

296,000 PEOPLE COVERED BY 4 NEW MINIMUM WAGE ORDERS IN NEW YORK STATE

Albany, N. Y.—Over 296,000 employes in four industries in New York State are affected by new minimum wage orders which are no win effect.

The Department of Labor promised "active enforcement" of the provisions of the orders.

The orders in the hotel, restaurant cleaning and dyeing, and confectionery industries were drawn up two months ago but the law provides for a 60-day waiting period between their promulgation and effective date.

Industrial Commissioner Edward Corsi said employes failing to comply were subject to action by the department for recovery of underpayments, as well as suits by employes.

New hourly minimums up to 51 cents for workers in year-around hotels were provided in the hotel order, which covers 91,000 workers. A weekly minimum as high as \$22 was set for resort establishments.

The restaurant order, covering 176,500 employes, set minimum hourly rates ranging to 52 cents with variations depending upon the size of communities.

The cleaning and dyeing order established a 57 1-2-cent-an-hour minimum, as did the confectionery order, with time and a half after 40 hours a week. They covered 17,000 cleaning and dyeing employes and 12,000 confectionery workers.

The first consumer received service in 1935, and REA-financed power systems passed the 1,000,000 consumer mark in 1942.

PENNSYLVANIA FEDERATION SETS UP POLITICAL LEAGUE

Harrisburg, Pa.—The Pennsylvania State Federation of Labor set up a political organization to combat anti-labor forces in the forthcoming political campaign of 1948.

Establishment of the league was the result of a conference called by James L. McDevitt, president of the state federation, and attended by over 300 delegates from AFL affiliates throughout the state.

Main purposes of the organization, known as the Pennsylvania Federation Educational and Political League, will be to get out the vote in 1948 and to urge union members to vote against those representatives in the state legislature and in Congress who have demonstrated an anti-labor attitude.

In addition to these declared purposes, the league will cooperate with and carry out the program of the political organization to be organized by the American Federation of Labor at the national level.

The conference appointed an executive committee to devise ways and means of raising the necessary funds required to effectuate the purposes of the league. The committee consists of the federation's 15-man executive council plus additional members to be appointed.

Under the plan adopted by the conference and announced by Mr. McDevitt, the central labor unions in the state will have charge of the campaign in the various congressional districts while the local unions concentrate their activities upon community elections.

WOLL SAYS PROPOSALS OF TAX COMMITTEE MEAN LOSS OF \$4 AND A HALF BILLION

Washington, D. C.—Matthew Woll, AFL Executive Council member who served on the Special Tax Study Committee appointed by Representative Knutson, declared that adoption of the recent recommendations of the majority of the committee would mean a revenue loss of approximately four and one-half billion dollars yearly.

Early on November when Woll, the labor representative on the Special Tax Study Committee, filed a minority report in which he took issue with the majority recommendations, he stated that he was reserving the right to file such statement as he might consider warranted by further study of the majority statement presented by Roswell Magill. "There was little or no reference during the committee deliberations to the probable revenue loss that might result from the adoption of the 46 recommendations embodied in the majority report," stated Mr. Woll. "When I tried to secure information on this point from technical advisers of the Ways and Means Committee, I was told it was not available. Through studies we have made independently, the estimates of these losses now included in the supplementary report have been secured from the latest available computations based on current revenue and tax receipts."

Mr. Woll emphasized that the \$4.5 billion estimated loss in revenue would be over and above any across the board income tax cut proposals such as that advocated by Representative Knutson. "The total of \$8 billion to \$8.5 billion proposed as tax reduction by Representative Knutson and the majority of his tax study committee would result in a tremendous slash in federal revenue," declared Mr. Woll. "Yet, if and when such reductions were made, low income groups would still be paying heavy income and excise taxes."

Mr. Woll concluded that excise taxes were contributing materially to inflationary price increases. He referred particularly to the taxes on transportation and communication, electrical goods, and other articles as "discriminatory, bad and their impact on business, and capricious in their effect on consumers."

LABOR DEPARTMENT FIXES 1,187 GI JOB RIGHTS CASES

Washington, D. C.—More than 1,300 claims involving reemployment rights of veterans have been filed with the Veterans' Reemployment Rights Division, U. S. Department of Labor, since opening of field offices in August, Robert Sayers, Director, announced here.

In the same period 1,187 cases were closed, including cases involving the payment of \$72,802.65 in cash settlement.

During October 1947, 594 cases were closed with 1,246 veterans involved. As of November 1, 1,251 cases were pending final settlement in field offices of the Veterans' Reemployment Rights Division.

The Selective Training and Service Act provided that all veterans who met certain conditions were entitled to the jobs they left to enter the armed services upon discharge, Mr. Sayers explained. When the Selective Training and Service Act expired last March 1, this function was transferred to the Secretary of Labor.

HOUSING OFFICIALS SUPPORT T-E-W BILL

New York City—The National Association of Housing Representatives meeting here adopted a resolution supporting the Taft-Ellender-Wagner bill as part of a program designed to boost production of homes.

The resolution calls for vigorous action to provide for the construction of dwellings at the rate of 1,500,000 per year for the next 13 years, nearly double the present rate.

Senator Robert F. Wagner, prevented from attending the session by illness, was honored by the group with the presentation of a scroll testifying to his "untiring efforts" for the betterment of housing conditions. The presentation marked the 10th anniversary of the United States Housing Act of 1937, adoption of which was due largely to the support given by Senator Wagner.

RAILWAY CLERKS SET UP EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Cincinnati.—An unusually broad educational program, recently started by the Railway Clerks, is now in full operation. President George M. Harrison reported here.

Glenn R. Atkinson, former assistant research director of the Brotherhood, is now educational director. During the war he served as railroad labor's liaison representative in the labor division of the OPA.

Four regional directors will function under Atkinson. They are: C. E. Kief, for the East; A. R. St. John, Southeast; W. M. Crawford, Midwest, and J. B. Haines, for West.

"One of their major tasks," Harrison said, "is to conduct leadership training programs for officers of our local lodges. The local people are to be trained in the techniques and procedures of the Brotherhood; in the history of our organization and in the Railway Labor Act, as well as other laws affecting railroad workers."

MCCOMB URGES A HIGHER MINIMUM WAGE; TIGHTENING LAW'S ON CHILD LABOR

Washington, D. C.—William R. McComb, chief of the Wage-Hour Administration, called upon Congress to increase the minimum wage and to tighten the Fair Labor Standards Act to make it more difficult for business-men to utilize child labor.

Mr. McComb, a former executive in manufacturing and construction corporations, seconded the plea for a 75-cent hourly minimum rate urged by the Secretary of Labor and long sought by the American Federation of Labor.

He pointed out that most companies, even in low-wage industries, pay at least that figure.

"If these can do so, others can too," he insisted.

McComb recalled that in the early days of the present law many employers set up a "phony" wage as the "regular rate of pay," in order to escape paying for overtime at 50 per cent above the true straight-time earnings.

"These schemes had begun to spread like wildfire until the courts penetrated the subterfuges and declared them illegal," he said.

Some employers, who came before the committee recommended revisions in the act which would open the door to exactly such cheating, McComb pointed out. He warned the committee against falling for such proposals, which, he said, "could be used by clever lawyers to circumvent the basic purpose of the act." The end result, he declared would be "widespread evasions" by chiselers, giving them "unfair competitive advantages" over fair employers.

In contrast with witnesses who called for undermining the law, McComb proposed many changes which would tighten the act and extend its safeguards to millions of workers not now covered.

Also, he stressed that the provisions curbing child labor are full of loopholes which need to be plugged up. For example, the law now bans shipment of goods produced by under-age children during a preceding 30-day period. Some employers, McComb said, "avoid the child labor standards by holding goods for more than 30 days before removing them for shipment in commerce."

"A direct prohibition of oppressive child labor would make this evasion impossible," he emphasized.

McComb went down the line in refuting claims made by some witnesses that they had been "brow-beaten" by government inspectors into complying with the law. He made it clear that his agency dealt fairly with firms which inadvertently violated the law, and that it was tough only with deliberate violators.

ARBITRATOR UPHOLDS SENIORITY PRINCIPLE

Philadelphia.—In one of the most important ruling in the history of the union, an arbitrator upheld the seniority of representative of 5,200 food workers enrolled in Local 195, Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America (AFL).

The decision, formalizing what the union declared had long been industry practice, was handed down in a dispute involving the

Harkell Beef Boning Company of Philadelphia.

The case came before Cooper following dismissal of Steward Ernest Meyer allegedly for "slack business." The union contended the dismissal violated the unwritten law of the industry protecting the seniority of union representatives.

The arbitrator ordered Meyer reinstated with pay for time lost.

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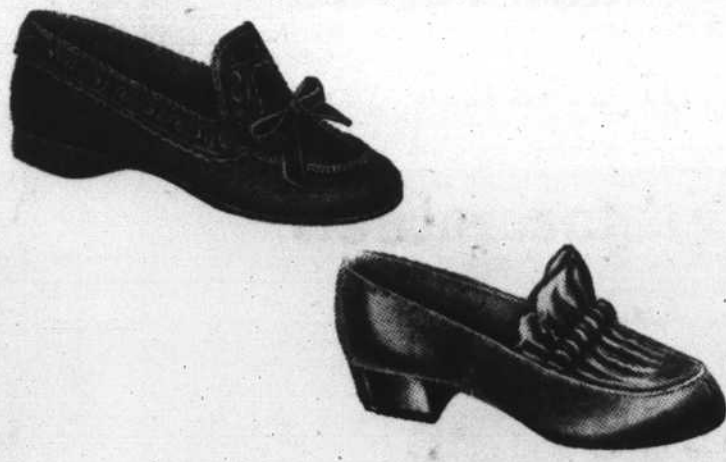
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