

# COMMITTEE TO INVESTIGATE PORT CHARGES NOT CHOSEN

## Plan to Put Negroes on Tribunal Objected to as Likely to Nullify Movement.

### Ship Agents Will Select Men Outside Their Body, and Suggestion Is That Screwmen Do the Same.

The committee to investigate all port charges, to be composed of four representatives of the Steamship Agents and four of the Screwmen, with an umpire elected by Mayor Behrman and President Smith, of the Cotton Exchange, the arrangement upon which the recent general strike was settled, was not appointed yesterday, according to schedule, but it is very probable that the agents at least will name their representatives to-day, and it is also likely the Screwmen will also make their selections.

The Ship Agents held a brief session yesterday, presided over by Mr. W. P. Ross, the Chairman, at which the matter of naming the employers' half of the committee was taken up. The names of quite a few gentlemen were considered, but no definite action was taken, and the matter went over until to-day.

At the meeting of the Screwmen, held at Screwmen's Hall, Bienville Street and Exchange Alley, last night, President James Byrnes, who so successfully led the strikers in the recent strike, laid the matter of the committee before the assemblage. It was generally understood that as the screwmen's contentions about the number of hales that should constitute a fair day's work had proven the cause of the strike, which involved the Longshoremen and all the other Levee labor unions, the Screwmen would have the right to name four of the members of their organization to serve on the committee. The Screwmen and other Levee unions go on the half-and-half principle—that is, all work is equally divided between the white and negro unions, and when committees are to be named to arbitrate any question or transact any business they are made up of an equal number of whites and negroes, generally with a white chairman and a negro secretary. Such being the case, it was concluded that the labor half of the committee to investigate port charges would be composed of two white men and two negroes.

As the committee is to go carefully and deeply into subjects and conditions of the utmost importance, and as much may depend upon the result of the committee's workings, the plan to have as a part of its constituency two negroes never from the first seemed a popular or a logical one. The ship agents were mute on the subject and would not express themselves, being parties to the issue, but generally in business and commercial circles such a move as placing

#### NEGROES ON THE COMMITTEE

was cried down, and declared to be not only impolitic, but almost out of the question.

One well known gentleman identified with the shipping and commercial interests of the port said yesterday afternoon that, in his opinion, if negroes were appointed there would be no investigation at all and that the committee would fall in its mission entirely. The gentleman further contended that he thought it would be fair for the Screwmen to appoint outsiders on the committee, as the Steamship Agents intended doing. Neither agents nor stevedores will be on the committee; they will be represented by gentlemen entirely disinterested, and it is thought by many that the Screwmen would work to a better end were they to pursue the same course and select disinterested gentlemen to serve for them.

Individual members of the cotton yardmen and longshoremen were contending yesterday that the section of the Investigation Committee from the labor side should be a general one, selected from the several unions of the Dock and Cotton Council, and not from the screwmen alone. Port charges generally are to be investigated, and they hold that as questions affecting all the thirteen unions in the Council are likely to crop out of the investigation, the Committee should be variously selected from among the best men of the organizations affiliated in the Council.

John T. Callahan, a well-known member of the cotton yardmen and a delegate from that union to the Dock and Cotton Council, it was stated yesterday, was being urged by his friends to seek a place on the committee of investigation that the Legislature will probably create.

It was stated yesterday that there was likely to be trouble in the Council as the result of the action of the Cotton Men's Protective Association in blackballing several well-known applicants for membership.

The cotton men were out on a strike for some time during the late summer and early fall, and when they effected a compromise agreement with the employers it was stipulated that they would admit to membership certain markers and inspectors who had remained at work during the strike.

It appears that most of the applicants were thrown down hard when they tried to become members of the Union, and the brokers and buyers were beginning to complain. Trouble was likely for a time, but it was averted by the Union promising to reconsider the applications of the blackballed.

#### THE COAL ROLLERS' TROUBLES.

As a result of the floating elevator companies continuing in their employ the thirty-six nonunion negroes, has not yet been adjusted. But the week given by the Dock and Cotton Council is still young, and there is every probability of an early adjustment of the difficulty.

President Byrnes, of the Dock and Cotton Council, and Secretary Peter Clark of the cotton yardmen, delegate from his union to the Council, called at the City Hall yesterday and presented Mayor Behrman with the following resolution of thanks for His Honor's untiring work in settling the recent general strike:

"New Orleans, La., Oct. 24, 1907.  
"Extract from the minutes of a meeting of the Dock and Cotton Council, held this day:

"On motion of Chris Scully, seconded by James Porter, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:

"Be it resolved, That the sincere thanks of this body be extended to the Hon. Martin Behrman, Mayor of the city of New Orleans, for his untiring efforts to bring to a satisfactory settlement the difficulty recently existing on the levee front of this city.

"Be it further resolved, That, recognizing the position he occupies, by reason of his exalted office as Mayor of the city of New Orleans, and the fact that he was compelled, therefore, to act in a fair and impartial manner without prejudice to either side in the controversy just ended, the hearty congratulations of this body are hereby extended to him for the earnestness, zeal and fairness with which, through his instrumentality, a culmination satisfactory to both sides was effected.

"Be it further resolved, That these resolutions be spread on the minutes of this meeting, that a copy of them, under the seal of this Council, be presented to him and a committee for that purpose be appointed by the Chairman."

"A true copy.  
"DOCK AND COTTON COUNCIL,  
"Per James Byrnes, President.  
"C. F. Beck, Recording Secretary."  
Mayor Behrman thanked Mr. Byrnes and through him those whom he represented for these appreciable resolutions. At the same time he took occasion again to express his gratification for the splendid manner in which the laboring men preserved law and order by waging their contest.

The longshoremen held a regular meeting last night, with President Chris. Scully in the chair and Secretary John J. Higgins at his desk. Several new members were admitted, and business of a routine nature for

the most part transacted. The following resolutions thanking the Mayor for his services in the recent strike were adopted unanimously:

"Whereas in the recent controversy between the longshoremen and the stevedores the timely intercession, at the instance of both sides, of His Honor, Mayor Behrman, Mayor of the city of New Orleans, paved the way to common ground which employers and employees were enabled to negotiate an adjustment resulting in the resumption of work and the restoration of the orderly movement of the port's commerce; therefore be it

"Resolved, by the Longshoremen's Benevolent Association, Local No. 251, That we record our high appreciation of the service thus rendered by the Hon. Martin Behrman, and extend to him our thanks for his assistance in bringing the levee trouble to a conclusion reasonably satisfactory to the contending interests and of inestimable benefit to the public interest; and be it further

"Resolved, That in his action we find renewed evidence of the sense of even justice, of the devotion to the general welfare and of the abiding sympathy with the cause of the toiling masses which have heretofore commended the Hon. Martin Behrman to the esteem of his fellow-citizens of all classes and conditions.

"CHRIS. SCULLY, President.  
"JNO. J. HIGGINS, Secretary."

#### SOUTHERN PACIFIC STRIKE

##### Mayor Behrman's Aid Asked in Seeking Settlement.

Appreciating that it was largely through the efforts of Mayor Martin Behrman that the big general strike on the Levee, involving over ten thousand men, was settled, representatives of the Central Labor Union and the Southern Pacific freight handlers called at the City Hall yesterday to solicit the Mayor's aid in affecting some kind of a compromise between the Southern Pacific Company and the striking freight handlers. Although just through with one controversy, the Mayor, in the interests of the general welfare, consented to confer with Assistant General Manager Torney and General Agent Lamberton, of the railroad, and last evening he met the gentlemen at the St. Charles Hotel. The conference lasted for some time, but neither the Mayor nor the railroad representatives had anything to give out for publication.

It was generally understood, though, that Messrs. Torney and Lamberton said that the Company was ready to take back all the strikers possibly could under old conditions.

The Southern Pacific Company now has nearly nine hundred strikebreakers housed on the barge near the wharf, and the work of loading and discharging vessels, it is said, is progressing most satisfactorily. Two more strikebreakers were recruited yesterday, and the Company will continue to bring them in as needed.