

**REPORT OF ROYAL COMMISSION APPOINTED TO INQUIRE INTO THE  
ALLEGED UNREST EXISTING IN THE SHIPBUILDING INDUSTRY  
IN THE PROVINCE OF QUEBEC**

**A** REPORT was received from the Royal Commission appointed under the Inquiries Act to inquire into the alleged unrest existing in the province of Quebec as between various firms engaged in the shipbuilding industry and their employees, with special regard to wages, working hours, overtime, and other conditions of employment. The Commission was composed as follows:

The Honourable Mr. Justice F. S. MacLennan, Montreal (chairman), Mr. Thomas Robb, Montreal, and Mr. J. M. Walsh, Quebec. The award was accompanied by copies of signed agreements entered into between various firms and their employees; also recommendations as to the settlement of disputes in other localities where signed agreements had not been effected.

**Report of Royal Commission**

To the Honourable  
T. W. Crothers, K.C., M.P.,  
Minister of Labour, Ottawa.

Sir,—

The Royal Commission appointed under the Great Seal of Canada, on July

29, 1918, to inquire into alleged unrest existing in the province of Quebec between firms engaged in the shipbuilding industry and their employees, with special regard to wages, working hours, overtime, and other conditions of labour, and as to the nature and cause of the

grievances alleged, has the honour to report as follows:

The first meeting of the commissioners was held at the chairman's chambers, in the Court House, Montreal, on August 6, 1918, when the commissioners took oath of office and examined the complaints from different employees and applications for Boards of Conciliation which had been placed before the Commission by the Minister. The general plan of executing the Commission was discussed, and it was arranged to begin the inquiry in the city of Quebec, where the most serious grievances seemed to exist. On the following day another sitting was held in the Court House, Montreal, at which Captain W. J. Gerrard, C.E., was appointed secretary to the Commission, and, being present, entered upon the discharge of his duties. Mr. Bertrand, fair wages officer of the department, appeared and explained the efforts he had made to try and bring the employers and their workmen together in some of the shipyards where disputes had arisen. Mr. Cameron, of the Canadian Vickers, Limited, appeared and explained the working agreement between his company and the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers of America.

The Davie Shipbuilding and Repairing Company, Limited, of Lauzon, Quebec, and the representatives of the boilermakers, iron shipbuilders, blacksmiths and helpers were advised by telegram that the commissioners would be in Quebec on the following day to take up their complaints and disputes.

#### The Davie Shipbuilding and Repairing Company, Ltd.

On August 8 the commissioners sat in the Court House, in the city of Quebec, to investigate the complaints respecting the Davie Shipbuilding and Repairing Company, Limited. At this sitting there were about 200 strikers present. The Order-in-Council creating the Commission was read by the secretary, after which the chairman made the following statement:

"This Commission is not directly constituted like a court of justice; we are commissioners for the purpose of investigating and hearing any disputes which may exist between the shipbuilding firms and their employees, with the view, if possible, of restoring harmony between the employers and the workmen in order that the very essential and important work of ship construction may not be delayed or retarded during the great crisis through which our country is passing. I may say that the commissioners approach this matter with open minds, anxious to do justice to all parties and willing to hear fully all the complaints and representations which may be made, in order that any misunderstandings which may heretofore have existed or which at present exist between the employers and their workmen may be removed and harmony restored, so that this important work may go on. This is a time when there should be give and take between employers and employees. Nothing should be permitted to stand in the way of the very important work of shipbuilding and ship repairing, which should be proceeded with without interruption and to the utmost capacity of the plants so far as work is presented for them to do.

"With that view we hope to be able to bring about a better understanding, if misunderstandings exist, and to bring about an arrangement by which everybody will be satisfied, if both parties will be reasonable, and everybody will have to be reasonable at this time.

"We are willing to hear you at all reasonable length.

"The Commission proposes this morning to take up the troubles which have arisen at the Davie Shipbuilding and Repairing Plant."

Mr. J. P. Merrigan, third international vice-president of the International Union of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers of America, and Mr. Arthur Martel, of the general executive board of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, and vice-president of the Trades and Labour Con-

gress of Canada, appeared for their respective unions. Honourable A. Gali-pault appeared at the second sitting as their counsel. Mr. Emile Gelly appeared for the National Union of the South Shore (Union Nationale de la Rive Sud). Mr. A. Bernier, K.C., appeared for the company. Mr. George Duncan Davie, of Lauzon, general manager of the Davie Shipbuilding and Repairing Company, Limited, was examined, and testified to the work which his company had on hand and the contracts which were in process of execution. The Davie plant has existed at Lauzon for about 28 years, and, at the time of the investigation, had in its employ about 600 workmen; last year it had as many as 1,500. Both steel and wooden ships are built at this plant, which is situate opposite the city of Quebec, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence river, and adjoins the two Government dry docks where large repairing work can be done. The plant could not be better situated for executing repairs to all sizes of ships. Additions and extensions to the company's plant are under construction which will cost in the neighbourhood of one million dollars when completed. Since the war several hundred vessels have been constructed, and at the time of the investigation a number of steel trawlers were on the stocks and some large steel vessels were under repair or construction. In addition to these several other vessels were under contract for repairs or new construction. Mr. Davie testified that climatic conditions during the winter months were a serious handicap, and that his principal competitors, particularly for repairing, were shipyards in New York and other places on the American seaboard where work could be carried on during the whole year. In May, 1917, the workmen had been given a general increase in pay of 15 per cent, and in May, 1918, a further increase of 20 per cent. Mr. Davie filed an agreement between his company and the South Shore National Labour Union which has been in force since March 21, 1918.

The wages paid to the different classes of workmen were the following:

		cents per hr.
Ship fitters, Sr.	80-60	"
Ship fitters, Jr.	51-48-42 & 36	"
Ship fitters' helpers	36-32 & 27	"
Ship riggers	43	"
Ship riggers' helpers	32	"
Riveters, Sr.	48	"
Riveters, Jr.	47	"
Holders-on, Sr.	39	"
Holders-on, Jr.	35	"
Rivet heaters, Sr.	32	"
Rivet heaters, Jr.	23 & 20	"
Air drillers	36	"
Air drillers' helpers	32	"
Caulkers and chippers, Sr.	48	"
Caulkers and chippers, Jr.	43	"
Labourers	32	"
Carpenters, Sr.	48	"
Carpenters, Jr.	43	"
Joiners, Sr.	48	"
Joiners, Jr.	43	"
Pattern makers	51½ & 43	"
Mechanics	43	"
Pipe fitters	43	"
Electricians	41½	"
Electricians' helpers	36	"
Blacksmiths	55-48 & 43	"
Blacksmiths' helpers	36	"
Painters	43 & 36	"
Furnace slab men	60	"
Furnace slab helpers	45-36 & 32	"
Oxy. acety. cutters	55	"
Oxy. acety. cutters' helpers	35	"
Locomotive engineer	45	"
Locomotive brakemen	32	"
Donk y engineer	39	"
Shop engineer	48	"
Craneman	45	"
Fireman	43	"
Coal trimmer	39	"
Boilermakers	48	"
Punchers	48 & 43	"
Punchers' helpers	36 & 32	"
Shearers	48 & 43	"
Shearers' helpers	36 & 32	"
Counter sinkers	36	"
Rollers	51½ & 40	"
Rollers' helpers	32	"
Planers	43	"
Planer helpers	32	"
Teamsters and carters	48-36 & 32	"
Watchmen	36	"
Water carriers	20	"
Foremen	60	"
Sub-foremen	55 & 45	"
Draughtsmen	60 & 75	"
Asst. draughtsmen	30	"
Timekeepers	40	"
Asst. timekeepers	32	"

Overtime (night work and Sundays), double time on repairs.  
 Overtime (night work), time and one-half on new construction.  
 Overtime (Sundays), double time on new construction.  
 Sunday work only when extremely necessary.  
 Rivetting gangs were paid at piece work rate of \$2.50 and \$3.00 per hundred.

The rates above stated were accepted by the South Shore National Union on May 11, and went into operation on May 17, 1918.

The International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers of America, on May 23, 1918, made a demand for increased rates, a

nine hour day, and other conditions, and submitted a proposed agreement.

The International Brotherhood of Blacksmiths and Helpers, on June 22, 1918, submitted an agreement for execution by the company, asking for shorter hours and increased pay.

The company did not reply to either of these communications or demands, as it had already an agreement with the National Union, which was working satisfactorily.

An application for a Board of Conciliation from the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, Iron Shipbuilders and Helpers of America, Local No. 380, the International Brotherhood of Blacksmiths and Helpers, Local Union No. 235, and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, Local Union No. 2033, was forwarded to the Minister by the third vice-president of the International unions, under letter dated July 12, 1918. This application claims to directly affect 290 workmen, and indirectly 460.

As the International and National unions were claiming the right to be recognized, the Commission requested that both submit their books for examination in order to see what representation each union had in the workmen in the yard. The books showed the following results: Out of 707 workmen whose names appeared on the pay-roll of the company, 250 were members of the International and 457 were members of the National union. The books further showed that the National union had 18 blacksmiths and the International 8, and that the National had 363 boilermakers and iron shipbuilders and the International 188 in the employ of the company.

On July 25 the company dismissed 10 of its employees for alleged failure to properly perform their work and other misconduct. On the following day 240 employees went on strike through sympathy for the 10 dismissed men, alleging that the men were dismissed because they belonged to the International union. It was therefore necessary for

the Commission to investigate whether the company had proper and sufficient cause for these dismissals, or whether they had been dismissed on account of their membership in the International union. The discharged men consisted of six riveters, one holder-on, one assistant machinist, one helper, and one ship-fitter, the latter being practically an apprentice. According to the evidence of Mr. Davie, the riveters had for some time been putting in 45 to 150 rivets a day of 10 hours. This was a very poor showing. Mr. Davie had personally watched these men on several occasions spending their time without proper results. The majority of them had been dismissed several times and taken back. A comparative statement of general work in the iron shipbuilding in May, June and July, 1917, with the corresponding months in 1918, shows that the workmen were doing this year less than 50 per cent of the work which they did in the previous year. It was established by two witnesses that one of the discharged men, a few days before the discharge, had thrown hot rivets, bolts and washers at a fellow workman, and also had made threats of bodily harm against him. Another of the dismissed men made threats to a crippled employee to induce him to join the International union, and also made a threat against Mr. Davie. The superintendent of the yard testified that the dismissed men were not working satisfactorily, were idling their time, and engaging in discussions and arguments with their fellow workmen, and that if he had had a free hand he would have dismissed them long ago. A special constable in the employ of the company made a report against several of the dismissed men, that they had been wasting their time talking instead of working. He was not asked to report specially on the 10 dismissed men, but had the whole yard under his supervision. An opportunity was given to all the dismissed men to appear before the Commission. Nine of them appeared and gave evidence. They all assumed that they were

dismissed on account of their connection with the International union, but not one of them inquired from the manager or the superintendent why they had been dismissed. The dismissals were made after the company had obtained the advice of its solicitor that there was just and sufficient cause for the dismissals. The general manager of the company, on May 14, had posted up in the yard a notice in the following terms:

"It has been brought to my notice that there are certain parties in this yard who are trying to form a union. I have recognized the National Union of South Shore Labourers, and any employees of this plant trying to organize or cause friction through dealing with other unions, which are not recognized by this company, will be immediately discharged.

"Davie Shipbuilding & Repairing  
Company, Limited,

"(Sgd.) GEORGE D. DAVIE,  
"General Manager."

The National union, at Lauzon, was organized in March, 1917, and is registered under the provisions of the Trade Unions Act, R.S.C., ch. 125. It succeeded an organization which had existed there for some time before. The secretary of the National union was examined on August 9, and testified that, on July 26, 1918, it had a membership of 510, all working for the company, with the exception of six members, and that from July 26 to August 9 the National union had taken in 125 new members; copies of its constitution and by-laws were filed as exhibits. The International union began organizing at Lauzon in March or April, 1918, and at the date of investigation its local organizer was Alfred Bourget, who, at one time, had been a workman for the company, and had been dismissed about February, 1918. Both Mr. Davie and his superintendent stated in evidence their willingness to take back the men who went on strike, in so far as their positions had not been filled, but they were unwilling

to take back the 10 dismissed men. During the first two weeks succeeding the strike, 102 new men were taken on the works, and, according to the superintendent, the work in the yard was proceeding better than during the three months prior to the strike. The work was not seriously affected by the strike, the conditions were more settled, and the men were easier to handle. New men were taken on without distinction as to whether they were union or non-union men. The company was willing to deal with one union, but it did not think that it was possible to have two unions recognized in the same yard, as the existence of two separate organizations would lead to strife and reduce production. At the end of the first day's sitting, the chairman, in the presence of 150 or 200 of the strikers, after Mr. Davie had expressed his willingness to take the strikers back, advised them to return to their work, stating that their position would thereby be improved and that, in so far as the 10 dismissed men were concerned, the cause of their dismissal would be fully investigated by the Commission. The strikers did not accept this advice; they remained on strike.

Ten hours constituted a day's labour in this yard, except during the winter when the days are short when the men worked eight or nine hours. The company paid for overtime time and one-half on new construction, and double time on repairs, and also double time for all work on Sundays.

The investigation into the disputes connected with this company extended from August 8 to 15, 41 witnesses in all were heard. The shipyard was also visited and the actual conditions under which the men worked were inspected.

After full consideration and examination of the evidence, the commissioners are unanimous in finding that the wages paid since May, 1918, were reasonable, sufficient, and equal to any prevailing in the locality. The chairman and Commissioner Robb are of opinion that the dismissal of the 10 men was justified and

was made for sufficient cause, and that the sympathetic strike was not justified, but Commissioner Walsh does not concur in this finding on this one question. The commissioners were also of the unanimous opinion that nine hours should constitute a day's work and invited the general manager of the company and representatives of the National union to appear again before the Commission in Montreal. This resulted in a new agreement being entered into between the company and the National union, on September 7, 1918, providing for a nine hour day, for overtime payments, for the adjustment of disputes, for wages at the rates which prevailed since May, 1918, and for the continuation of the agreement during the duration of the war subject to such changes in rates of pay as fluctuation in cost of living may justify, such adjustment to be made on February 1, 1919, according to the fluctuation in the cost of living shown by the LABOUR GAZETTE.

A signed triplicate of the Agreement accompanies this report.

**Quinlan and Robertson, Limited, and Quebec Shipbuilding and Repair Co., Ltd.**

The Commission investigated the complaints with reference to these two companies at Quebec, on August 15, 16, 17, and 19, 1918.

Mr. Albert E. Laroche, local manager, appeared for Quinlan & Robertson, Limited; Mr. R. A. Carter, vice-president and managing director, and C. L. Campbell, superintendent, appeared for the Quebec Shipbuilding and Repair Company, Limited, and Messrs. Arthur Martel and Alfred Robitaille appeared for the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America.

Quinlan & Robertson, Limited, are general contractors, have carried on that business for a number of years, and, in July, 1917, obtained a contract from the Imperial Munitions Board for the construction of a number of wooden ships. The work of these ships was well advanced at the time of the investigation. The company at that time had about 700

men on its pay-roll. A schedule showing the rate of wages paid to all trades was filed; carpenters were paid from 40 to 45 cents per hour; joiners, 40, 45 and 50 cents; caulkers, 40 and 45 cents per hour; night gangs were allowed 13 hours for 12½ hours' work, and for Sunday an hour or two extra time was allowed; no extra pay was given for overtime; 10 hours constituted the day's work.

When the company started shipbuilding it paid carpenters 34½ cents per hour, and advanced them from time to time as their ability increased. Thirty cents per hour was the ordinary rate for carpenters in Quebec when the company started to build ships. As a general rule the company provided tools; both union and non-union men were employed and the yard was run on the principle of open shop. Under date of June 20, 1918, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Local No. 730, Quebec, applied to the Minister for a Board of Conciliation and Investigation, and asked for an increase in wages with a minimum of 50 cents per hour, nine hours per day, and time and one-half for overtime till midnight, and double time from midnight to 7 a.m., double time for Sundays, New Year's Day, Labour Day, and Christmas Day. About 20 of the workmen were heard. There was not much complaint about wages, but the men asked for shorter hours and extra pay for overtime.

The Quebec Shipbuilding and Repair Company, Limited, began business in October, 1916; its business is building and repairing wooden ships. It has a shipyard at the Island of Orleans, which was closed at the time of the investigation, and another shipyard in Quebec. A schedule of the rates of pay in both yards was filed. Shipwrights and carpenters were paid from 35 to 45 cents per hour according to their ability. No extra pay was given for overtime and 10 hours constituted a day's work. The company has built some wooden ships on its own account and has a contract from the Imperial Munitions Board. When

the company started its operations it was unable to secure a practical wooden shipbuilder in Quebec, but it brought an expert and some caulkers from New Brunswick who have since trained and instructed the local workmen secured in Quebec. As the work went on the workmen became more expert in the art of wooden shipbuilding and had got on so well that they planked the second ship for the Imperial Munitions Board in one half the time it took to plank the first. At the date of the investigation the work in the yard was proceeding satisfactorily and there was no shortage of men. Both union and non-union men were in the yard, which was run on the principle of open shop. Under date of July 8 the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Local No. 730, made an application to the Minister for the appointment of a Board of Conciliation and Investigation, and asked for increased wages, shorter hours, and extra pay for overtime. Before leaving Quebec the commissioners suggested to the representatives of both companies that in the opinion of the commissioners extra pay should be given for overtime work, and both companies readily acceded to this suggestion.

On September 6, 1918, the commissioners invited representatives of these two companies and of the workmen to meet the Commission in Montreal, when the commissioners advised the parties that it was desirable that an agreement for the duration of the war should be entered into with the carpenters and joiners, and submitted to them a draft agreement which would meet with the approval of the Commission, with the result that, on September 9, 1918, each company signed an agreement with the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners providing for a day of nine hours, extra pay for overtime, for the settlement of disputes, minimum rate of wages for carpenters, shipwrights, and joiners at 45 cents per hour; the agreement to continue during the duration of the war subject to such changes in rates of pay as fluctuation in cost of liv-

ing may justify; such adjustment to be made on February 1, 1919, according to the fluctuation of the cost of living shown by the official reports of the LABOUR GAZETTE.

Signed triplicates of these Agreements accompany this report.

**Tidewater Shipbuilders, Limited, and the  
Three Rivers Shipyards, Limited**

The Commission investigated the complaints with reference to these two companies at Three Rivers on August 20 and 21, last.

Mr. Robert Duguid, manager, appeared for the Tidewater Shipbuilders, Limited, and Thomas M. Kirkwood, president and manager, Harold L. Clifford, superintendent, and Walter Joseph Shea, secretary-treasurer, appeared for the Three Rivers Shipyards, Limited; Mr. Arthur Martel appeared for the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Local No. 1793.

The Tidewater Shipbuilders, Limited, began putting up its plant in Three Rivers for steel shipbuilding in November, 1917, and at the time of the investigation had several steel ships under construction and about 450 workmen on its pay-roll. The plant is not yet fully completed. Ten hours constituted a day's work; overtime was paid at the rate of time and a half for week days and double time for Sundays and holidays. A schedule of the wages paid to all trades was filed before the Commission; carpenters' pay was 40 to 45 cents an hour; no distinction was made between union and non-union men. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters, in April last, asked for a minimum wage of 45 cents per hour and for a nine hour day. The Three Rivers Shipyards, Limited, began operations on August 20, 1917. Its business is entirely the building of wooden ships, and, at the time of the investigation, it had a contract with the Imperial Munitions Board. It employed between 700 and 800 men; when it started, carpenters were paid 35 cents per hour, and the company had no trouble getting

them at that rate. Overtime was paid at the rate of time and one-half, and double time was paid for Sundays and holidays. On July 23, 1918, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, Local No. 1793, wrote a letter to the Minister asking that the minimum wages for carpenters in both companies be fixed at 45 cents per hour, and that the hours of work be reduced to nine hours per day, with time and a half for overtime and double time for Sundays and holidays. At the time of the inquiry both these yards were paying their carpenters 40 to 45 cents per hour, and a few who were more expert, 50 and 52½ cents per hour in the yard of the Tidewater Shipbuilders, Limited. On September 10, 1918, the Commission invited representatives of both companies and of Local 1793 of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters to appear again, and the Commission suggested that it was desirable that an agreement should be entered into by each company with its carpenters, and the question then arose as to the standing of a local union at Three Rivers, known as Corporation Ouvrière Catholique des Trois-Rivières, which has been in existence since 1913. On further investigation at Three Rivers, it was found that this local union had much stronger representation in both yards than the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. The companies were willing to enter into an agreement with the local union, but not with the United Brotherhood, and after further conference and discussions, an agreement was executed by each company with La Corporation Ouvrière Catholique des Trois-Rivières on September 23, providing for a day of nine hours, payment for overtime, provisions for settlement of disputes, a minimum wage for shipwrights, carpenters, joiners and caulkers at 45 cents per hour, the agreement to continue during the duration of the war, subject to such changes in rates of pay as fluctuation in cost of living may justify, such adjustment to be made on February 1, 1919, according to the fluctuation in the cost of living shown

by the official reports in the **LABOUR GAZETTE**.

Signed triplicates of these Agreements accompany this report.

#### **Fraser, Brace and Company, Limited**

The Commission began its inquiries in connection with this company in Montreal on August 22. Mr. Charles Edward Fraser, president, and Mr. George G. Underhill, superintendent, appeared on behalf of the company; Mr. Joe Wall appeared for the Montreal Marine Trades Federation; Messieurs Narcisse Arcaud, Arthur Lamothe, and Arthur Martel appeared for the carpenters and joiners; Mr. Ed. J. Sinclair appeared for the electrical workers, and Mr. Wilbrod Vachon appeared for the steamfitters and plumbers.

The company for many years has carried on business as general contractors. Its operations in the province of Quebec have been extensive. In November, 1917, it was given a contract by the Imperial Munitions Board for the construction of some wooden steamers not yet completed, and recently it has received from the French Government a contract for a number of wooden ships. The latter were obtained in competition with shipyards in Canada and the United States.

On February 15, 1918, the Montreal Marine Trades Federation made a demand upon the company for shorter hours and increased wages on behalf of blacksmiths, electrical workers, machinists, painters, sheet metal workers, carpenters, joiners, plumbers and steamfitters. The workmen engaged in wooden ships were mainly shipwrights and carpenters. The evidence submitted to the Commission shows that the company had no difficulty in getting all the workmen which it required. There was, however, a scarcity of skilled shipwrights and ship carpenters as the industry of wooden shipbuilding had practically gone out of existence at the time the company began wooden shipbuilding, at the end of 1917.



When the company started its ship-building operations it paid its carpenters 40 cents an hour, working 10 hours per day, with time and a half for all overtime. About the beginning of May these wages were increased to 45 cents, and on May 15, 1918, to 50 cents per hour. On or about May 16 a strike occurred, when some 300 men went out and remained away for 10 or 12 days. A fair conclusion from the evidence submitted is that they returned to work upon the understanding that the demand for shorter hours and other improved working conditions and higher pay would be considered. On June 15, 1918, the Montreal Marine Trades Federation applied to the Department of Labour for the appointment of a Board of Conciliation and Investigation. At the time of the strike, in May, the company had about 920 workmen in its employ, and at the time the matter was investigated by the Commission it had about 600 workmen.

The main dispute between the company and the representatives of the workmen was with reference to the number of hours which should constitute a day's work. The company had been working 10 hours per day except during the winter months, when, on account of shortened days, nine hours per day was worked. So far as the rate of wages is concerned, there was not much difference between the company and its men. The wages had been advanced from time to time as the men's capacity and ability justified an increase. After several conferences between the representatives of the company and of the workmen the Commission succeeded in bringing the parties together, with the result that, on September 4, 1918, an agreement was signed providing for a nine hour day and other working conditions, rates of wages for the different trades employed, and for a revision of these rates on February 1, 1919, according to any fluctuation in the cost of living which may be shown at that time by the official reports in the LABOUR GAZETTE.

A signed triplicate of this Agreement accompanies this report.

#### **Montreal Dry Docks and Ship Repairing Company, Limited**

This company carries on the business of repairing wooden and steel ships in all branches and has been under the present name and management for seven years. Mr. Thomas Ball, managing director, Walter Carroll, timekeeper, and William Brunton, superintendent, appeared for the company, and Messrs. Martel, Wall, Arcand, Lamothe and Vachon appeared for the workmen. At the time the investigation began, on August 23, 1918, the company had about 350 on its pay-roll. The schedule of the rates paid to the various trades was filed, showing boilermakers were paid from 47½ to 50 cents; helpers, 37½ to 42½ cents; carpenters and caulkers, 45 cents; and painters, 40 to 45 cents. These rates are about 10 cents an hour in advance of what was paid in the corresponding month in 1917. Before the war, in 1914, the general rate of wages for mechanics was about 30 cents per hour. The company worked 10 hours per day, and all overtime was paid as double time. In October, 1917, the business agent of the Local Boilermakers' International Union made a demand for increased wages and shorter hours. Some correspondence took place between the company and the Department. The company interviewed its workmen, with the result that they declared themselves satisfied with the then existing conditions and pay. In May, 1918, the boilermakers made a demand for 55 cents an hour, and, after an interview with their business agent, the company agreed to pay them 50 cents an hour, which was accepted by the union.

While the Commission was in session the Montreal Marine Trades Federation made a demand for increased wages and shorter hours. The company made a full disclosure of its relations with its workmen. Many of the latter had to be specially trained for the nature of the

work carried on by the company. Repairs to ships, as a general rule, were made in the harbour and the company was obliged to send its workmen to the ships where the repair operations were performed. Some of the workmen drew very substantial weekly payments. On the pay-roll for the week of June 27, 1918, one man drew \$126.75; another, \$112.75, and three men \$77.50 each.

After numerous conferences between the general manager of the company, the secretary of the Montreal Marine Trades Federation, and the business agent of the boilermakers, the company agreed to accede to the demand for the nine hour day and for increased wages to the different classes of workmen employed by the company, as follows:

Boilermakers .....	55	cents per hour
Helpers .....	45	"
Heaters .....	25	"
Carpenters .....	50	"
Painters .....	45	"
Steamfitters and plumbers .....	55	"
Electrical workers .....	55	"
Charge hands .....	55	"
Journeyman .....	50	"
Armature winders, 1st .....	50	"
Helpers .....	35	"
Motor attendants .....	40	"
Cranemen (overhead) .....	38	"
Cranemen (jib) .....	35	"
Temporary light men .....	37	"
Power station operators, per eight hour shift, \$3.50.		

The boilermakers now refuse to accept the rate of 55 cents per hour, giving for their reason that the boilermakers in the railway shops are paid 68 cents per hour under the award of the Canadian Railway War Board.

As far as the commissioners have been able to ascertain from the investigation of different shipyards brought to their attention, 55 cents per hour appears to be the highest rate of pay for boilermakers in shipyards in the province of Quebec. The Montreal Dry Docks is willing to pay this rate, and, in the opinion of the commissioners, it should be accepted. In the opinion of the commissioners the foregoing rates for carpenters, painters, steamfitters, plumbers and electricians should also be accepted.

### The Shipyards in Sorel

While the Commission was investigating conditions in some of the shipyards in the city of Montreal, the Minister brought to its attention communications received by him from the secretary of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers and Iron Shipbuilders of America, Local Lodge No 373, at Sorel, requesting the Minister to permit the Commission to investigate the existing conditions there. It was alleged that the local lodge had 350 members; that the Leclaire Shipbuilding Company had dismissed several workmen because they had joined the union; that wages were low, the hours long, and that it was desirable to have the conditions investigated. The Commission sat at the Court House in Sorel, on August 29, 1918. Mr. J. M. Arthur Leclaire appeared, representing the Leclaire Shipbuilding Company, and Mr. J. P. Merrigan appeared on behalf of the boilermakers, and Mr. Narcisse Arcand appeared on behalf of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, Local No. 671. The Leclaire Shipbuilding Company had under construction a number of steel trawlers and wooden ships; had then about 450 workmen in its employ; worked 10 hours a day and paid from 27 1/2 to 40 cents per hour in the various trades. Riveters were mainly paid by piece work at from \$2.00 to \$3.00 per hundred, some of the riveters earning as high as \$5.92 per day. An alleged case of intimidation by dismissal was investigated, and it was established that the man in question was not dismissed on account of his connection with the union, but for proper and sufficient cause. The wages paid in the Leclaire Shipbuilding Company are substantially the same as are paid by the Sincennes McNaughton Line, Limited, in its yard at Sorel, where it builds and repairs its own boats and where carpenters are paid from \$3.00 to \$3.50 per day, boilermakers from \$3.00 to \$4.00 per day, and labourers from \$2.00 to \$2.50 per day. Substantially the same wages were paid by the Department of Marine in its ship-

yard at Sorel. Wages are lower in Sorel than in any of the other shipyards in the province of Quebec. The majority of the workmen there own their own houses, in connection with which they usually have a small garden where a considerable portion of their supplies are raised. Ten hours constitute a day's work; it is the general rule, and no instance was brought to the attention of the Commission where shorter hours were worked in any shop at Sorel. The International union was not organized to the extent represented by Mr. Aristide Cournoyer, secretary of the boiler-makers, who stated in his communication to the Minister that the local lodge had 350 members.

A further conference was held in Montreal, on October 2, with the representatives of the Leclaire Shipbuilding Company and the Sincennes McNaughton Line, Limited, at which Mr. Arthur Martel, representing the carpenters, was present, and the whole situation was discussed. Labour in Sorel is plentiful at the wages now paid and men are advanced in pay according to their ability and efficiency. Extra pay is given for overtime and no shop or establishment in Sorel has adopted the nine hour day; they all work 10 hours and pay overtime rates for all-work over 10 hours and for Sundays and holidays. The Leclaire Shipbuilding Company is willing to advance their wages as the cost of living increases, and claims it has done so in the past.

Under all the circumstances disclosed to the Commission, the hours of work and rates of pay in the shipyards at Sorel are in accordance with what prevails in the locality, and it is not deemed advisable for the present to make any recommendation.

The commissioners desire to place on record their appreciation of the manner in which all employees who appeared before them made full disclosure of their relations with their workmen and also of the readiness of the different unions to submit their books showing the membership in the respective organizations.

All trade unions doing business in Canada, in the opinion of the commissioners, should be required to register under the Trade Unions Act. Local unions do so, and all labour organizations having their principal place of business outside of Canada should, when they attempt to control labour in this country, be subject to the same rule.

Commissioner Walsh reserves his right to make a minority report on the situation in Lauzon and Sorel, and also with respect to the registration of trade unions.

The whole respectfully submitted,

(Sgd.) F. S. MACLENNAN,  
Chairman.

(Sgd.) THOMAS ROBB,  
Commissioner.

(Sgd.) J. M. WALSH,  
Commissioner.

Montreal, October 2, 1918.

#### Minority Report

To the Hon. T. W. Crothers,  
Minister of Labour.

Dear Sir,—

As member of the Royal Commission, instituted by an Order-in-Council to investigate the industrial unrest in the shipyards of the province of Quebec, I feel it is my duty in the circumstances to make a minority report in the cases of the Davie Shipbuilding Company, of Lauzon, Que., the situation in Sorel, the signing of agreements with independent labour organizations, and the registration of trades unions.

In the case of the Davie Shipbuilding Company, as you are aware, 240 men did not report to work in the morning of July 26, due to the fact that 10 of their men had been discharged July 25. The 10 men and the men that did not report to work were men belonging to the International union. During the inquiry several witnesses have been heard from the union, and have testified that on Monday, July 22, it was reported and known to every one that on Thursday,

July 25, 10 men belonging to the International were to be discharged, and they were discharged as the rumour had been circulated. Mr. Davie testified that these men had been discharged for cause. Asked what was the cause, he said that these men were not doing their work as they should, that they were neglecting their duty, but the testimony proves that they have never been told or reprimanded either by the foreman or the superintendent.

In reading Mr. Davie's testimony you will find contradiction. He said (page 27 on last line): "the cause is that they would not do the work," and then on page 37 of his testimony he said: "and I am to be criticized by 10 men. Never, sir. I cannot stand it from anybody," which in my opinion indicates that these men have been reported as criticizing Mr. Davie, and that they have been discharged on that account without ascertaining whether it was true or not, and without giving those men a chance to answer any accusations of the kind, and that when a Board of Conciliation had been applied for, the men have been brought before the Commission and denied ever having said anything of the kind against Mr. Davie. It has not been proven that these men were not doing their work. We have had before us the foremen of different gangs of men and they have testified that the 10 men discharged were amongst the best men in the yard, and that they were not neglecting their duty, and that they were very much surprised when they heard that they were discharged, for they know no charges against them.

Detective St. Laurent, who is in the employ of the company, testified that his duty in the yard was to see that nothing was stolen in the yard. Asked if he had anything to do with the men, he said that his duty was to see that they lose no time, as he considered that losing time when at work was stealing from the company, and that he looked after that also. Asked if the 10 men discharged were to his knowledge losing their time, he said he had never seen them

losing time. Asked if he had ever received letters from the members of the National union against those men, he answered in the affirmative, saying that he had received letters; some were signed, others were not. He reported to the office of the company, but kept the letters. I asked that those letters be produced, but they have never been.

So in no evidence did they prove that the men were not doing their work as usual, and I sincerely believe that these men were discharged on account of reports of Detective St. Laurent that were given to the office and taken from letters that he had received from members of the National union and others, anonymously.

Mr. Davie complained that since there were two unions in his yard the men were losing their time canvassing other men to join their respective unions. It has been proven that the National union has used methods that would not have been permitted by other employers had he not consented and been favourable to it. In the month of July the National union posted cards saying that on the seventeenth every man in the yard had to have a card of the National union, otherwise he would be instantly discharged. Those cards bore the name of Geo. Davie. Mr. Davie denies having any knowledge of it, although he admits further in his testimony that it had been shown to him and that he had permitted same to be posted outside the yard. On the morning of the seventeenth all International men refused to take a card of the other union. It is on the following Monday, July 22, that they have been informed that 10 of their men were going to be discharged on Thursday, twenty-fifth, and they were discharged on that date as they had been informed. On the morning of the twenty-sixth, 240 men refused to go back to work unless the 10 men were reinstated, and they are still out. Mr. Davie said in his testimony that it was not a shipyard he was running; it was more of a hospital. He was then operating his plant with men of the National union.

It is clear in my mind that these men have not been discharged for neglecting their duty and that they should have been reinstated pending investigation.

#### SITUATION IN SOREL.

I sincerely regret that the majority, and, in fact, all the employers in Sorel, refused to come to an understanding with their employees, and I fail to see how the majority of the Commission did not see fit to make some recommendation for Sorel. Sorel is a town of about 10,000 population, with one industry, shipbuilding, and the building of boilers and engines for the ships. The men are the lowest paid on the continent in that industry. They have not had in the past any organization to protect them, and have, therefore, been more like slaves than free men. They have always been compelled to work for whatever they could get. As a result they are yet building ships for 30 cents per hour and work 10 hours per day. The majority of the Commission based their judgment on the principle that the majority of them own their own houses and have gardens. If we take into consideration the wages that have been paid and are paid yet, one can imagine the kind of house and garden they possess, and I personally protest against any system which penalizes a man in granting him low wages for all time because of his thrift in the past; and then it is not the majority that own their own houses and have gardens. The cost of living in Sorel is just as high as it is in other places in the province, while foodstuffs are as dear in Sorel as in Montreal. One can safely say that clothing and coal are dearer in Sorel than in Montreal, so I fail to see any reason why the majority of the Commission refuses to recommend an increase in the wages and the nine-hour day as established in other shipyards of the province. You will find in the majority report that 10 hours is the general rule, and that they are all paying about the same wages. I may say that apart from the private concerns, the Government is operating a

shipbuilding and repairing yard in Sorel, and which I regret that the Commission failed to recommend an increase; more so do I regret that the Government is keeping their men under the same starving wages as the private concerns are. I hope the Government will realize the situation and pay at least what is paid in other shipyards in other parts of the province.

In conclusion I strongly recommend that some steps be taken to establish living wages and conditions based on the wages and conditions established in other shipyards of the province.

#### SIGNING OF AGREEMENT WITH INDEPENDENT UNIONS.

Regarding the signing of agreements between the Davie Shipbuilding Company, of Lauzon, the Tide Water Shipbuilding Company, and the Three Rivers Shipyards of Three Rivers, with independent organizations of their employees.

I wish to strongly emphasize that, in my judgment, this will lead to further and more serious industrial unrest. The Commission was charged with power to investigate the conditions over an area covering practically all yards from Montreal to Quebec, or, in other words, the St. Lawrence river shipbuilding area. As you will note by the majority report, an attempt has been made to have the companies, so far as possible, standardize the minimum conditions. The International unions were shown to be the predominant factor in this area, and the majority of agreements existing between the shipbuilding companies and their employees are executed with their respective International unions. In order, therefore, to standardize not only wages and hours, but also to facilitate a general interchange of workers, it is advisable that all companies should enter into agreements with the same organizations. Where this is not done it is plain to be seen that immediate friction would arise when men were required in the national interest to change their place of employment from one yard to another.

The independent organizations made no efforts on their own behalf to institute this inquiry, and, further, as the membership in some cases is confined clearly to men professing one religion, no recognition should be given to agreements existing between them and the companies referred to, and the companies should be advised to immediately recognize and make agreements with the various international organizations recognized generally in this area and throughout the other shipyards of Canada.

#### REGISTRATION OF UNIONS.

That section of the majority report recommending the registration of trades unions should, in my opinion, be entirely eliminated. There was no evidence submitted during the inquiry to show that lack of registration was in any way connected with the industrial unrest prevailing or that the registration of trade unions would remedy any of the existing conditions.

During the great number of years that this Act has been on the statute books of Canada, the larger trade unions, for reasons of their own, have not availed themselves of the option of registering under it, and I cannot see that any good would be served by this recommendation being complied with.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd.) J. M. WALSH,  
Commissioner.

Agreement between Davis Shipbuilding  
and Repairing Co., Ltd., and Union  
Nationale des Ouvriers de la  
Rive Sud

1. Nine hours shall constitute a day's work and shall be worked from 7 a.m. to 12 noon and from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. from Monday to Saturday inclusive.