

LICENSING PROPOSAL TO BE INVESTIGATED

Principle of Pipefitters Bill
Is Approved by Labor
Committee

PROTESTS REGISTERED

A resolution holding that the "committee is in accord with the principle of the bill, but considers that further investigation should be made by the Department of Labor into the general principles of licensing pipefitters, electricians, steamfitters, and plumbers, and also proper municipal or Provincial inspection of work and materials," was passed by the Labor Committee of the Ontario Legislature yesterday, after lengthy consideration of the proposed legislation providing for the examination and licensing of pipefitters.

The advisability of inspection, which had not been provided in the original legislation, was repeatedly stressed by the deputations which appeared before the committee yesterday morning, sharing honors with a controversy between pipefitters and stationary engineers, in which the latter protested against the clause requiring all pipefitters' business to be done by licensed pipefitters. In this connection an amendment was introduced excepting maintenance, repairs, and alterations and minor extensions, when done by regularly employed stationary engineers, under the supervision of the chief operating engineer of a steam or refrigerating plant, from the operations of the act. The amendment formed a subject for comment by appearing witnesses.

George Milligan, appearing on behalf of the steamfitters, painted a dark picture of present conditions in the industry, contending that steamfitting was being done by workmen unskilled in any form of the work and that second-hand material was being used on new jobs. A great number of accidents could be eliminated if the work was done by qualified men and properly inspected. Proper licensing, he said, would also militate against unscrupulous workmen who have entered the business, until, in certain cases, heating systems were practically worthless.

Other witnesses testified in the same tenor, one representative of the unions declaring that "the steamfitting industry today is nothing but a racket." Members particularly questioned the representatives of the industry in respect to their contentions that there was at present no satisfactory inspection and that the use of second-hand equipment was undesirable, but witnesses so questioned reaffirmed the truth of their observations.

Stationary engineers were represented by a deputation which offered no objections to the licensing provisions, but protested against any clauses requiring steamfitters to do work which, they held, they were authorized to do. "We have to live with our work and, if anything goes wrong, it comes back on us," a representative pointed out.

Ernest Ingles of London, Ont., representing the electricians, discussed the problems in that industry. There was no check on the purchase and installation of utilization equipment, he said, and he claimed that there was an uncontrolled competition from "jerry" contractors, who worked after the skeleton electric wiring had been inspected and approved. Mr. Ingles suggested that every sale of electric equipment should be reported to the inspector, who could then check up on its use.

MINIMUM WAGE ACT AMENDMENT IS SEEN AS LIABLE TO ABUSE

Charles H. Ball Addresses
Labor Committee on
New Legislation

OTHER VIEWS ARE HEARD

The minimum wage amendment, which is awaiting proclamation before becoming law, was brought before the Labor Committee at Queen's Park yesterday when Charles H. Ball, Provincial Chairman of the Trades and Labor Congress of Canada, appeared by arrangement with the Department of Labor, to speak on one feature of the new legislation.

Commending the improvements implemented by the enactment, Mr. Ball held that even the amended law would be liable to abuse, particularly because of the clauses setting a higher minimum wage for a lower maximum of hours in large centres in contrast with the scales prevailing in the smaller communities. Referring to mass buying, Mr. Ball suggested that these provisions would induce manufacturers to employ modern transportation as a link between manufacturing in the rural sections and selling in the urban centres. Factories doing the same business in the two different zones might be particularly involved, he said.

Hon. Dr. J. M. Robb pointed out that the great number of retail stores in outlying areas had to be taken into consideration. William Morrison (Conservative, Hamilton East), Chairman of the Labor Committee, and other members admitted some force in Mr. Ball's contention, but pointed out that the legislation had gone so far that successful amendment was out of the question. The advantages of separate legislation for factories and for "service" labor were mentioned by Mr. Morrison, who also lauded the idea of a permanent committee which could study labor problems during the recess.

"Are you in favor of a minimum wage for men?" one member asked Mr. Ball. Mr. Ball answered: "I am not."

Mr. Morrison remarked a minimum wage for unskilled labor was a matter worthy of consideration.

PRICE GIVES ANSWER TO LIQUOR CRITICISM

States, After Withdrawals,
\$422,959 Left With
Board

GOVERNMENT'S MONEY

Liberal House Leader McQuibban's allegations regarding Liquor Board accounts, based on his contention that funds were diverted to the Provincial Treasury to create a surplus for the Government, were answered in Public Accounts Committee yesterday by Attorney-General Price, with the statements that all Liquor Board funds are the property of the Government; and that withdrawals have been made at a rate that reduced the surplus, but, nevertheless, left \$422,959 still in the hands of the board at Oct. 31, the end of the past fiscal year.

Colonel Price noted that Dr. McQuibban and D. Paul Munro, Liberal lawyer, had been given access to Liquor Board accounts for the year 1932, concerning which the Opposition had displayed curiosity. When the Liquor Board started operations, it had been loaned \$500,000 by the Government, and this loan gradually had been paid off. After the repayment, the board, over a period of years, had been enabled to build up a surplus. In the fiscal year ended Oct. 31, 1928, a surplus of \$603,088 had been established, after payment of \$7,225,000 to the Government; in 1929 the surplus was \$2,156,448, after a payment of \$7,505,000; in 1930 the surplus was \$1,820,967, after payment of \$7,495,000. In 1931, said Colonel Price, this meant that there was a surplus of \$4,000,000 on hand, and when, in succeeding years, the profits were not so large, \$1,508,346 was

taken from the surplus in 1931 to make a payment of \$10,000,000 to the Treasurer; in 1932, \$2,627,579 was taken, to make a payment of \$9,260,000; and in 1933, \$26,378, to make a payment of \$5,450,000.

The question of whether the Province should have withdrawn that amount was a matter of business wisdom, but the fact remained that all the money belonged to the Province, said Colonel Price.

Hon. Harry Nixon, Progressive Leader, asked why the money had not been shown in accounts receivable, and the Attorney-General agreed that this might have been a wise step.

The committee adjourned for the session yesterday.