

No Dissenting Vote As Men's Wage Act Gets Second Reading

Ontario and Quebec Will
Work Together in Estab-
lishing Minimums, De-
clares Hon. David Croll

PRINCIPLE APPROVED

Second reading of the Minimum Wage Bill for men was obtained by unanimous vote of the whole House last night, the Conservatives joining with the Government in sending the measure into committee stage.

Though the Opposition approved the bill in principle, it was not a scene of amity in the Legislature. The presence of only seven members of the Conservative group in the House brought criticism from Premier Hepburn, who said there was a marked lack of enthusiasm on the part of the Opposition, and he accused them of acting in a "silent, sulky manner."

The Prime Minister wound up the debate on the bill, and he clashed briefly with Opposition Leader George Henry.

Replies to Argument.

Answering one of the chief arguments against a minimum wage for men in Ontario, Hon. David Croll, told the Legislature that not only would Quebec Province enact similar legislation, but that the Quebec board would work in harmony with the Ontario body set up to administer the act here.

The Labor Minister spoke for an hour at second reading of his bill. A. Russell Nesbitt (Cons., Bracadale), one of the most outspoken champions of the workingmen in the Opposition ranks, came the statement that he thoroughly agreed with the principle of the bill, though he warned that difficulty would be experienced in classifying labor in the various industries and in establishing a minimum rate. It was a step in the right direction, however, the Bracadale member declared.

Rate Not Yet Set.

In summing up the Government's policy, Mr. Croll referred to the speculation in the press over the probable minimum to be established. He said he wished to make it perfectly clear to the House that it was speculation and no more.

"The act empowers the Industry and Labor Board to investigate conditions in any industry in any area of the Province and to set minimum rates which it considers suited to the type of work and to the local cost of living. I have no intention of dictating to the board. From its composition I am certain that the rates it sets will be fair both to employees and to employers. Not many of us can quarrel with the rates similar established for women by the existing Minimum Wage Board. Similar freedom will be given the Industry and Labor Board."

Mr. Croll had a pile of pay envelopes on his desk and he picked them up, one by one, and told the Legislature the amount of wages paid working men by chain stores, factories and other employers of unskilled or semi-skilled men. He gave numerous instances of men receiving as low as \$5 weekly for an 80-hour week; of married men receiving less than \$9 for a full week's work.

Cites Some Wages.

Mr. Croll said he had received evidence of the following wage scales for adult male workers: In

Hunters Must Display Badge While Shooting To Show License Paid

Farmers Will Have Way of Knowing Whether or Not Sportsmen Have Right to Hunt on Land

Hunters in Ontario will be required to wear a button which will signify that they have paid the required fee for the license issued by the Government, Hon. H. C. Nixon, Minister of Fish and Game, told the Fish and Game Committee of the Legislature yesterday.

Badges Once Used.

A delegation from the Ontario Hunters' Game Protective Association asked for various changes in existing laws covering wild life, and when the button idea was broached, Mr. Nixon said it would be put into effect. The Minister recalled that the issuing of a button with a hunting license had been tried before and discontinued a few years ago.

Farmers would be in a position to know if sportsmen on their land were entitled to shoot game, if the button was worn by the huntsmen, it was explained. At present farmers had no way of knowing whether hunters were entitled to hunt as the man with the gun did not have to produce his license if he did not wish to do so.

Additional game wardens were asked by the protective association and some criticism was voiced by one of the speakers over the use of Provincial Police as game wardens. It was claimed that the number of wardens was inadequate in many areas.

Would Trap Beaver.

Commercial raising of pheasants was not wholly approved, and the fifty-fifty law regarding the shooting of does and bucks also came in for criticism.

Warm praise, however, was given the committee, Mr. Nixon and his Deputy, James Taylor, for their efforts on behalf of fish and game and their conservation. Confidence was expressed in the policy of the Department of Game and Fish under the present Administration.

Legal representatives of the Hudson's Bay Co., asked the committee to consider an open season on beaver. It was pointed out that for the past four years there has been closed seasons for this animal, and that they were now plentiful. The Indians were not trapping to any great extent and it was further suggested that an area be allotted exclusively to them.

Hamilton, hotel workers, 66 hours, \$5 to \$8; Windsor, hotel workers, 70 hours, \$5 to \$9; Windsor, engineers, 60 to 100 hours, \$12 to \$15; Hamilton, implement company employees, 48 hours, \$12.24; Penetang, box makers, \$4.50 for a full week; Chatham, brick makers, 60 hours, \$9.50; Toronto, drug clerks, 75 hours, averaging less than \$10; Sault Ste. Marie, store employees, \$2 to \$3 a week.

"In Ontario chain stores 25 per cent. of the employees average \$6.32 a week," he said. "For 18.16 per cent. average pay is \$6.93 a week. These stores go in for the boy method of employing men. Boys' wages have no reference to the fact the person receiving them may be a married man. Often they receive \$5 to \$6 a week, less than a boy's wages."

"In the Ontario shoe industry the average is less than \$9.87 for a full week's work," he said.

Hits Common Argument.

"To the great bulk of workers, to the wage earners supporting more than 1,000,000 of the Province's population, the new Minimum Wage Act gives a degree of security which they have never enjoyed before," said Mr. Croll.

After outlining the exemptions in the act, farm hands and domestics, the Minister dealt with the advantages that would accrue as a result of the new legislation. He refuted the truth of the criticism that the minimum would become the maximum, and in this connection he quoted prominent labor officials in England on their experience with minimum scales of pay. While there was no basis of experience in Ontario as far as men were concerned, there was the record of seventeen years' operation of the minimum wage for women, Mr. Croll pointed out.