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Shipbuilders Are Reported Shunning New Pay Talks

Washington, D. C.—Leading shipbuilders of the United States again have appeared to boycott a Government appeal for a wage

conference proposed by the country's Shipbuilders Stabilization committee to break a "freeze" in wages of several hundred thousand workers in private shipyards. The session had been arranged when it became quite evident that some discussion of the wage situation was increasingly important if stable labor conditions were to be maintained in the industry.

ers on May 12 for a 25-cent-an-hour increase to almost 150,000 shipyard workers on that coast.

These negotiations started earlier in the year, but were recessed pending efforts by Federal authorities to end the snarl in the Shipbuilding Stabilization committee.

But when the delegates met they were unable to act because of the absence of a quorum on the part of management. Out of 12 representatives of management on the committee, only three showed up. A previous meeting in January was similarly boycotted.

That action was sharply criticized by President John P. Frey of the AFL Metal Trades department, who is also a principal labor member of the committee.

He recalled that the committee was set up during the war to stabilize wages in the shipyards, and that labor co-operated fully with it. Back in 1942, he said, shipyard labor accepted a substantially smaller wage increase than it was entitled to because it wished to advance "stabilization."

In return, he said, management agreed to an annual review of wages in the shipyards, but since the end of the war those promises have not been fulfilled. Despite strong appeals from Government officials, the shipbuilders shunned the recent committee meetings which were called to consider a wage review.

"This action of the management constitutes a repudiation of their obligation under their contract with us," Mr. Frey declared.

The Metal Trades unions do not intend to let the matter rest there, officials indicated, but will continue the fight for improved standards for men in the shipbuilding industry.

One of the next moves will be the resumption of direct negotiations with West Coast shipbuild-

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