

HOPES TO AVOID WEAKENING OF PAY-HOUR LAW

Administration Optimism Is Higher; Fleming Makes Good Impression.

Times Special

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23.—The Administration is somewhat more hopeful that it may prevent, at least postpone, threatened emasculation of the Wage-Hour Law by amendments. Even if such amendments get through the House later in the session, the Administration will have a better chance of holding the line in the Senate.

This tentative optimism is based on the following developments:

1. Increased efficiency of the Wage-Hour Division under the newly confirmed Administrator, Col. Philip B. Fleming, who has been troubleshooting the organization for several months without title.

2. Willingness of congressional critics of the law, including Rep. Graham A. Barden (D. N. C.), to give the Fleming regime a longer trial before moving on it.

Court Case Cited

3. The Division's success record in the Federal courts, and anticipated victory in the Supreme Court.

4. The (Glen Frank) Republican Program Committee report, which was critical but did not recommend a definite amendment or repeal as expected—indicating the G. O. P. is too divided to make this a campaign issue.

5. Col. Fleming's plan for re-consideration, and probable modification, after public hearings, of certain unpopular regulations. This would relieve pressure for law amendments. It applies particularly to re-definition of exempted administrative, executive, professional employees and outside salesmen.

Administrator Fleming has speeded the decentralization begun by his predecessor. This has made for a fairer and faster operation by regional offices, and injected new "humanness" in dealing with employers and employees.

Personnel Still Needed

But the old problem of personnel shortage still exists. The number of field inspectors has been doubled to about 300, and plans call for 700 by summer. But the backlog of uninvestigated complaints of violations is about 16,000, or almost as many as last summer.

Although personnel has increased in number and efficiency, the number of complaints to handle has about doubled. Last October the legal wage minimum jumped from 26 to 30 cents an hour and the hourly minimum was reduced from 44 to 42 cents a week. More than half the complaints now are for alleged failure to pay time-and-a-half for work over the 42-hour maximum.

Rep. Barden's willingness to postpone, at least for a few weeks, House consideration of the emasculating amendments, is partly due to the favorable impression made by Col. Fleming on the Hill. Col. Fleming's attitude is that he will try to answer anyone's questions concerning operation of the law, but that neither he nor his Division will operate a lobby in Congress.

Lobby Works for Exemptions

Relationship has removed some of the bitterness from the House fight. It probably cannot prevent a showdown later in the session. The U. S. Chamber of Commerce demands repeal, and a farm-processors' lobby wants amendments removing protection from an estimated 1,500,000 low-paid workers.

SORENSEN TO TALK TO SCOUTS, PARENTS

C. V. Sorenson, of the Northern Indiana Power Co. and former member of the Indianapolis Council of Boy Scouts, will speak at the annual Boy Scout and Parents recognition dinner at 6:30 p.m. today at the Northwood Christian Church. Troop No. 78 of the church is sponsor of the event. Scout Master Glenn F. Findley will be master of ceremonies.

Guests will include Harry E. Templeton, Wallace O. Lee, Floyd Wallace, the Rev. Theodore Fisher, pastor of the church; F. O. Belzer, Indianapolis Scout executive, and Stanley L. Norton, assistant Scout executive.

CHECK VOTES IN ARMORY

Times Special

ANDERSON, Ind., Feb. 23.—The Madison County Election Board has signed a contract for the use of the National Guard Armory for the tabulation of votes under the new "Certificates" Ballot Counting Law. It is estimated it will take from 30 to 48 hours to tabulate the votes cast in the 65 precincts.

Hoosier Heads Tourist Group

TAMPA, Fla., Feb. 23 (U. P.)—George R. Moudy, retired salesman of the Wayne, Ind., relay headed the tin can tourists of America, having been elected royal chief by acclamation this week. He succeeds Frank L. Van Epps, of Portage, Wis. R. T. Hamilton, of Sand Lake, Mich., was elected treasurer. C. W. Coppersmith, Lakeview, O., was named secretary; Elliott L. Giger, Alliance, O., assistant secretary, and J. A. Suprenant, Manteno, Ill., director.

HATCH PRESSES FOR NEW BILL

Reports Ohio G. O. P. Attempts to Force Road Workers to Aid Campaign.

By CHARLES T. LUCEY
Times Special Writer
WASHINGTON, Feb. 23.—Reports of new attempts to force state jobholders to be active in election campaigns gave impetus today to legislation proposed by Senator Carl Hatch (D. N. M.), extending the 1939 "clean politics" law to state workers whose salaries are paid in part by Federal funds.

Senator Hatch took cognizance of reports that Republican leaders in Ohio had attempted to force State Highway Department employees to be active politically, saying that "this shows the absolute necessity of broadening the law passed at the last session."

In Columbus, O., Democratic officials charged they had obtained documentary proof that Ed Scherer, Republican State Chairman, had tried to force highway workers to participate in a congressional election campaign now in progress.

Robert S. Brightler, State Highway Director, said Mr. Scherer had asked him to "do whatever is necessary" to help elect T. Harry McGregor, but that he took no steps to comply with the G. O. P. chairman's wishes.

"The very condition charged here," Senator Hatch said, "argues for amending the 1939 act as we are seeking to do by applying it to the state jobholders, right down to highway departments, which receive substantial Federal funds."

"I hope my Democratic friends who have been somewhat disturbed by this law will learn of this situation and see how the tables can be turned against the Democratic Party by the use of such tactics."

The Senator said his amendment had been approved by a subcommittee of the Senate Privileges and Elections Committee. The whole committee is scheduled to consider it today.

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