INTERIM REPORT OF ROYAL COMMISSION APPOINTED TO INVEST-IGATE THE DISPUTE EXISTING ON THE BRITISH COLUMBIA COAST PETWEEN VARIOUS SHIP OWNERS AND THEIR EMPLOYEES

AN interim report was received from the Royal Commission appointed under the Inquiries Act to investigate the dispute existing on the British Columbia coast between various shipowners and their employees, being masters and mates, members of the Canadian Merchant Service Guild.

The Commission was composed as follows: Messrs. W. E. Burns, James H. McVety and A. E. James, of Vancouver, Mr. Burns being appointed chairman. The powers of this Commission were extended during September to investigate also any differences which might exist on vessels operating on the lakes and rivers of British Columbia.

Report of Board

(Copy.)

To His Excellency Governor-General for the Dominion of Canada.

Sir,-

Pursuant to the appointment of your Commissioners, W. E. Burns, chairman; Edwin A. James and James H. McVety, under the "Inquiries Act," to inquire into the unrest existing on the coast of British Columbia as between various employers concerned in water transportation between British Columbia ports and to American ports in Puget Sound and Alaska and certain of their employees, being shipmasters and mates, members of the organization known as the Canadian Merchant Service Guild, and employed in vessels operating out of British Columbia ports in coastwise service, your Commissioners beg to make interim report as follows:

The Canadian Merchant Service Guild was formed in 1917, and on the twenty-eighth day of March, 1918, adopted its constitution and by-laws, which are in the main based upon the objects of the constitution or rules of the Imperial Merchant Scrvice Guild. Its membership is confined to certificated shipmasters, navigating officers and pilots, and at the present time it appears that about 98 per cent of such upon all vessels trading upon the British Columbia coast belong to the Guild.

On the nineteenth of April, 1918, the Guild submitted to the various owners affected a minimum wage scale and working rules, which the Guild had decided upon, with an accompanying letter asking careful and favourable consideration thereof by the owners, and that the same be accepted and recognized by the owners as from the first day of April, 1918.

The owners replied to the communication, taking the position that they had always dealt with their own masters and officers, and indicated that they preferred to deal with them in the premises. In the course of the correspondence which followed with the different owners, the Guild indicated that the schedule had been presented with the idea of opening a discussion in respect thereof, taking a posi-tion which, had it been taken at the cutset, might have been productive of different results. The correspondence which ensued came to the point where the owners refused altogether to deal with the Guild, although in one case, or perhaps two cases, the owner was willing to discuss matters with a committee of their own employees who were members of the Guild. The Guild demanded the right to have its representative or representatives present at such negotiation and a deadlock occurred, the Guild demanding recognition and the owners declining to confer with any person or body outside of their own employees.

The Guild then applied for a Board of Conciliation under the Industrial Disputes Act, and because of the non-application of that Act to

the situation your Commissioners were appointed to make inquiry as above set out, the inquiry extending to all such matters as wages, hours of work, working conditions and such other matters as might seem to be the occasion

of the existing friction.

The taking of evidence was commenced on the twenty-second day of July, and it soon ap-peared to your Commissioners that the deadlock above mentioned was the primal cause of the existing difficulties. It appeared that most at least of the difficulties regarding wages and working conditions might be successfully arranged by negotiations between the owners and representatives of their respective employees, the status of whom was accepted, and in these circumstances your Commissioners, at a stage of the inquiry, confined the evidence to the question of recognition or non-recognition of the Guild in order that this question might be dealt with as a preliminary point.

The evidence centred mainly on the position of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild, its activities and status in respect of problems of the same nature as indicated in this inquiry. Both sides before your Commissioners took the position that the status of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild as worked out in practice in its relations with ship-owners was acceptable, and the Canadian Merchant Service Guild would be accepted or recognized on the one hand and satisfactory on the other, if its objects were carried out and its influence developed upon the same lines and in the same

manner. After the completion of evidence offered on the question of recognition, and after discussion of same by your Commissioners, the chairman telegraphed to the Imperial Merchant Service Guild at Liverpool and to the Secretary of the Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association, an organization composed of a large number of steamship owners, asking as to the status of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild previous to the appointment of the Shipping Controller in connection with the National Maritime Board, the formation of which, since the beginning of the war, having presumably affected the situation. The telegram read as follows:

"Shipping Commission here desires information whether before appointment Ship-ping Controller Imperial Guild was recognized by shipowners to extent of discussion by letter and at times conferences or interviews on questions of wages and working conditions. Cable exact position fully."

This cable was sent on the sixth of August. On the following day a reply was received from Lieutenant Commander Moore, R.M., Secretary of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild, as follows:

"Imperial Guild fully recognized for many years past by Government and shipowners in all matters concerning captains, officers, British ships."

No reply was received to the other cablegram for some time, although pressed for through the Telegraph Company, and the matter investigated. Finally word was received that the message had been held up by censor, and it was arranged for it to get through, and on the ninetcenth of August a reply was received from Sir Norman Hill, the secretary, as follows:

''Liverpool Steamship Owners' Association have never had any discussions at any time with Guild on questions of wages and working conditions. Association leave all wages questions in hands of Liverpool Employers' Am informed by last named Association. association that they have never had any discussions with Guild. For your information neither association is in any way represented on National Maritime Board. They have both refused to appoint representatives."

In the meantime, feeling that it might be possible for the parties to get together upon the besis of a limited recognition of the Guild as indicated by a memorandum of the views of the chairman submitted to the other Commissioners, the chairman discussed the situation with the executive of the Guild and also with a meeting of the owners. From these discussions it appeared that a limited recognition would be acceptable to the Guild whereby a committee composed solely of employees would be received by the owner involved on the question under discussion, but that this would not be acceptable to the owners at any rate at that time.

The situation was then discussed by your Commissioners and a public session of the Commission called for Wednesday, the twenty-first of August.

At this ression the chairman announced that on account of the fact that the views of your Commissioners in connection with the point under discussion were not such as would form a basis upon which the parties in dispute in connection with wages and working conditions could arrange them themselves, your Commis-sioners proposed to go on and deal with the questions of wages and working conditions which were in difference, not making any finding on the question of recognition in the mean-After a discussion upon the situation the Guild announced that in view of there being no present finding on the question of recognition it was withdrawing from the proceedings and its members were resigning from service. The chairman stated that the question of recognition was taken up first in the hope that a relationship could be established between the owners and the Guild whereby the questions of wages and working conditions could be readily adjusted; that this had been shown to be impossible and that your Commissioners were accordingly simply proceeding with their work and purposed calling upon the owners for state-ments of the extent to which they were ready to meet the Guild's claims. The Guild, however, in the face of these circumstances withdrew from the proceedings and proceeded to carry out its determination in respect of the resignation of its members.

Your Commissioners followed the course which bad been announced and called upon the owners to present the following day the statements above referred to. On the twenty-second August, statements with explanatory evidence were presented by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, the Union Steamship Company, Limited, the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company and the British Columbia Tow Boat Owners' Association, setting out scales of wages effective from August 1, 1918, and in the case of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company and the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company, a scale of increase effective from April 1, 1918, giving effect thereby to increases which were at that time contemplated but held in aboyance because of the situation. After consideration of the various statements thus submitted and of the evidence given on working conditions, your Commissioners felt that they were in a position to make a report which would substantially cover the whole field of inquiry with the exception of some matters which might well be reserved for further evidence and consideration.

It was felt, however, that the views of the majority of your Commissioners as to recognition of the Guild on the evidence submitted would not be accepted by both parties unless some sanction were imposed which must necessarily involve at best a considerable period of The tie-up of shipping and water transportation which had resulted from the action of the Guild had brought about a very serious situation which was fast assuming calamitous proportions. Public and private business and war productions were being seriously interfered with and retarded. In these circumstances the chairman and Commissioner James met the owners on the twenty-sixth of August and obtained from them the following memorandum of agreement:

"We agree to accept and abide by the finding of the Commission that the Canadian Merchant Service Guild be recognized to the extent of the recognition accorded the Imperial Merchant Service Guild by shipowners in Great Britain in reference to relations between employer and employees on questions of wages and working conditions, the exact status of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild in this respect to be determined by the Commission after further evidence at the instance of either party or or the Commission's own initiative. It is enderstood that the Commission will make its finding now on the claims of the Guild in respect of wages and in respect of working conditions, reserving only such points as it may desire further information upon.

Dated this twenty-sixth day of August, 1918."

This was taken before the Vancouver section of the Guild on that evening by the chairman and Commissioner McVety, when after an exhaustive discussion a resolution was passed accepting the proposal subject to the approval of the Victoria section of the Guild. Endeavour was made over long distance telephone to obtain action in Victoria with negative results, and on the twenty-seventh August your Commissioners proceeded to Victoria and met the Victoria section of the Guild in meeting at that city. At a following meeting which Commissioner McVety attended, the following resolution was finally passed:

"Whereas, assurances have been received from Sir Robert Borden, Prime Minister, and also from the Royal Commission, that recegnition of the Canadian Merchant Service Guild, on the basis of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild, will be given by the employers, and that a fair and satisfactory adjustment of wages and working conditions will be given promptly;

Resolved that we, the Victoria members of the Canadian Merchant Service Guild, hereby agree to resume our services, believing that by so doing we will secure a prompt and fair adjustment of matters in dispute, and not impede nor interfere with the requirements of the nation at this time."

This resolution was submitted by long distance telephone to a meeting at Vancouver sitting at the same time as the Victoria meeting, and the following resolution was passed:

"That we adopt and confirm the decision arrived at by the members of the Canadian Merchant Service Guild at Victoria, with recommendation to the Commissioners that the present decision will not be considered a break in service, and that members on the lake and river steamers receive the same consideration as coast members."

A further resolution was adopted at the Vancouver meeting:

"That the Royal Commission be asked to use its influence to secure a fair and satisfactory adjustment of wages and working conditions for masters and officers in vessels in Government service in proportion to the rates and conditions in other vessels of the same class."

As a result of these proceedings, work was resumed and the shipping tie-up ceased.

Your Commissioners since this result have taken further evidence bearing on adjustments of the statements filed by the owners and the Guild's claims; on questions involved in claims with respect to working conditions; and on the question of recognition. Evidence as to the exact status of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild as aforesaid will have to be obtained from

Engla id, and upon certain other matters which came before your Commissioners to be dealt with in this inquiry further evidence will be required before your Commissioners will feel justified in making definite findings or recommendations with respect thereto.

In accordance with the foregoing, your Commissioners beg to make the following findings and recommendations:

Recognition:

Your Commissioners find that the Canadian Merchant Service Guild should be recognized by shipowners in Canada to the extent of the recognition accorded the Imperial Merchant Service by shipowners in Great Britain in reference to relations between employer and employees on questions of wages and working conditions. The exact status of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild in this respect, your Commissioners, in accordance with the above arragnement, will determine after further evidence on the point has been obtained.

Wages:

After careful consideration of the claims of the Guild and the position of the owners as set out in the statements filed and in the evidence, your Commissioners find that the wages set out in the schedule hereto should apply as indicated.

In this schedule in certain instances retroactive pay is established. In the case of the Union Steamship Company, Limited, and tow boats, the increases in pay which have occurred from time to time are, in the opinion of your Commissioners, satisfactory.

With reference to the vessels which have not been represented before your Commissioners, the classification of the Guild had been accepted. It is felt that this should be satisfactory in reference to tow boats as the Tow Boat Owners' Association, which appeared before your Commissioners, representing 45 tow boats, made no complaint as to this classification. Notice of the proceedings was given to all owners of whom information could be obtained. Your Commissioners will be ready to hear any owner who considers himself aggrieved in reference to this classification, and reservation is made so that any such case may be made the subject of subsequent action and readjustment.

Working Conditions:

Three Watch System: The only objection voiced before your Commissioners to the use of this system on the ships to which it is applicable was that the men were not available. Your Commissioners feel that the three watch system should be inaugurated and sustained where possible and would therefore recommend that this be done wherever and whenever the men are available.

Classification of Officers: Your Commissioners feel that the claim of the Guild in this respect should not be given effect to. Any ad-

justments which the situation calls for because of difficulties in respect of time to be served for certificates should be made under Government regulations as the present classification in use by the owners is the most sensible and satisfactory.

Holidays: Your Commissioners recommend that masters and mates on all boats should be given annual holidays with full pay to the extent of two weeks. The principle of annual holidays to the extent of a fortnight is in vogue on passenger and freight steamers, and in the opinion of your Commissioners should be applied to all boats. Your Commissioners also recommend that two hoat masters and certificated officers away from the home port for fourteen days or more should be given upon their return 24 hours free from the vessel.

Increased percentage for two hoat masters and officers operating to the westward of the Jordan River and north of and across Queen Charlotte Sound;

Your Commissioners are of the opinion that the evidence submitted does not disclose any undue or extraordinary hazard for the class of vessels sent to the waters in question, and if such hazard exists the practice of laying up in shelter for favourable weather removes any extra danger likely to be encountered because. of weather conditions. Your Commissioners also feel that there has been no good reason shown why the wages on vessels operating out of Prince Rupert should be increased 20 per cent above wages on vessels from others ports in the province. The finding on this point is that the claim is not well founded and should not be granted.

Rc Harbour Tugs: The questions in respect to harbour tugs of the working day, overtime and extra pay in lieu of board, are reserved by your Commissioners to be dealt with later upon further evidence.

Towing by Freight Boats: Your Commissioners feel that the claim for extra pay on this score is not well founded and should not be granted.

Number of Officers on Specified Ships: Your Commissioners' position with reference to any claim in this regard is indicated by the officers mentioned in the wage schedule hereto.

Vessels in Government Service: Evidence was given before your Commissioners to the effect that the present rate of wages paid is and has been for some time inadequate. The completion of evidence now would mean considerable delay and your Commissioners reserve this situation to be dealt with subsequently.

Ferry Boats, Fishing Vessels and Barges: Intimation was made to your Commissioners that the present situation with reference to these vessels is satisfactory. The matter was not made absolutely definite, however, and your Commissioners therefore reserve for subsequent attention any questions or difficulties which may be presented to your Commissioners by owners or the Guild with reference to these vessels.

Lake and River Steamers: The Guild has made application to your Commissioners for the extension of the Commission to cover inquiry with respect to wages and working conditions on these vessels. Your commissioners therefore would request that their powers be extended so that what difficulties exist may be dealt with.

Reservations:

Your Commissioners, in view of the fact that subsequent report on the matters specifically reserved will be deferred on account of the necessity, in your Commissioners' opinion, of obtaining evidence from England on the status of the Imperial Merchant Service Guild, desire it to be understood that any questions properly coming within the work of the Commission concerning which no findings or recommendations have been set out will, at the instance of any owner or the Guild, be made the subject of inquiry, if in the opinion of your Commissioners, they are of sufficient importance.

Commissioner James is unavoidably absent from the city, and will be away for a few days, so that his signature to this report will be delayed. He, however, concurs in the findings and recommendations contained herein.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

(Sgd.) JAS. H. McVETY. Sept. 27, 1918. (Sgd.) C. A. JAMES. (Sgd.) W. E. BURNS.

Dated at Vancouver, B.C., this twelfth day of September, A.D. 1918.

Chairman.

SCHEDULE OF SALARIES AWARDED.

Vessels Owned by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

PASSENGER AND CARGO VESSELS.

Class 1A

Princess Charlotte, Princess Sophia, Princess Victoria, Princess Adelaide, and Princess Alice.

	Effective April 1, 1918.	Effective Aug. 1, 1918.
Master	per month.	per month. \$250.00
1st Officer	145.00	160.00
2nd Officer	., 120.00 90.00	135.00 100.00
	Class 1B.	

Vessels of Class 1A that run to Alaska.

2nd Officer		145.00	\$300.00 160.00 185.00 110.00
	Class 2	A.	

Princess Maquinna when on West Coast service.

1st Officer 2nd Officer	*************	185.00 110.00	\$250.00 160.00 135.00 100.00

Class 2B.

Princess Mary, Princess Royal, Princess Maquinns, and Princess Sophia when on local runs.

Master 1st Officer . 2nd Officer	• •	::	•	•	• •	:	•	 145,00	\$225.00 150.00 185.00
3rd Officer					• •		:	 90.00	100.00

Class 8.

Princess Beatrice, Princess Ena, Princess Patricia, Princess May, and Tees.

	= :		
Master	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	REOK DO	\$210.00
184 Olucer		195 00	
zna Uincer		110 00	10E 00
3rd Officer	A A VIA VALVA PARA A	90.00	100.00

Class 4.

Princess Patricia (when on single runs) and Charmer.

Master	\$185.00	\$190.00
ist Uincer		130.00
and Omcei	105.00	110.00

Class 5.

Island Princess and Otter.

Mast	er	 #185-na	
			, 120.00
zna	Officer	 90.00	100.00

Note.—The April 1 scale will apply to the Island Princess as from the date of acquisition by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

TOW BOATS.

Nancose, Nitinat, and Qualicum.

faster st Officer	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	\$180.00 90.00	\$200.00
er Omcei		90.00	110.00

Vessels Owned by the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway Company.

PASSENGER AND CARGO VESSELS.

Class 1.

Prince Rupert and Prince George.

	Effective April 1, 1918. per month.	Effective Aug. 1, 1918, per month,
Master	\$245.00	\$250,00
1st Officer	145.00	160.00
2nd Officer	120,00	135.00
8rd Officer	90.00	100.00

Class B.

Prince Albert and Prince John.

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Master	\$195,00	\$210.00
Ist Officer	135.00	150.00
2nd Officer	110.00	125.00
3rd Officer	90.00	100.00

TOW BOATS.

Tug Lorne.

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	· · · · · ·	_
Master	\$175.00	\$200.00
Mate .	90.00	100.00

Vesse's Owned by the Union Steamship Company of British Columbia, Limited.	Class 8,
Class 3.	Cascade, Clansman, Coaster, Forrager, Grainer, Matsqui, Selkirk, Trader, and Westham,
Camosum, Chelobsin, and Venture.	Master \$150.00 Ma'e (when carried) 110.00
Effective Aug. 1, 1918.	Class 9.
Master \$210.00 1st Officer 150.00 2nd Officer 125.00 3rd Officer 90.00 to 100.00	Bentick, Enilada, Fort Langley, Lake Buntzen, Le Olbee, Marine Express, and New Delta.
	Outside Harbour. \$150.00 Mate (when carried)
Class 4A. Cheakamus and Cowichan.	Inside Harbour.
Master \$190.00 1st Officer 180.00 2nd Officer 110.00 8rd Officer 90.00 to 100.00	Master
Class 4B.	TOW BOATS OTHER THAN ABOVE
Cassiar.	MENTIONED.
Master \$185.00 1st Officer 125.00 2nd Officer 110.00	Effective August 1, 1918. Tug. Master. Mate.
Class 5A.	Class 2.
Chasina and Chilco.	Commodore
Master \$175.00 1st Officer 120.00	Class 3.
Class 5B.	Achates 180.00 105.00 Active 180.00 105.00
Coquit.am.	Ctar
Master \$180.00 1st Officer 125.00 2nd Officer 90.00 to 100.00	Danutless 180,00 105,00 Dola 180,00 105,00 Erin 180,00 105,00 Faultless 180,00 105,00 Germania 180,00 105,00 Haro 180,00 105,00
•	Haro 180.00 105.60 Ivanhoe 180.00 105.00 Le Roi 180.00 105.00
PASSENGER AND CARGO VESSELS OTHER THAN ABOVE MENTIONED.	Peerless 180,00 103,00 Sebastian 180,00 105,00 Tariar 180,00 105,00
Class 27	Class 4.
Amur. ** Effective Aug. 1, 1918. Master	Beatrice 170.00 100.00 Berquist 170.00 100.00 Clayburn 170.00 100.00 Cortli 170.00 100.00 Earl 170.00 100.00 Etta White 170.00 100.00 Freno 170.00 100.00 Mystery 170.00 100.00 Mystery 170.00 100.00 Olive M 170.00 100.00 Progressive 170.00 100.00
Quadra.	Queen 170.00 100.00 8t. Clair 170.00 100.00 Tepic 170.00 100.00 Wireless 170.00 100.00 Vulcan 170.00 90.00
Master \$210.00 1st Officer 150.00 2nd Officer 125.00 3rd Officer 100.00	Vulcan
Class 5.	Annacis
Ballena, Bowens, Britannia, Celtic, Eastholm, and Queen City. Master	Belle 155.00 90.00 Cheerful 155.00 90.00 Ohleftain 155.00 90.00 Daring 155.00 90.00 Farquhar 155.00 90.00 Fearful 155.00 90.00 Francis Outting 155.00 90.00

Tug.	Master.	Mate.	Tug.		Master.	Mate.
Gleeful	155.00	90.00	Stormer		148.00	90.00
Glenboro	155.00	90.00	Superior		145.00	
Hopkins	155.00	80.00	Vancouver		145.00	90.00
Lornet	155.00	90.00		*** *****	295.00	90.00
Ж. С. М.	155.00	90.00		Olean		
Phoenix	155.00	90.00		Class	γ.	
Protective	155.00	90.00	4 4 3			
Red Fir	155.00	90.00	Autolycus		125.00	
Spray	155,00	90.00	Beryl		125.00	
Dtorm King	155.00	90.00	Buster B		125.00	
Swell	155.00	90.00	Canpac		125.00	
		•0.00	Centre Star .		125.00	
Class	R		Cleeve		125.00	
Ciaas	0.		Clive		125.00	
Armono	445.00		Cultus , .		125.00	
Armoco	145.00	90.00	Delta		125.00	
B. C. Maid	145.00	90.00	Dolphin		125.00	
Brunette	145.00	90.00	Dominion		125.00	
Burrard	145.00	90,00	Dorothy		125.00	
Canadian	135.00	90.00	Elsie		130.00	
City of Land	145.00	90.00	Enola	• • • • • • • • • • • •	125.00	
Dalsy	145.00	90.00	Еув		125.00	
Defiance	145.00	90.00	Сурау		125.00	
Digges	145.00	90.00	Hilda		125.00	
Edith	145.00	90.00	Iris		125.00	
Edna Grace	145.00	80.00	Isaac		125.00	
Ellison	145,00	90.00	Joyful		125.00	
Fearless	145,00	90.00	Lottie N		125.00	•
Flyer	145,00	90.00	M. T. No. 1		125.00	
Hero No. 1	145.00	90.00	Najad		125.00	
imp	145.00	90.00	Polarine			
Jessie Mac	155.00	90.00	Raliumas		125,00	
Kildonan	145.00	90.00	Reliance		125.00	
Maagen	145.00	90.00	Respond		125.00	
Marvis	145.00	90.00	Senator		125.00	
Moonlight	145.00	90.00	Shuswap		125.00	
Muriel	145.00	90.00	Steteon	• • • • • • • • •	185.00	
Native	145.00	90.00	Stranger	•• •••	125.00	
Owen	145.00	90.00	Tussler		125.00	
Plunger	145.00	90.00				
Projective	145.00			(Sgd.) \	W. E. Burs	18.
Pronative	145.00	90.00				Chairman.
Sadie	145.00	90.00		(Sgd.) J	As. H. McV	
Squid		80.00				
bquid	145.00	90.00		(Sgd.) I	E. A. JAMES.	
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