BIPARTISAN UNITY SOUGHT ON LABOR BILL

Warning that a prospective stalemate between a Republican Congress and a Democratic President over labor legislation will bring nation-wide criticism and lower respect for the United States Government, Senator Wayne B. Morse (R.) of Oregon urged the Senate straightway to name a bipartisan committee to call upon Mr. Truman at the White House and map labor legislation that could be passed without a veto.

As the situation now is shaping, a labor deadlock seems inevitable. The result almost will certainly be no legislation at all on labor matters.

Congress now is writing labor legislation which Mr. Truman's past utterances indicate he will veto. On the other hand, Mr. Truman, in his annual message and in his veto of the Case Labor bill, has outlined changes in labor laws which he wants Congress to enact.

The American people deserve something better than a frustrating stalemate produced by a clash between executive and legislative branches, Senator Morse told his senatorial colleagues. More particularly, he asserted, the omnibus form of labor bill which now is being written inevitably will produce charges, found or unfounded, that Republicans are "playing politics" with the subject in order to provoke a veto.

Senator Morse urged that "a bipartisan committee of the Senate sit down and confer in an informal and friendly fashion with the President in regard to the whole problem of labor legislation." Congress has a right to know how far the President will go, Senator Morse declared, and conversely the President, he said, "has the right to have such a consultation with us so that there can be a mutual exchange of points of view concerning labor legislation."

Senator Morse also wants the present omnibus labor bill broken up into three or four separate measures, to give the President choice of accepting some features and rejecting others. In that way the nation at least would have some legislation to show for the months of debate and discussion that have gone into the great controversy.

Contrary to the Morse proposal all the signals seemed set in Congress for a stalemate. So far, at any rate, Republican leaders show no indication of accepting consultation with President Truman, and the Chief Executive has not called the latter to the White House. The Morse proposal to break up the pending omnibus Senate bill into various categories has been vetoed by Republican membership.

In brief, the situation is this:

1. The Republican - dominated House fresh from the 1946 election, by an overwhelming 3-to-1 vote in which even a majority of Democratic members deserted their leadership, approved the sharp Hartley Labor Bill, probably the most rigid trade-union-control bill passed by the House in American labor history. Mr. Truman almost certainly would veto this omnibus measure.

2. A coalition revolt within the Senate Labor Committee defeated the leardership of Senator Robert A. Taft (R.) of Ohio the Chairman and reported out a relatively mild labor bill, incorporating most of the recommendations previously asked by President Truman. This bill has the backing of such G. O. P. insurgents as Senator Morse and Senator Irving Ives (R) of New York. It is thought the President would approve this bill in its present form.

3. However, Senate Republicans are pledged to vote stronger "teeth" into this bill, which Senators Morse and Ives forecast would make a veto sure. Furthermore, the amended Senate bill must go to conference with the House, when still sharper teeth would be affixed. Mr. Truman would have no choice but a take-it-or-leave-it decision. Some Republicans think it would be "good politics" to saddle a labor bill veto on Mr. Truman; some Democrats fear the same result. The result in either case, from the public standpoint, would be the same—no legislation.

There will also be the spectacle of American democracy unable to act on a vital issue because of the stalemate produced by spilt political control between White House and Congress.

Senator Claude Pepper (D) of Florida concluded a major four-hour labor speech in the course of which he cited polls indicating the public favors the telephone strikers and said that the telephone companies enjoys a "monopoly," yet refuses to pay a "fair wage" to workers.

NATION ADVISED TO HIT INFLATION FROM ALL SIDES

As communities such as Newburyport, Mass., and Jackson Heights, Long Island, launched experiments in retail price cutting warnings were heard that the national effort to halt inflation must not be lopsided.

To rout the common enemy of spiraling costs, there must be a co-ordinated attack from at least five separate approaches, if the United States is to avoid a severe shock to its economy and the well-being of its people, it is argued here.

The Guaranty Trust Company of New York, closely recording the distortions in the nation's economy, is the latest to add its warning against one-sidedness in the struggle. It joins with such agencies as the National Industrial Conference Board and representatives of industry in urging that the Federal Government itself can do much to remedy the present condition.

Voluntary price reductions by industries and retailers are all to the good, these organizations say. But their spokesmen also point out that price reductions on manufactured goods alone and only at the retail level can do little to correct distortions in the nation's economy if other groups do not participate in the general scaling down.

FARM PRICE OFF 1.4 PER CENT FROM MID-MARCH

Farm product prices declined about 1.4 per cent during the month ended April 15 from record levels of mid-March, the Agriculture Department reported.

Leading in the downturn were meat animals, dairy products, and food grains.

The Department said that the index of prices received by farmers in mid-April was 276 per cent of the 1909-14 average, compared with a mid-March index of 280 per cent and with 107 per cent for the 1935-39 average.

Prices paid by farmers for production materials and cost-of-living items, including interest and taxes, continued an upward trend which has been under way for many months.

The index for these prices in mid-April was 230 per cent of the 1909-14 average compared with 227 in mid-March and 128 for the 1935-39 average.

This advance in the index for prices paid pushed farm parity prices slightly higher.

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From where I sit ... by Joe Marsh

We Got to the Fish Fry After All

That community fish fry was sure a great success. There were plenty of appetizing extras, and Will Dudley did a right wonderful job of frying the fish—soft and flaky inside—brown and crisp around the edges.

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Then how did we know the fish was so good? Because the folks didn't forget us. They sent Skippy Henderson over with two steaming covered plates of fish, and a pitcher of cool, sparkling beer. And we finished them off in front of our own fire.

From where I sit, that's one of the things that makes our town so nice a place to live in: a spirit of share and share alike. That plate of fish and glass of beer weren't just great *eating*, they were symbols of the thoughtfulness that makes for better *living!*

Joe Marsh

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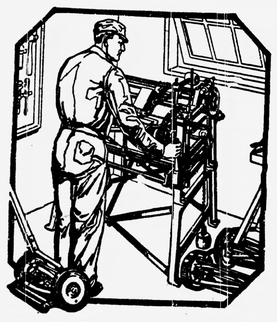
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