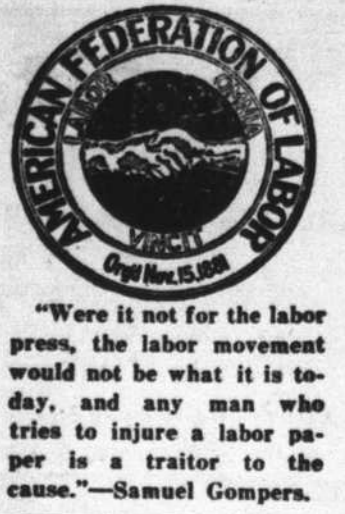


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Charlotte Labor Journal

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EARLY END OF WAGE CONTROLS FORECAST

Washington, D. C.—Increasing indications are seen here that wage controls are slated for the discard and soon will take their place beside those which already have been abandoned with numerous other wartime regulations.

In consequence, the eyes of labor and Government are pointed toward President Truman, who is expected to announce in the near future how quickly and to what extent wage controls will be dropped.

Already wage limitations, like OPA ceilings, have been abandoned since VJ-Day in many fields. Generally, they are being removed from industries as price ceilings are abandoned. As an example, when price controls on meat and livestock were terminated automatically in the packing industry.

However, the problem is not quite so simple as a flat drop of all wage controls, some who have given the issue close study report. It is a complex problem in many respects, they said. Wage stabilization is divided into both direct and indirect controls, and the controls are still exercised over the wage and salary rises in the building and construction field, over all wage decreases and rates established for new jobs or plants.

Subject to the detailed regulations of the Wage Stabilization Board, direct control means the failure to obtain the board's approval of wage changes coming within the above categories marks a violation of the Stabilization Act.

The WSB also is administering direct control of wage rates for war veterans, under the veterans' training program. Its purpose is to prevent employers from paying unreasonably low wages to former service men who are receiving government payments while in training.

The WSB in a few instances has disapproved applications for

low wage rates received while in training should bear some relationship to the pay which the veteran will receive when his training is completed.

In addition to these direct controls, the WSB regulations establish indirect controls which extend to a much wider field but are being reduced in scope as price ceilings are terminated.

The indirect controls specify that wage increases may not be used as a basis for requesting higher OPA ceilings on prices or rents or as a basis for increased cost to the Federal Government unless they have the WSB's approval.

Several recent developments have weakened the WSB's hold on wage controls and have impelled the reconsideration of the entire program. These included:

1. Overruling of the WSB's decision by John R. Steelman, reconversion director, in the maritime labor case involving AFL unions. The seamen were allowed a greater increase than the board would approve.

2. Resignation of the two industry members of the board. Mr. Truman has not yet accepted their resignations, but study is being given to setting up a new board or agency which would abandon the tripartite plan under which labor, industry and the public are equally represented.

3. The decision to speed up the entire wage-price decontrol program as a result of the removal of ceilings from meat.

Electricians Sign Pact With 2,000 Contractors

Washington, D. C.—Approximately 100,000 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL) will benefit under the terms of an agreement signed by the union officers and officials of the National Electrical Contractors' Association, comprised of more than 2,000 contractors throughout the Nation.

The new contract, signed in the office of Labor Secretary Lewis B. Schwelienbach, embraced an employees' benefit agreement providing for employer contributions to an industry-wide pension fund of the union. Members of the union will contribute 60 cents a month each to the pension fund and this sum will be matched dollar-for-dollar by the employers.

This will provide a retirement benefit of \$50 a month to members of the IBEW when they reach 65 years after 20 years of continuous membership in the union. It is the first industry-wide pension agreement in the construction field.

The agreement was signed for the union by International President Ed J. Brown, International Secretary Gus Bugniazet and C. F. Preller, a member of the International Executive Council. Signing for the employers were NECA President Robert W. McChesney; E. C. Carlson, chairman of the Labor Relations Committee, and Paul M. Geary, executive vice president.

Commenting on the new agreement the employers' spokesman said:

"There is nothing mysterious about successful employer-employee relations. Given any normal problem of adjustment, it can be solved if employers in good faith have the

will to solve it in co-operation with the employes acting in good faith with the will to solve it. Much of the present problem of employe and employer relations has been shrouded in legalities and high-sounding hocus-pocus.

"The successful relations in the electrical contracting industry have been established over a period of more than a quarter of a century. They rest upon a simple formula of getting the facts, of analyzing the facts, of arriving at the nature of the problem, and then doing something about it jointly, with kindness and reasonableness.

"The long-time relationships between NECA and IBEW are dedicated to the single proposition: Co-operation is an art not to be had merely by wishing for it. It is not a static but a dynamic art and one that demands intelligence, honesty of purpose and just as constant attention as any other department of the activities of both the union and the employers."

Discussing this statement of the contractors with reporters a short time later, Secretary Schwelienbach said:

"This is the best and most understanding statement concerning employer-employee relations that I have seen since I became Secretary of Labor. I think any employer would do well to study it."

VETS' INCOMES LOW
Washington, D. C.—Most former GI's are not receiving incomes sufficient "to properly care for their families," it was indicated by a poll conducted by the American Veterans of World War II. Of the 98 posts which reported, 81 stated their members were receiving inadequate incomes.

Building And Construction Trades Hold History-Making Chicago Meet

FREY SHARPLY CRITICAL OF BUREAUCRATIC ACTS INJURIOUS TO LABOR.

Chicago. — Delegates from three major divisions of the American Federation of Labor gathered here for their annual meetings which serve as a curtain-raiser to the 65th AFL convention opening here October 7. They included the Metal Trades, the Union Label, and the Building and Construction Trades Departments.

All three were confronted with serious questions touching upon wages, hours, climbing living costs, legislation covering many issues vital to labor and relations with Federal agencies.

In a comprehensive report to the Metals Trades Convention John P. Frey, president, was sharply critical of some Government agencies whose authority extends into the field of labor. He singled out particularly the National Labor Relations board which, he said, had shown an anti-AFL bias.

Discussing the Government's part in labor matters, Mr. Frey said:

"As there must be Federal agencies wielding authority, it strikes the average man that Trade Unionists cannot be protected unless there is action by Congress which would prevent such conditions as those against which we have found cause to complain.

"As the situation stands today, our welfare, our rights, and our opportunities rest largely in the hands of men given great authority, over whom we have no voice, for they do not hold elective office. It is our well-measured con-

viction that the existence of a bureaucracy is a definite menace to free institutions, and as they increase in number, the menace is increased."

Pursuing this issue further, Mr. Frey told the delegates:

"Government by law, which regulates and defines the authority of public officials, has been superseded by control over our everyday activities by the Bureaus, Commissions, Boards, and other Federal regulation bodies which are controlled, at least in part, by their partisan views, the theories to which they are wedded, obvious prejudices and political objectives. Perhaps no greater problem faces our Trade Union movement today than this issue of bureaucratic controls."

Mr. Frey reported an extensive membership gain throughout the war period and added:

"It is most gratifying to find that the present membership of our International Unions is much larger than before the war and that friendly relationships have been established with thousands of employers who formerly were opposed to maintaining cordial relations.

"From one end of the country to the other, AFL unions, early this year, negotiated wage contracts which precluded an increase in prices. Over three thousand of such agreements were entered into which carried no price increases."

Discussing the international labor picture, Mr. Frey reported grave difficulties in reviving the International Metal Workers' Federation in a manner which would restore its former effectiveness.

"A free trade union movement does not exist in most of Europe,"

he said. "What was previously the largest trade union in Europe, that of Germany, has practically vanished."

Mr. Frey said many obstacles had been encountered in the attempts to restore free trade unionism in the allied occupied areas.

"Russia," he said, "apparently wants only the form of so-called trade unions which were permitted in Russia."

"As it is, the official hand in the French, British, and American zones in Germany has not proved itself to be either helpful or friendly," he declared.

Sounding grave warning to the delegates to be constantly on guard against infiltration by Red agents, Mr. Frey said:

"Since our last convention, Communism in the United States has rapidly developed as an agency for Moscow. It now goes far beyond carrying out the party line. A well planned, active campaign has been launched by Moscow agents to secure a controlling place in the American Trade Union movement."

90 MILLION FOR VETERANS

Washington, D. C. — Approximately \$90,000,000 in compensation or pensions is being paid monthly to more than 2,135,000 living veterans of wars dating back as far as the Indian War campaigns, the Veterans Administration announced.

ANOTHER GREEN BAY GROUP AFFILIATES WITH UAW-AFL

Green Bay, Wis.—Employees of the Auto Parts Company of this city have become the newest unit to join the United Automobile Workers of America (AFL).

Highlights Of Green's Address

Chicago.—Following are some of the highlights of the address of AFL President William Green to the opening session of the AFL convention here:

The war could not have been won except for the devoted service given by that army of production. I make answer without reservation to those who have indulged in criticism and complaint, those who have found fault regardless of the near-perfect record that has been made and the transportation lines of the nation. Truly here was located the arsenal of democracy.

Opposes Continued Controls
It is more than a year since VJ-Day and we are disturbed because of the confused situation that has developed, the tendency on the part of government to still exercise control over our economic life and to delegate even collective bargaining to the rear and clothe a governmental agency with authority to veto the collective bargaining agreements reached around the conference table between employers and employees.

No Limitation in Production
We hear some complaints from some unthinking persons and individuals that labor is not measuring up to the economic requirements of the nation—that we are limiting production. All of that is untrue. The productive capacity of the individual worker has constantly increased. As new means and new methods are developed out of the laboratories and the scientific investigations of the nation, and as these new methods are applied, industry and the worker have become more and more efficient.

Fewer workers are producing more.

Asks End of Wage-Price Control

On the question of price control we have been passing through a situation that has subjected us to very trying experiences. Fairly decent governmental control was exercised by the government up to June 30, when the first governmental control act was in operation. Then the Congress refused to continue the act in its original form. I am not sure that it was then suited for the changed conditions that had come about, but examination of the act itself and the record leads to the conclusion that it was better at least than the act they finally passed. Instead of this act now in operation being a price control law, I would classify it as a profit promoting measure.

Labor has suffered as a result of it already. We are suffering now. We believe that some new way must be found, and with the exception of perhaps continued control of rent and some other items comparable to that, we believe the time has come when price control, along with wage control, should be lifted by the government.

Hails Miners' Welfare Fund
I wish we had the facts of the mining industry. The development there has been remarkable. We are happy to know that they have a leader and leaders who stood up and uncompromisingly fought for the creation of a national welfare fund for the injured miners of the nation.

That objective will be the objective now of organizations affiliated with the AFL. We must establish in this nation security in

Washington, D. C.—An early end of wage controls was strongly hinted by President Truman to match wholesale removal of price ceilings on foods and thousands of other items.

Asked at a press conference about recent reports that wage controls would be dropped, the President avoided a direct reply but referred his questioners to his address cancelling meat ceilings. At that time he told the Nation:

"We all recognize the close relationship between wages and prices. If either one rises too high, the other is certain to be affected. Price control and wage control are largely dependent on each other.

"As we speed up the removal of price controls, the removal of wage controls will also be accelerated. In this way we shall move steadily—and as quickly as we can—toward a free economy and a free collective bargaining."

OPA took its longest stride toward decontrol when it removed ceilings on all foods except sugar, syrups, molasses and rice, as well as a long list of nonfood products.

At the same time the agency said a still broader decontrol order would be issued soon lifting price restrictions in virtually every product and service except such essentials as building material rents, clothing, machinery, consumer durable goods and metals.

The Administration drops a part of its wage control every time the Office of Price Administration frees something from price control. This is because War Stabilization Board exercises only limited authority over wages.

These are the major controls which the WSB maintains over the wage structure:

1. Wages of construction workers are "frozen" except as increases are allowed by the Wage Adjustment Board, a part of WSB.

2. Wage increases granted by employers, other than in building, must be approved by WSB only if the pay hikes are to be used as the basis for seeking ceiling price increases from OPA.

3. Wage decreases below a certain base must be approved by WSB.

Representatives of both industry and labor have expressed opposition to the wage controls. Both industry members of the

Home Buyers Balk At Prices On Real Estate

Washington, D. C.—A steadily increasing resistance by buyers to highly inflated real estate prices throughout the nation was revealed by an Associated Press survey in key cities.

This report came simultaneously with other surveys, official and unofficial, indicating an oversupply of some materials for new building and a grave undersupply of other equally needed items of construction.

The Commerce Department forecast that supplies of lumber, cast iron soil pipe and plumbing fixtures for housing and nonresidential construction "will remain short during 1947."

On the other hand, the department said, supplies of brick, tile, concrete block, clay sewer pipe, warm air furnaces and cast iron and convactor radiation are now nearing demand.

Contractors complained that nails are scarce in many areas, although glass is plentiful, but that they can't nail two-by-fours together with glass. They protested, too, that they could build bathrooms, but can't get bathtubs.

Here's the outlook for 1947, according to a confidential study made by the Civilian Production Administration:

A surplus of 51,000 sinks is to be expected, after housing and other needs are filled. But there'll be an embarrassing shortage of 241,000 bathtubs, of 283,000 lav-

atories, of 231,000 water closet bowls.

Clay sewer pipe will be in surplus by 157,000 tons. But cast iron soil pipe, every bit as necessary, will be short by 56,000 tons.

People who manage to get their shelter assembled should thereafter be able to keep warm. A surplus of 44,000 warm air furnaces is expected, as well as a surplus of 8 million square feet of radiators.

But there will be the preliminary difficulty of an anticipated 1947 "deficit" of 1,341,000,000 board feet of lumber, not to mention an additional lack of 282,000,000 board feet of flooring. There'll be too little asphalt roofing and siding, by 200,000 square feet.

The brick surplus will become almost monumental; it is expected to rise to 1,121,000,000 next year. The excess of concrete blocks above housing and other needs is reckoned at 56,000,000. And the surplus of tile will mount to 220,000 tons, the Federal experts think.

In the survey of the slump in real estate turnover, attributed to highly inflated prices, only Washington, D. C., and San Francisco reported no slow down. Reports from other major cities showed a definite drop in sales, forcing a gradual leveling off in prices.

As one real estate official in Baltimore put it: "People have stopped reaching for the sky in their efforts to buy homes."

(Continued on Page 3)