

March 29

LICENSING SUGGESTED IN BUILDING INDUSTRY BY LABOR COMMITTEE

**Report Also Recommends
General Contractor
Must Produce Names of
Subcontractors at Time
of Tendering**

STUDY OF MINIMUM FOR MEN IN ZONES

Official findings rising from the investigation into subcontracting initiated by Russell Nesbitt (Conservative, Bracondale) were incorporated in a report tabled in the Ontario Legislature yesterday by the Labor Committee. Highlights of the report recommended:

That the Government devise a licensing system applicable to the building industry throughout Ontario.

That a general contractor must produce at the time of tendering the names of subcontractors whose figures have been used in making up his tender, and at the time of awarding the tender, the subcontractors' prices, and on these figures the subcontracts shall be let.

That Ontario conditions should be studied with a view to the possible passage of a minimum wage law for men based on a zoning system.

Basis of Equality.

That the prevailing rate of union wages shall be set forth at the time of submitting tenders for all public buildings in order to place all contractors on the same basis of equality.

That a committee of the House should be appointed to study and investigate into all conditions pertaining to the building trade and construction industry, including unemployment, working during the recess, and reporting to the next session.

A report of proceedings mentioned that representatives from contractors, subcontractors, and every branch of the trades organizations had presented their views during the hearings. All were agreed, the report stated, that the building trade was in a very chaotic state and that some compulsory legislation should be devised and passed, licensing every one engaged in the industry. Fair wages, hours of labor, inclusion of wage schedules in large contracts, and duplicate contracts were also discussed, according to the report.

The indictment of conditions was reaffirmed in a clause stating: "The committee regrets to say that the facts produced before the committee go to show that there is an increasing number of contractors who operate only in the capacity of brokers and perform no work and derive their profits before even any of the material is on the job."

Lien Law Is Opposed.

Mechanics' liens were also a subject of discussion, the report saying that 90 per cent. of those who appeared before the committee were opposed to the Ontario mechanics' lien law, and recommended that the law should apply to labor only. The opinion of the witnesses had held, according to the report, that supply houses were taking advantage of the law to extend credit to unreliable and irresponsible contractors to the general detriment. The witnesses' reason for the exclusion of all save the working man was "that the supply house might have a prior lien without the knowledge of the working man who, in turn, by making use of the material in the building really created the only value on which a lien could be registered."

The NRA code, the licensing system in California, and the South Africa code were recommended for study as an aid in devising the licensing system.

Personnel of the committee which will function during the recess was also announced in the report. This body will be composed of William Morrison (Conservative, Hamilton East) and Chairman of the standing committee on labor; T. A. Murphy (Conservative, Toronto Beaches); Earl Hutchinson (Labor, Kenora); C. A. Robertson, the Liberal Whip, and Mr. Nesbitt.