's pay in many cases for considerably less than the standard day's work.

TO SETTLE LABOR DISPUTES.

Federal Body Should Fix Railway Rates and Wages.

Baton Rouge, La.—Commenting on the prospective railroad strike for higher wages, the Times says:

Congress should pass an act at once giving the interstate commerce commission authority to settle the labor disputes, just as it has the right to fix rates.

It is more important that the interstate commerce commission have the right to fix wages and settle disputes than it is that it have the right to determine freight rates and prohibit rebates.

Business can huddle along under high freight rates. Death would follow a general railroad strike.

Both the railroads and the railroad men may be able to withstand a strike, but the public cannot. The public is not in a position to face a general strike of the railroads in the country. The calamity is too awful to contemplate.

It would be more frightful than a dozen Mexican wars. It should not be in the power of a set of men to bring such a disaster to the public.

The commission has the right to say what the railroads shall charge for their service.

This commission should be given the right to say what they shall pay for the labor that it takes to perform this service.

And it should be given the authority at once.

DENVER BUSINESS MEN APPEAL TO CONGRESS.

They Want Interstate Commerce Commission to Stop Railroad Strikes.

Denver.—Alarmed by the prospective strike of railway train employees to secure higher wages, the members of the Denver Clearing House association unanimously passed the following resolution:

Whereas, At a recent meeting in New York between managers of the railroads and executives of the trainmen's brotherhoods, called for the discussion of wage schedules, at which conference interested parties were unable to agree; and Whereas, Subsequently the brotherhood representatives refused to consider arbitration and are now taking a strike vote, which may end in a general strike, such as would paralyze the industry of the country.

Therefore, be it resolved, That by this resolution the Denver Clearing House association, regardless of the merits of the controversy as between the railroads and their employees, does hereby express its disapproval of a strike as a medium of adjustment, and we hereby call on our senators and congressmen to interest themselves in the passing by congress of such a measure as will have the effect of instructing and empowering the interstate commerce commission to take cognizance of these conditions and effect a fair and equitable adjustment as between the railroads and their employees, thereby preventing a nation wide railroad strike.

R. R. STRIKE VOTE IS TO BE ENDED AUG. 5

Men Required to Vote—Ballot Ignored Arbitration—Gives Leaders Full Authority.

The results of the strike vote being taken by the railroad engineers, firemen, conductors and brakemen to enforce their demands for a \$100,000,000 increase in wages will be determined early in August, according to a circular of instructions issued by the executive officers of the "big four" brotherhoods of train employees. The local chairmen of the organizations are to take the votes of the employees in their districts and forward them to the general chairman on each road not later than July 25. The general chairman for the eastern and southeastern roads are to report at headquarters in New York not later than Aug. 1 and those for the western roads not later than Aug. 5. The ballots will then be counted and another meeting will be held with the national conference committee of the railroads.

The strike ballots are attached to a brief statement of the conference between the brotherhood committee and the committee representing the railroads which was held in New York in June, at which the railroads proposed either arbitration or reference of the entire wage controversy to the interstate commerce commission for settlement. Both proposals were rejected by the brotherhood leaders, and the wording of the strike ballot gives the employees no opportunity to vote on the question of arbitration. The form of the ballot is as follows:

I have personally read the foregoing statement and believe the request for an eight hour basic day, with time and one-half for all overtime worked in all except passenger service, a just demand and hereby authorize the chief executives and general chairmen of the B. L. E., B. L. F. and E. O. R. C. and B. R. T. to act as my agents or attorneys in dealing for a settlement of these questions, and if the said chief executives and general chairmen are unable to otherwise effect a settlement satisfactory to them I hereby cast my vote..... A STRIKE (For or against)

According to the circular of instructions, "all members holding seniority rights or actually employed in the service affected by this movement will be required to vote." The man voting is to sign the ballot and hand it to the person authorized to take the vote, in a sealed envelope with his name written on the outside, "but under no circumstances will he be permitted to take it away with him," and "all members are cautioned against giving out information or discussing the questions involved."

Says E-therhoods Err. Milwaukee, Wis.—The Free Press says editorially:

We think the brotherhoods are making a mistake in refusing arbitration. If they are fairly entitled to what they ask for, impartial arbitrators will award it to them, and the public, which finally foots all transportation bills, will draw its belt a bit tighter, pay the price either in higher rates or diminished service, or both, and there will be no interruption of the country's commerce.

But if American business shall be thrown out of gear by a general stoppage of railroad service because the brotherhoods have refused to arbitrate, public sympathy will undoubtedly be with the railroad owners and managers. And without the support of public opinion the brotherhoods could not win a strike. . . .

Capital must get its living wage as well as labor.

A general strike would effect every individual in the country. It must, not occur. — Philadelphia Inquirer.

A strike such as is threatened would be a calamity to all the people of the United States.—Brooklyn Eagle.

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