

HOPES TO AVERT STEEL ROW RISE

May Work Out Price Hike to Meet Pay Demand.

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and the United Steelworkers (C. I. O.) and set a pattern for the entire industry.

The company has refused to consider wage raises without a price boost. The union has set Jan. 14 for a nation-wide steel strike unless its \$2-a-day wage increase demands on the industry are met.

Truman Studies Appeal

Elsewhere on the labor front in Washington:

ONE: President Truman was said to be considering how strong to make his new appeal to Congress for statutory fact-finding boards following the General Motors Corp. walkout from the panel inquiring into its dispute with its workers.

Sources close to the President said his faith in his proposed fact-finding boards with power to subpoena company books is unshaken. They said he felt G. M. had invited public disfavor by quitting the present panel, which lacks subpoena powers, because it objected to the panel's decision to consider ability to pay wage increases.

Despite the company walkout the panel planned to continue looking into the facts in the 39-day-old General Motors strike today. Union Vice President Walter Reuther was scheduled to conclude presentation of the union's case. He said yesterday the union's case was based on General Motors' annual reports and government figures. The panel said it would sift this data.

TWO: The national labor relations board quit taking strike votes after President Truman signed legislation prohibiting use of government funds for such polls. Labor officials believed unions still would have to file 30-day strike notices under the Smith-Connally act.

NLRB polls have cost the government nearly \$1,000,000. All scheduled polls now have been called off.

THREE: The new wage stabilization board which will replace the war labor board next Tuesday announced its plans for handling wage problems. It will not touch labor dispute cases but will rule on wage increases based on agreements between employers and employees which may affect price or rent ceilings.

Delays Appointment

Mr. Truman delayed appointment of a fact-finding board in the steel dispute pending OFA action.

Under WSB rules the Little Steel formula, which during the war limited wage raises to 15 per cent of January, 1941, levels, will be virtually tossed out the window along with wage brackets. Instead the WSB will grant raises (1) to compensate for higher living costs where straight time average hourly earnings are less than the recently estimated 33 per cent living cost increase, (2) to correct inequities between plants and (3) to ease manpower shortages in certain bottleneck industries.

Voluntary wage raises not affecting prices do not have to be submitted to the WSB.

Considers Formula

The office of price administration is reported to be considering a formula by which it could consider fourth quarter earnings of the U. S. Steel Corp. and its subsidiaries as the basis for higher prices.

Meanwhile five U. S. Steel Corp. subsidiaries were directed by the war labor board to grant severance pay to employees permanently displaced by the closing of less efficient plants. The companies involved are Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corp., American Steel & Wire Co., National Tube Co., Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Co. and Columbia Steel Co.

The WLB also recommended that 44 Lake Superior iron ore mines make severance payments to employees permanently laid off in war-exhausted mines.

CHINESE PREPARING NOTE TO COMMUNISTS

CHUNGKING, Dec. 29 (U. P.)—Authoritative sources reported today that the Chinese government was preparing a "satisfactory" reply to a formal Communist proposal for halting the civil war.

It was understood that the reply will contain one important condition—that the Communists must evacuate sections of railways in their areas of control.

A spokesman announced meanwhile that the government was in complete agreement with the Big Three communiqué.

NEW MEDITERRANEAN CHIEF

FRANKFURT, Dec. 29 (U. P.)—Lt. Gen. John C. H. Lee, commanding general of European theater service forces, today was named allied commander in the Mediterranean theater, succeeding Lt. Gen. Matthew B. Ridgway.

32 DIE IN BUS CRASH

PUEBLA, Mexico, Dec. 29 (U. P.)—A collision between two busses on a narrow mountain highway which plunged one of them 200 feet into a gorge was reported today to have killed at least 32 persons and injured 27.

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A Weekly Sizup by the Washington Staff of the Scripps-Howard Newspapers

(Continued From Page One)

They give companies rebates on excess profits taxes if earnings fall below 1936-38 average.

Look for General Motors strike to end with workers yielding on their demand to examine company books, and getting in return what amounts to guarantee of steady work.

Secret discussions are in progress on this formula: Company to grant a 15 per cent wage increase and to lay aside another 15 per cent in escrow. This money goes back to company if workers get 50 weeks work in year. If not it goes to workers.

Look for Higher Prices

LOOK for prices to continue rising as wages rise. It's inflation, and it'll pick up speed after first of year. But it's kind that may be

months. Joint army-navy planning board is still undecided who will be in charge of project, though Adm. Bland seems likely choice. Only two things now certain: Tests will be made in Pacific, and some of our own ships in addition to enemy vessels, will be used as targets.

CLOSEST congressional contest in next few months will be over approving British loan. It will be decided eventually, perhaps with some reservations.

Legislation

CONGRESS will get joint committee recommendations on modernizing its machinery and procedures but will be slow to enact them.

It will not override presidential veto of the recession bill, based on employment service issue. Senate votes were too close when issue was before it.

Look for Senate to bury Bulwinkle bill immunizing railroads from anti-trust prosecutions; to pass a bill for consolidation of government research, perhaps Kilgore bill.

Labor legislation will be more along line of Hatch-Burton bill when it emerges than fact-finding boards proposed by President.

Don't expect substantial changes in taxes.

One thing congressmen were certain of was that this country will not give away the secret of the atom bomb without congressional approval.

Senator Arthur H. Vandenberg (R. Mich.) said he had been told by the state department that all plans for controlling atomic energy would be submitted to congress for final approval.

"Any disclosures regarding the atomic bomb should be part of a complete plan for adequate worldwide inspection and control," he said.

Two May Quit

LOOK for Mr. Ickes and Mr. Schwellenbach to resign. Mr. Ickes will write, Mr. Schwellenbach will go back to federal bench. His successor will be less of a man than we used in Europe were British-built.

TWO MORE New Deal books are coming out soon. Frances Perkins is writing a history of labor under Mr. Roosevelt. Oscar Cox is writing a history of lend-lease.

DON'T LOOK for atomic bomb tests on ships for at least six

months.

MacArthur's Position

GEN. MACARTHUR probably will not quit over creation of a policy-making commission on Japan. But if any agency is set up between him and Japanese government, he probably will. He's said to feel that he alone should tell the Japs what to do, that any change in this setup would make his position untenable.

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THERE'LL BE more war scans before the year's out. Congress may look into glider construction here, ask why practically all those we used in Europe were British-built.

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