

JOURNAL'S POLICY
The Charlotte Labor Journal welcomes suggestions and constructive criticism. Its object is to promote organization of the unorganized, to help bring about a better understanding between employer and employe, thereby gaining a better standard of living for the worker.
Progress shall always govern The Journal's opinions.

The Charlotte Labor Journal

(AND DIXIE FARM NEWS)

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Right To Scan Books Vital In Pay Cases, Truman Rules

ALSO RULES THAT A COMPANY'S BOOKS SHOULD NOT BE MADE PUBLIC IN ORDER TO PROTECT IT FROM COMPETITORS.

Washington, D. C.—President Truman bluntly ruled that government fact-finding boards considering wage disputes must have authority to examine employers' books in order to determine their ability to pay increases in wage rates.

However, the President included a proviso that the information contained in a company's books should not be made public in order to protect it from prying competitors.

AFL unions with a long history of successful collective bargaining have established procedures under which company data on earnings and profits are considered at the bargaining table but are not broadcast to the rest of the world.

The new wrinkle in the present situation was whether a government fact-finding board appointed by the President to seek a solution when collective bargaining breaks down should have authority, without subpoena power, to examine an employer's books.

The fact-finding boards now functioning have been appointed by the President without specific authority from Congress and cannot issue subpoenas. Only CIO cases are as yet involved. The President's request for legislation giving such boards statutory authority has been rebuffed by Congress which postponed hearings on the Norton-Ellender bill until late in January.

In a formal statement issued at a White House press conference, the President outlined his views as follows:

"In appointing a fact-finding board in an industrial dispute where one of the questions at issue is wages, it is essential to a fulfillment of its duty that the

board have the authority, whenever it deems it necessary, to examine the books of the employer. That authority is essential to enable the board to determine the ability of the employer to pay an increase in wages where such ability is in question. Ability to pay is always one of the facts relevant to the issue of an increase in wages.

"This does not mean that the government or its fact-finding board is going to endeavor to fix a rate of return for the employer. It does mean, however, that since wages are paid out of earnings, the question of earnings is relevant.

"The detailed information obtained from the books of an employer should not be made public. Such a disclosure would place the employer at a disadvantage with respect to his competitors. But the fact-finding board should unquestionably have the right to examine the employer's books where it deems it necessary in order to make up its own mind as to whether a demand for increase is justified and to make public all findings based on such information, that it deems relevant to the controversy.

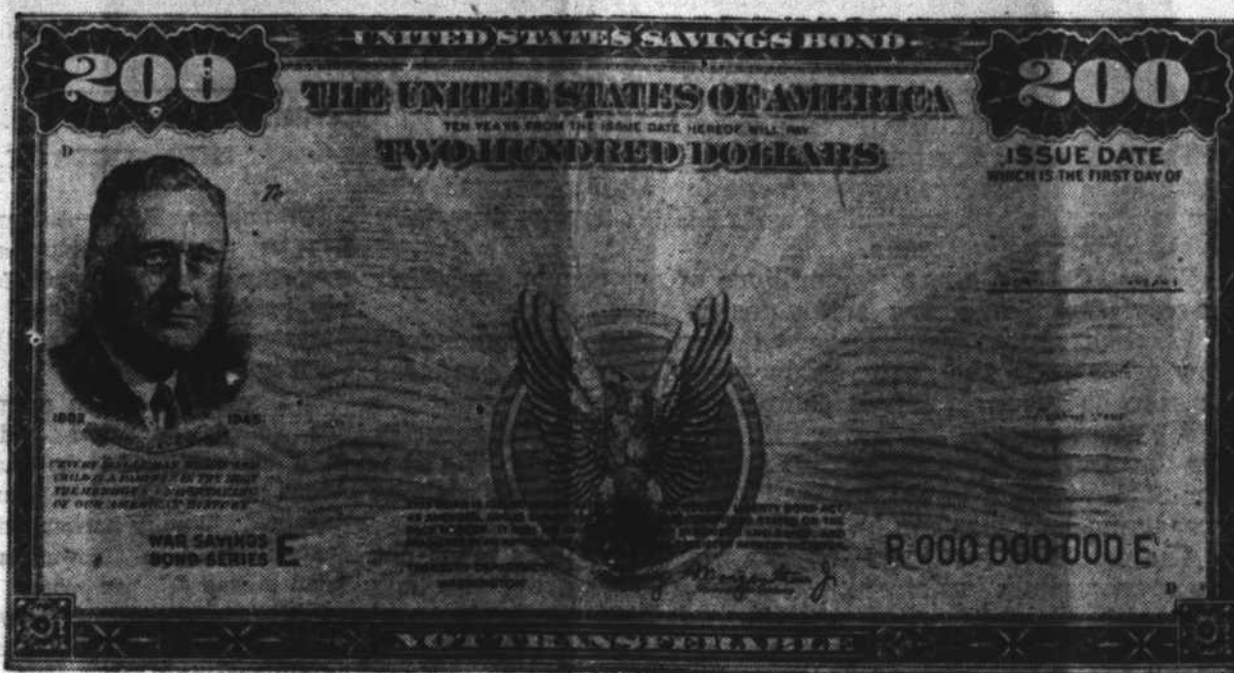
"That is one of the things I meant when I stated in my message of December 3, 1945, to the Congress:

"The board should be directed to make a thorough investigation of all the facts which it deems relevant in the controversy."

"This is nothing new. There are many instances where the books of corporations are opened for inspection to representatives of the State and Federal governments and where the information so obtained is used solely by such officials to carry out their functions.

"To confer the right to examine books is one of the main purposes

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Gov't Workers Get Meager Wage Boost From Senate

Washington, D. C.—The United States Senate voted an average 11 per cent increase in the pay of government employes receiving less than \$10,000 a year and rejected the Downey bill which would have provided the 20 per cent increase urged by President Truman and the American Federation of Labor.

AFL unions representing government workers immediately served notice that they would press for the higher rates when the measure comes up for consideration in the House of Representatives late in January.

Meanwhile, the AFL Council of Government Employees Unions will conduct a vigorous campaign to enlist the support of members of Congress for a more adequate wage bill, including pay increases for Representatives and Senators.

The Senate substitute was sponsored by Senator Harry Byrd of Virginia, who has a long record

of obstruction against lifting the standards of Federal employes. In the name of economy, Senator Byrd has fought practically every measure which would give Uncle Sam's army of public servants a break.

The measure adopted by the Senate grants higher percentage increases to those in the lower income brackets and scales down the increase for those in the higher brackets.

Results of three surveys just completed have demonstrated that Labor and Management alike advocate the continuance of the payroll savings method of buying U. S. Savings Bonds in peacetime, the War Finance division has disclosed.

Take a squint at the Roosevelt Bond, shown above. No better savings method—buy a bond for \$150 and get \$200 in 10 years!

Although the war is over, it is important to continue purchasing U. S. Savings Bonds, either outright or through the payroll savings plan which has proven so convenient and profitable.

Schwellenbach Warns Cost Of Living May Pierce Roof When Controls End

Washington, D. C.—Removal of price and rent controls would boost the cost of living through the roof and create a "very grave" situation as to wages, Secretary of Labor Schwellenbach advised Congress.

"Until supplies are really adequate, it is important to hold controls not only over prices, but over materials in some cases," he told the Senate Small Business committee.

A "big profits" lobby has been pressuring Congress for removal of price control, while real estate interests have undertaken an all-out campaign to relax rent ceilings.

Secretary Schwellenbach's report offered no support for these selfish interests. He said:

"The experience of the war demonstrates that the kind of price control we have had makes possible production on a very large scale.

"We need to continue price control."

Schwellenbach declared that if American labor were faced with a rise in prices month after month, "industrial unrest will inevitably increase."

Wages in heavy industries already are down to \$44.50 weekly from \$52.90 in April, 1945, just before the end of war in Europe, the Secretary said. Workers in light industries are receiving an average of approximately \$38 now,

representing a decline of only 75 cents from April.

But even where the decline has been slight, he related, family incomes on an average have dropped because fewer persons are employed now than last spring. Government employment alone has declined 230,000 since mid-August.

"With such a situation as this," said Schwellenbach, "we simply cannot afford to allow prices of more. Most of all we cannot permit rents to run wild.

"I do not want to conjure up any imaginary dangers. These dangers are very real indeed. They begin with the simple fact that there are shortages of many kinds of goods. If price and rent controls are removed, the cost of living could go through the roof within six months."

Everyday goods which consumers buy are now up 33 per cent above the prewar level, Schwellenbach continued, and even with continuation controls there will be no decline in the cost of living soon.

Because food and clothing continue in short supply, prices paid for them will remain as high as the government permits.

"You can imagine," he said, "what would happen to the prices of the few shirts that do come into retail stores if this government were to say to the retailers and manufacturers, now or in June, 'price control is off and you can charge anything you please.'"

OPA Price Ceilings Established For 34 Scarce Building Materials

New York City.—Leo F. Genter, regional OPA administrator, announced flat dollars-and-cents ceiling prices on 34 major "hard" building materials for New York City and Nassau county.

Included in this list are plaster, bricks, tile, cement, lath, wall-board, clay, sewer-pipe, plywood and other important construction commodities.

The OPA ceiling prices for New York City and Nassau county became effective January 1, 1946, with one exception, western softwood plywood, on which ceiling prices went into effect on December 18. Prices include all charges

and additions for delivery in the free-delivery zone recognized in the base-period, March, 1942.

OPA's establishment of ceiling prices on the 34 major "hard" building materials follows the agency's announced program of improving and strengthening price controls in the building construction field, and is in line with the national movement inaugurated by OPA to prevent an inflationary spiral in new housing construction.

OPA's action is expected to accelerate housing construction and spur builders to provide dwelling for millions of homeless people.

17 AFL Unions Tender Testimonial To Rep. Ramspeck, Friend Of Labor

Washington, D. C.—Members of Congress, executives of Federal agencies and representatives of 17 AFL unions paid tribute to the 16 years' public service of Representative Robert Ramspeck (Democrat of Georgia) at a testimonial dinner at the Statler hotel.

In a letter, President Truman credited Ramspeck with a large share in the raising of standards and efficiency in public service during the 10 years he headed the House Committee on Civil Service.

Ramspeck leaves the House January 1, to accept the position of vice president of the Air Transport Association of North America at a reported \$25,000 salary.

For more than two hours, speakers, including House Majority Leader John W. McCormack, Dem-

ocrat of Massachusetts, and AFL President William Green, lauded Ramspeck for his leadership and steady influence in the Congress, as well as his fairness and wisdom as a friend of labor.

Mr. Green emphasized that "if pay standards for Federal employes, including members of Congress, had been raised to proper levels, the government would not have to lose faithful and efficient public servants, such as Ramspeck.

A scroll, citing Ramspeck's sponsorship of the Ramspeck act, the Mead-Ramspeck act, the liberalized Retirement act, the War Overtime Pay act, and the Federal Employees Pay act of 1945, was presented in the names of the 17

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Jobs For Veterans Are Shrinking As General Unemployment Mounts

Washington, D. C.—Veterans are beginning to encounter difficulties in finding employment, with the full impact of discharges upon the labor market yet to be felt, the Department of Commerce said in its Survey of Current Business.

"Despite the fact that peak separations had not occurred and that many veterans already released were not seeking work, difficulties in reabsorption had begun to emerge during September and October," the article stated.

Although about 5,000,000 veterans, half of the number to be discharged, are expected to be mustered out by January 1 and many servicemen have not yet joined the labor force by taking time out for adjustments to civilian life, opportunities for veterans already have narrowed and the job situation will be aggravated in the next few months when discharges hit flood tide, the article stated, adding:

"The increase in the number of veterans receiving compensation for unemployment, together with the widening gap between application for placement in jobs through local offices of United States Employment service, reflect the occupational shifting now under way and the changed relationship of applicants and job opportunities."

Before V-J day, it was explained, discharges were offset by large-scale withdrawals from the labor market into military service so that veterans were really absorbed, while under present conditions, with the rate of releases stepped up, reconversion has reduced, at least temporarily, the demand for workers in many industries.

With Army surveys showing that at least 75 per cent of the returning veterans would be job-seekers, the article concluded that the country faced a "primary problem" of developing a labor demand sufficient to provide employment for the returning veterans, "along with the additional problem of finding jobs satisfactory to the veteran with previous training, newly acquired skills and generally high expectations."

New Housing Bill, Endorsed By AFL, Gets Bi-Partisan Senate Support

WASHINGTON, D. C.—A compromise general housing bill, assured of bipartisan support, was introduced in Congress by Senator Robert F. Wagner, Democrat of New York.

The new bill reflects an agreement between Senator Wagner and Senator Taft, Republican of Ohio. Hearings began November 19 before the Senate Banking and Currency committee, of which Senator Wagner is chairman.

It is hoped that passage of this legislation will make possible a huge construction program to meet the serious housing shortage and to provide millions of new jobs over the next 10 years. The bill includes the major features of the AFL's housing program.

Combining the Federal Home Loan bank board, the Federal Housing administration and the United States Housing authority into a single agency under one policy-making head, the bill concentrates on enabling private enterprise to expand its activities in the so-called middle market or "no man's land" of housing by strengthening the FHA system so as to reach a greater number of families in that market.

"The first main plan for this middle income privately financed housing sets up a special plan for small home ownership with FHA insurance," Senator Wagner explained. "This plan raises the amount eligible for insurance from 80 per cent or 90 per cent of the cost of the housing to 95 per cent,

thus reducing the down payment required for the middle income family to 5 per cent.

"To make the terms more favorable, it extends the period of amortization from 20 or 25 years to 32 years. It also reduced the maximum interest rate allowable under the statute from 5 per cent to 4 per cent. It provides additional insurance protection to promote the flow of capital on these more favorable terms.

Another major provision affecting private financing of mutual home ownership or rental projects permits insured mortgages of as much as 95 per cent in the case of mutuals or public instrumentalities, and 90 per cent in other cases, at interest of no more than 3 1-2 per cent with a maximum amortization period of 40 years.

A 5-year program for urban redevelopment, in which both private and public funds would be utilized, also is set forth in the measure. For this purpose the Federal government could loan \$500,000,000 to cities and towns to get land assembly and clearance projects started and which must be repaid in full within five years. It could loan \$50,000,000 annually, repayable in 45 years, for the same purposes.

To expand low-rent public housing, the measure sets up a four-year program to cost the Federal government a total of \$88,000,000, and Senator Wagner estimated this would provide about 500,000 additional units of low-rent public housing.



YOU ARE RIGHT to be proud of this double hero. He did his part overseas and now that he's back he is still fighting for his way of life by buying Victory Bonds—to help get the other boys home; to keep prices down; to speed conversion to peace industry, so there will be jobs for the boys still overseas, when they return.

This time he won't get a medal for being a hero... neither will you, just the satisfaction of finishing up the job the best way you can.

Following the Victory Loan, the sale of E, F & G U. S. Savings Bonds will continue through regular authorized agencies and through the Payroll Savings Plan.



They finished their job—Let's finish ours!