

Lack of Union Protection Big Cause of Low Wages Paid Women Workers

Washington, D. C. (ILNS).—Tradition, chiselling, and above all the lack of union protection are the chief reasons why women's wages are much lower than those of men. So says a revealing bulletin issued by the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor, prepared by Mary Elizabeth Pidgeon.

For the most part, women's work in industry differs from that of men—but that, the bulletin shows, is not even a good excuse for the lower wages, let alone being a reason. It says:

"While the special skills and aptitudes of women differ somewhat from those of men, in the jobs they perform women are quite as important to industry as men are, and are worthy of better wage consideration than they now receive. Differences in skill that may exist are far from sufficient to justify a wage to women that frequently is only 60 to 70 per cent as great as that paid to men."

Women's Pay Uniformly Low

The bulletin likewise takes sharp issue with the Brookings Institution statement that discrimination against women is not an important factor.

"The data," says the bulletin, "show an almost uncanny uniformity in the extent to which women's wages

are below men's, in spite of changes in the general wage level, in public sentiment, in business conditions, or in source of labor supply, and regardless of locality, type of industry, period of time, method of pay, or other qualifying factor."

"Women's lack of organization undoubtedly forms a large factor in keeping their wages at low levels, but in many instances is a hangover from the traditional attitude that assigns a low money value to work thought of as women's work."

"It is obvious that the low wages received by women produce a low standard of living for the women themselves and in many cases for their families, especially in those now very numerous cases in which wage-earning women support dependents and even entire families of considerable size."

All Pay Lowered

"But the effect of this situation is far more widespread than that, since it has a definite tendency to depress wage standards in general for both sexes, extending and perpetuating the ills of poverty and dependency and placing a premium on the displacement of men and the hiring of women at reduced rates."

MANY EMPLOYERS

Still Fight Labor Act, Madden Charges

Washington, D. C. (ILNS).—J. Warren Madden, chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, in a broadcast recently recalled that the Wagner act did not really come into full force until the supreme court declared it constitutional only 13 months before. Then, he said:

"Many thousands of employers at once accepted the law. They dispensed with their industrial spies, recognized the dignity of their employees, and instructed their supervisors and foremen to keep their hands off union affairs. The consequence has been an unprecedented growth of unions, old and new, and thousands of new collective bargaining contracts which have given mutual self respect and stability to labor relations."

Unfortunately, Madden went on, many employers were determined to evade the law. "There is a discouraging absence of any spirit of good sportsmanship of fair play among these people," he said.

Madden pointed out that strikes have dropped off since the supreme court's decision. In March of this year, there were 235 strikes involving 52,000 workers, as against 614 strikes involving 290,000 workers in March last year, just before the decision of the supreme court.

The supreme court, Madden noted, has reviewed the board's work 11 times and upheld the board 11 times, though it was necessary to reverse the circuit court of appeals, 7 times to do this.

Hague Rule in Jersey City Under U. S. Inquiry

Washington, D. C. (ILNS).—The department of justice has been investigating for several weeks to determine whether persons coming under the Hague ban in Jersey City have been deprived of civil rights in a way that permits the federal government to act.

The law which will be invoked if the evidence is secured is the same law under which the Harlan county trials are now in progress; a statute passed in 1870, making it a criminal offense for two or more persons to conspire to deprive a person of the rights guaranteed by the constitution.

Senator La Follette indicates that with proper financing his civil liberties committee probably will investigate charges that civil liberties have been violated by Mayor Hague.

La Follette told friends this shortly after the senate voted a \$60,000 appropriation to continue the committee's work.

Union Pays Out \$75,000 To Idle Members

New York City (ILNS).—Local 117 of the Cloak Operators' Union, affiliated with the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, is paying out about \$75,000 to 1,400 of its unemployed members who have had less than \$300 in wages this year. It is the first time anything quite like this has happened in the union. The fund was raised by contributions from the 10,000 members who are at work.

Those who have earned no wages this year get \$85 each; those earning up to \$100, \$65; those receiving between \$100 and \$200, \$55; and those from \$200 to \$300 get \$45.

The sick benefits of the union are \$10 a week for not more than 10 weeks.

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SENATE OPPOSITION TO RAILROAD PAY SLASHES GROWS

Washington, D. C. (ILNS).—Chairman Wagner of the Senate Banking and Currency Committee has joined the opposition to proposed government loans to railroads in the face of a projected 15 per cent wage reduction.

Wagner's committee had under consideration a bill which authorizes the RFC to make loans to railroads for equipment and to re-employ workers furloughed since September 1, 1937.

Senator McAdoo, a member of the committee, also announced that he would oppose the legislation if the carriers placed into effect the 15 per cent reduction. The same stand was taken by Senator Truman of Missouri.

Senator La Follette and Chairman Wheeler of the Senate Interstate Commerce Committee, opened the drive against the proposed wage cuts with a declaration that faulty debt structures were the cause of the carriers' plight.

Read The Press.

Trials of a "Vet"

GETTIN' INTO TH' OLD "BUCK PRIVATE REGALIA" (FOR TH' MEMORIAL DAY PARADE) IS A MAJOR UNDERTAKING THESE DAYS!



Big Cincinnati Union Label Exhibition Is Smashing Success

Unions and Fair Employers Co-operate To Dramatize Label Buying

Exhibits Make Plain Benefits of Purchasing Union Products and Show "Buy Union Label" Is Easy Rule to Follow in Wide and Varied Field of Goods and Services.

Cincinnati (ILNS).—The A. F. of L. Union Label and Industrial Exhibition here, first national exhibition of its kind, was a tremendous success. Opening on May 16, it ran through the week, delighting exhibitors by the size and interest of the audiences which came to see and delighting visitors by the quality and quantity of the exhibits.

I. M. Ornburn, the real daddy of the show, was greatly pleased—though the major part of his mind was already occupied with plans to make the next show even better.

It was a cooperative show; the members and officers of American Federation of Labor unions cooperating with business firms and corporations which employ members of the A. F. of L. unions. As William Green put it:

"Members of labor unions are always glad to cooperate with business men who recognize the rights of workers to organize and who adhere to the principles of collective bargaining. Those fair-minded and highest standard manufacturers deserve and should be awarded the billions of union earned dollars which the families of these A. F. of L. type of unions annually spend for their living requirements."

"Organized labor wants to reciprocate."

Union Plants Well Represented

Union labor employers of Cincinnati were all represented, of course; though no one could have guessed that they would be so very well represented. But that was just a start. Brown and Williamson were there, and Axton Fisher, both from Louisville, to show that a union man need not buy non-union tobacco; but can always get a union smoke. Carnation of Milwaukee—"milk from contented cows," made it clear that you do not need to patronize anti-union industries to feed the baby.

Outstanding exhibits were presented by many union groups, including the Bakery and Confectionery Workers' International Union of America; Journeymen Barbers International Union; Retail Clerks International Protective Association; Printing Pressmen's and Assistants' Union of North America; Associates for Government Service; Allied Printing Trades Association; International Brotherhood of Teamsters, Chauffeurs, Stablemen and Helpers of America; Cigar Makers International

COOPERS IN CONTRACT WITH PEORIA COMPANY

Peoria, Ill. (ILNS).—A union shop agreement has been signed between the National Cooperaage Company of this city and the Coopers International Union. The agreement ends a year-old controversy which resulted in a strike last summer. Under the contract, the lowest wage to be paid will be 50 cents an hour for unskilled labor, ranging up to standard rates for skilled cooperaage workers.

MEAT CUTTERS WIN PACKING PLANT VOTE

Chicago, (ILNS).—An overwhelming victory for the Amalgamated Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor, was the result of an election called by the National Labor Relations Board, with the consent of all parties involved, to determine whether the A. F. of L. union or the United Packing House Workers, a CIO organization, would represent workers employed in the principal plant of Kingan & Co., at Indianapolis.

The Amalgamated received 998, the CIO affiliate, 450, of the votes cast in the labor board poll, and 63 ballots were thrown out. The election was called after an agreement with the company had been signed by the A. F. of L. union.

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MEAD DECLARES PAY-HOUR BILL

Necessary for Protection Of Fair Wage Districts

Washington, D. C. (ILNS).—Congressman James M. Mead, of New York, declares that a federal wage-hour bill is absolutely necessary, not only for justice to the workers, but also to stop the turmoil caused by the migration of industry to low wage states and sections.

"New York industries have striven to maintain fair wage levels but competition with products manufactured in low wage areas have made the effort difficult and, in some cases, impossible of accomplishment," Mr. Mead says.

"As a result, there has been a steady departure of factories from our state to the lower wage sections of the country. In every industrial community between Buffalo and Albany, we can today view the devastating results of this exodus of industry. Rochester, Utica, Oswego and Troy are but examples of the hundreds of smaller communities suffering from unemployment occasioned by the closing down of manufacturing plants. New York city, likewise, has suffered from this economic plague."

Uniform Law Is Vital

"How can New York industry pay twice the wage scale paid in some other states and hope to compete with those products of cheap labor? Of course, the answer is—it cannot be done. If this is true then, we are badly in need of a uniform minimum wage law to protect our own industries. Unless we do so, and do it quickly, our industrial centers are doomed."

"Let us look at one of New York's typical industries and see the existing situation. New York manufacturers approximately 70 per cent of women's clothing. Most of the workers in this industry enjoy a 35-hour week. In the cloak industry, wages average from \$1.10 to \$1.65 per hour. In the dress industry, wages average from 75 cents to 90 cents an hour. These wages run fully twice as high as wages in many other states, making the same articles. Specifically, in the neckwear, skirt and underwear industry, New York industries pay an average wage of 56 cents an hour. The same class of worker in Texas receives 31.8 cents, or 56.8 per cent of the New York wage. In Maryland that some worker receives 33.3 cents per hour and in North Carolina, he receives 32 cents per hour."

North Offends, Too
"A Mississippi cotton dress factory pays \$10.68 for 105 hours of work and \$15.39 for 137 hours of work. This means that employees in that factory work from 50 to 70 hours per week for a pittance of from \$5 to \$7 per week. In New York state, the employee would receive triple that wage for one-half the time."

PRIEST CHAMPIONS RIGHT TO ORGANIZE

New York City (ILNS).—Rev. John P. Monaghan, one of the founders of the Labor College at Fordham University, declares that the working man of today is "morally bound to organize," because only through organization can he keep his individuality and get the necessities which God meant him to have.



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