

Anti-Strike Bill May Force Arbitration In Future Negotiations

Washington, D. C.—Stern condemnation of the Herter Bill to punish strikers in the public utilities field was expressed by Boris Shishkin, AFL economist, in a recent radio debate with Rep. Herter of Massachusetts, author of the bill.

Such a measure, Mr. Shishkin warned, could "never reach the roots of the trouble—the causes of industrial disputes—and would only delay our working out a real solution."

This legislation, Mr. Shishkin asserted, could be applied, if passed, to almost all labor disputes. Mr. Herter conceded this was true, depending upon the interpretation of this bill which is aimed at prohibition of strikes involving interstate or foreign commerce, or stoppages "which result in or threaten to result in danger to public health or safety."

Agreeing with Mr. Herter that Government seizure "will not work" and declaring that "compulsory arbitration awards will not work, either," Mr. Shishkin declared:

"In a free society, human relations cannot be forced. Every work stoppage brings hardship, especially to the workers involved. Workers don't strike unless they have a real grievance. My point is that the only way to insure industrial peace is to eliminate the causes of strikes. Compulsory arbitration will not work in these special areas of public interest any more than in any other industry or trade.

"I certainly agree that our industrial relations have been in a mess for the last couple of years. The crucial point being overlooked is that the strikes since V-J Day were not brought about by any breakdown in collective bargaining. Almost all of them were wage disputes brought about by one thing; inflation. This involves wages, prices and profits, and

whether we are ready to have these issues determined by a government tribunal, and a political-minded tribunal, to boot. The question we must come to grips with is how labor disputes can best be settled.

"I can't be done by compulsion. You can't wipe out the essential freedom of contract, which is the basis of good industrial relations, and preserve private enterprise. If you start tampering with freedom of contract, where are you going to draw the line? How can you arbitrate rights? And how about property rights? Are they, also, subject to compulsory adjudication?"

Summing up his view of the broad labor-management picture, Mr. Shishkin said:

"I would recommend, as an approach, specific methods of working out industrial problems which would really work and which would strengthen, instead of undermining, our private enterprises system. A recent recommendation of the Labor Management Advisory Committee of the U. S. Conciliation Service, in which the employer members—top management men designated by the NAM—were in perfect agreement with the labor men, of whom I am one, stated that "in cases of national importance, where normal mediation has failed and the parties consent, emergency boards of inquiry should be appointed from outside the Federal Government to conduct hearings on the issues and to publish findings based upon evidence submitted at these hearings. The committee believes that any form of compulsory arbitration or 'super machinery for disposition of labor disputes may frustrate, rather than foster, industrial peace.'"

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JOE WORKER

BY NAT SCHACHNER AND JACK ALDERMAN

ALLY SHIMMS IS STILL ALIVE... BUT NOT FOR LONG, FROM THE LOOKS OF THINGS. THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER IS GOING TO MAKE HER SPILL ALL THE UNION SECRETS... OR ELSE! SAMMY EPSTEIN IS OUTSIDE, WHODDING HOW HE CAN HELP HER...



Atomic Commission Okays The Check-Off

Atlanta.—An AFL union contract with the manufacturers of atomic energy for civilian use has been approved by the U. S. Atomic Commission.

The contract between the AFL Atomic Trades Council and the Monsanto Chemical Co. in Oak Ridge, Tenn., was approved by David Lilienthal, chairman of the commission, and endorsed by the War Department, George L. Googe, AFL southern director, said.

The contract covering workers in the Clinton Laboratories operated by the company includes:

1. Wage increases ranging from 6 to 20 cents an hour.
 2. Time and a half for overtime.
 3. Two weeks' yearly vacation with pay.
- Googe said the wage increases are retroactive to December 14. The 6-cent increase affects only the top pay group. Hourly rates range from an \$2 1-2 cent minimum for janitors and unskilled

laborers to \$2.02 1-2 for electronic instrument mechanics. The rate for journeymen mechanics in practically all other occupations is \$1.18 1-2 an hour.

The contract, the AFL said, contains a provision barring work stoppages, lockouts and slow-downs. The union guaranteed its support to the company in maintaining productive operations.

"The contract has ideal features," Googe said, "every problem of management and labor has been carefully considered and adequate provisions made in the agreement for their equitable handling and adjustment with fair dealing to all." Featured in the contract are: union dues check-off, a special grievance board with equal company and union representation, arbitration of any disputes with the company, and employe seniority clause, special provisions under the agreement for the settlement of jurisdictional disputes, also disability for non-occupational illness.

AFL EXPERTS SEE BETTER DAYS AHEAD

(Continued From Page 1)

ment to make this year. Hasty and irresponsible action by unions or employers could bring about a depression with widespread loss of jobs and incomes for workers. Hasty action by Congress could destroy worker's freedom and limit collective bargaining. If ever there was a year which called for good judgment and economic statesmanship on the part of unions, employers and Congressmen, it is 1947.

"Production shifts will not be easy. Consumers have already made up many of their shortages in soft goods, such as clothing. The demand for high-priced luxuries, furs, jewelry, etc., is falling off; sales and marked-downs in stores, especially in women's clothing, show that people will no longer buy shoddy goods at high prices; competition is forcing stores to demand better quality goods at lower prices from factories. Business observers forecast that sales of soft goods will decline during the year, bringing production cuts and layoffs in plants producing them."

Pointing out that the worst result of the wage price formula of 1946 was that most workers did not even get an 18-cent increase, the report declared:

"From V-J Day to December, 1946, cost of living rose slightly more than 18 per cent, but it is safe to estimate that no more than 40 per cent of American workers received wage increases of as much as 18 cents during this period. The President's economic report sums it all up by showing that the 'real' per capita income or buying power of the American people as a whole dropped 5 per cent from 1945 to 1946 due to price increases, and that workers took the heaviest losses."

Asserting the low income groups had lost "billions in buying power of savings," the report continued:

"One serious feature of a price rise is that it cuts away the buying power of people's savings, war bonds and insurance. A family who had \$1,500 in a savings account in 1939 can get no more with it today than they could buy for \$100 when they invested. Workers want to see prices come down in 1947 to restore the buying power of their savings."

Discussing profits as they refer to the creation of jobs, the report said:

"The business man's profit in a free enterprise economy serves two useful purposes, both of which raise workers' living standards. It creates better products at lower costs and expands production, increasing productivity, creating more jobs, more consumer goods and making higher wages possible.

"The effort of business men to make a profit in competition with each other, under our system of free enterprise and strong labor unions, has made American industry the most efficient and productive, and American living

standards the highest in the world. It is interesting that today in Soviet Russia, where there are not profits, no free unions, and industry is a state monopoly, production lags because management is inefficient. Workers' living standards are at poverty levels and 'real' wages have declined. The many purges of managers for inefficiency have not raised Russian workers to decent levels of living. Russia destroys the incentive to produce.

"The outlook for increased productivity and maintenance of profits in 1947 suggests that industry in general can raise workers' pay without increasing prices. AFL unions have recently been winning, without strike, wage increases which vary from 10 to 37 1-2 cents per hour.

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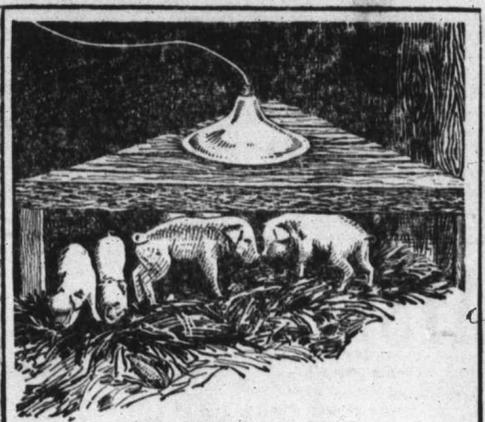
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Radiomen On Ship Lines Make Gains

New York City—Announcement was made here by the Radio Officers' Union (AFL) of the signing of new agreements with 45 ship lines providing for salary increases ranging up to \$21 a month.

More than 4,000 officers on 2,000 vessels, including the Nation's two largest passenger ships, the United States Lines' America and Washington, benefited by the agreement, it was revealed by Fred M. Howe, general secretary-treasurer of the 10-year-old union.

The contracts, effective from last October 1 until next September 30, provide for overtime pay of \$1.60 an hour on dry cargo ships. This provision already is in effect on the privately owned ships that have contracts with the union. Application on Government-owned vessels must be approved by the Maritime Commission.

The overtime rate is 10 cents an hour higher than that paid to radio operators who are members of the American Communications Association (CIO) under that union's current contract.

The ROU overtime scale on tankers has been set at \$1.70, Mr. Howe announced. Eleven tanker companies are among those under contract to the union.

Declaring that the contract with operators of dry cargo vessels was a standard contract, Mr. Howe said:

"It has taken two years to get these companies to agree on a common date."

Previously there had been separate agreements, he added. The pay on freight ships that carry only one radio officer will be \$254 a month. On freighters with more than one radio officer,

\$271 a month; first assistant, \$246.50, and second assistant, \$234.50.

On the liners America and Washington, the chief radio officer will receive \$333.50 a month; the first assistant, \$296.50, the second assistant, \$274.50, and the third assistant, \$259.50.

Another feature was a clause calling for transportation of a radio officer dismissed at a port other than that at which he joined the ship back to the port where he signed articles.

The agreement also specified eleven categories of work for which overtime pay may be charged.

LAUNDRY WORKERS GAIN

Washington, D. C.—The Wage and Hour Administration has issued an important ruling which will affect the working conditions of laundry workers favorably. It provides that laundry and dry cleaning establishments servicing commercial accounts engaged in interstate commerce are subject to the Wage and Hour La. Laundries in this category will be brought under the minimum wage and time and a half after 40 hours.

EMERGENCY MEET CALLED

New York City—The New York Central Trades and Labor Council was asked to hold an emergency meeting of all AFL locals to act against threatened anti-labor legislation in a resolution adopted by the joint board of the Hotel and Restaurant employes International Alliance. This board represents 11 locals with 60,000 members.