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CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA AREA. THURSDAY, MARCH 9, 1939

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LABOR CONFERENCE PRAISES THE PRESIDENT

Telegram Commends Roosevelt On Move to Bring Warring Labor Factions Together.

An interesting quarterly conference of the Central Labor Unions of Central Pennsylvania, comprised of representatives of both the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations, was held in Barnesboro last Sunday afternoon, and brought delegates from all over Central Pennsylvania.

Chief among the discussions were the contemplated amendments to the National Labor Relations Act, and other matters concerning the labor movement in general.

President Roosevelt was commended for his stand in endeavoring to bring the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations together, and the following was endorsed and sent by the meeting to President Roosevelt:

To the President:
The Central Pennsylvania Comprising eighty thousand workers of the AFL and CIO groups, in eight counties, commend you highly in calling together leaders of both factions for the purpose of bringing peace into the ranks of labor. These representative groups have been working in harmony meetings every two months for the past three years. The membership sincerely hopes the peace conference will be successful.

Albert Johnson, President, Ford City, Pa.
Luke Brett, Secretary, Kittanning, Pa.
Central Labor and Industrial Unions attending the Barnesboro Conference on Sunday included: Kittanning C. L. U., Clearfield County C. L. U., Barnesboro Industrial Union Council, Altoona C. L. U., and the Retail Employees Industrial Council.

MINE EXAMINATIONS BOOKED NEXT MONTH FOR THREE DISTRICTS

Examination dates for applicants seeking certification as mine foremen, assistant foremen, chief electricians or fire bosses were announced by State Mine Inspector Roy D. Joseph.

The examination, which will be held April 3 and 4 in the Vigilant Fire Hall, Dibert Street, will be for applicants from the sixth, 20th and 24 Bituminous Districts.

Joseph is chairman of the examining board. Other members are Bart C. Leonard of the Adams Fuel Corporation, representing the operators; John Edgar Cruse of the Berwind-White Coal Company, representing the miners; M. W. Thomas of Windber, mine inspector of the 24th District, secretary, and State Inspector F. W. Cunningham of the 20th District, associate inspector.

Inspector Joseph said miners desiring to take the examinations should notify him prior to the time the tests are to be held.

Applicants seeking certification as second-grade mine foremen and chief electricians will be given tests on April 3 only, while those seeking to be certified as first grade foremen and assistants and fire bosses will appear for examinations both days.

The Sixth District embraces the Johnstown area, while the 20th District covers the southern portion of Somerset County and the 24th District take sin sections of Somerset and Cambria Counties.

HALUSKA ASKS PROBE OF RELIEF AGENCIES IN CAMBRIA COUNTY

Harrisburg — A legislative investigation into charges of "highly irregular practices" by the WPA and three state agencies in Cambria County was demanded last Monday night by Senator John J. Haluska (D. Cambria).

Naming the Highway Department, the Department of Public Assistance and the Unemployment Compensation Division of the Department of Labor and Industry besides the federal works project organization Haluska said in a resolution:

"The charges made a not only confined to the improper use of funds by these departments and agencies, but also to the existence of many highly-irregular practices, incompetent personnel, political coercion, graft, bribery and macing."

He called for appointment of three senators and two representatives to be armed with power of subpoena for a "thorough and impartial investigation" and to report to the Governor or the next session of the General Assembly if it can not finish during this session.

MINERS TO ASK SIX HOUR DAY

New Philadelphia, O.,—John Owens, district head of the United Mine Workers, told a scale meeting last Thursday the union will ask for a six-hour day, five day week with annual vacations of two weeks and time and one-half for overtime and double time for Sunday work, when they confer in New York with coal operators.

"These things are being given in other industries that are stabilized and they can be given in the coal industry," Owens said. He predicted mine owners would try to reestablish the eight-hour day. Miners now work seven hours a day, five days a week.

HASTINGS MINERS PROTEST MINING BOARD CHANGES

Letter to Secretary of Mines Voices Dissatisfaction With New Ruling.

Local Union No. 393, of Hastings, Pa., has sent us the following letter to John Ira Thomas, secretary of mines—with a request for its publication:

Hastings, Pa., Feb. 24, 1939.
Mr. John Ira Thomas, Secretary of Mines, Harrisburg, Pa.

Dear Mr. Thomas:—We notice by the letter you sent the Miners' Examining Board that you contemplate discontinuing the Miners' Examining Boards and placing this work in the hands of Mine Inspectors.

We wish to call your attention to Sec. 2, Act 135, creating these positions, which specifies that examining boards shall be composed of miners. We also wish to call to your attention that mine inspectors, whom you contemplate handling the certification of the miner, are recruited from former mine officials such as mine foremen and mine superintendents, who in times of labor trouble, owing to their former positions, may stretch a point in granting certificates to miners who are not qualified.

And if you contemplate amending the Miners' Certificate Act to do as you say, then we wish to protest such action as being a direct slap at the Bituminous miners who worked so hard and so long to have Act 135 passed. We have no objection to the present administration cutting down expenses which, no doubt, you will give as the reason for your contemplated action, but we protest you doing it at the expense of the soft coal miners of Pennsylvania.

We wish to call your attention to the fact that similar laws in the Anthracite region of Pennsylvania and in the state of Illinois, are handled by the miners, which is right and proper. Trusting that the reasons set forth in this letter will receive your earnest consideration why your contemplated action should not become a reality.

Your respectfully on behalf of Local No. 393,
JOHN STEWART, President,
WALTER LUMADUE, Sec'y.

ANDREWS MAY SEEK CHANGES

Washington — Wage-Hour Administrator Elmer F. Andrews disclosed last week that he may ask Congress to change overtime provisions of the Wage-Hour Law affecting well-paid "white collar" workers.

He said he believes that questions involved in such work can be handled better by congressional amendments of the act than by administrative regulation.

The wage-hour administrator disclosed his attitude as an amendment sponsored by Representative Albert Thomas (D. Tex.) was referred to the House labor committee. Thomas' amendment would exempt from the law writers, newspaper reporters and clerical employees who are paid more than \$1,200 annually, receive sick leave without salary deductions and get vacations with pay.

Andrews said that the main problem concerning "white collar" workers is whether they have sufficient administrative responsibility to afford them exemption from the law. He said he would confer with members of Congress before he forwards specific recommendations.

Andrews announced meantime that handbooks on which employers of home-workers must record their hours of work and wages will be available at regional and local offices of the wage-hour division not later than Mar. 10th. The handbooks are supplemental to regulations governing payroll records which employers must maintain beginning March 15.

One in every ten inhabitants of the earth is a believer in Mohammedan religion.

PLANS FOR LABOR PEACE REMOTE AS AFL REJECTS CIO PROPOSITION

Additional Conferences Will Be Held, However: John L. Lewis Proposes Labor "Holding Company" Which Would Include Both Factions and the Railroad Brotherhoods.

Plans for any immediate peace or truce between the American Federation of Labor and the Congress for Industrial Organizations, at the time of going to press, seem to be rather remote, when, at the suggestion of the President, the committees from both factions of labor, met in Washington on Tuesday, and heard a proposition from the CIO, which the AFL promptly rejected.

John L. Lewis, head of the CIO, proposed a labor "holding company" to be called the American Congress of Labor, following an hour long White House Conference. Neutral observers believed its blunt rejection by the AFL augured ill for any truce or unity.

Lewis' proposal called for separate national conventions of the CIO, AFL, and Railroad Brotherhoods in April to ratify such establishment along the following lines:

1—It would supersede and embrace

the combined units of all members of organized labor with the president elected from the Brotherhoods; Lewis and Green would be ineligible for office but Green would have a life tenure of his salary for services rendered.

2—The congress governing body would consist of an executive board with equal representation for AFL and CIO components and proportional representation for the railroad units.

3—For the first year following its organization the Labor Department's Conciliation Board would be available to mediate jurisdictional and other disputes.

4—President Roosevelt would be invited to preside at the organizing convention.

The AFL did agree to meet with the CIO committee on Wednesday, but the hope for peace is remote unless pressure from the hite House has a greater bearing than is indicated at our press time.

CHAINS PURCHASES UP DURING PENNSYLVANIA DAYS

Rural Sections Supporting Drive Throughout Stage as Campaign Enters Final Stretch

Philadelphia — Rural Pennsylvania should benefit greatly from the extra chain store expenditures of \$3,000,000 for Pennsylvania products in the first three days of the "Pennsylvania Days" campaign, Fred W. Johnson, chairman of the Chain Store Committee for Pennsylvania Prosperity, declared on Monday.

"A large part of this money was spent for the products of Pennsylvania farms and dairies," Johnson asserted. The chain store chairman pointed out that the \$3,000,000 in added buying as a result of "Pennsylvania Days" boosted total chain store expenditures for Keystone State products last week to "approximately \$9,000,000." This huge expenditure," he added, "should do much to put men back to work on our farms and in our factories."

Johnson cited the many endorsements of the "Pennsylvania Days" campaign being sent to the chain store committee as evidence that rural Pennsylvania is supporting the drive. He said that farmer, dairy and cannery groups were almost unanimous in voicing their approval of the chain store effort to restore purchasing and create employment in the Keystone State by increasing consumption of Pennsylvania products.

"Chain stores spend \$300,400,000 annually for the products of Pennsylvania," Johnson said. "This huge expenditure is a stabilizing influence in the state's economy. By increasing this expenditure through extensive promotion of Pennsylvania products, the chains are aiding every person in Pennsylvania. For increased spending by the chains mean more jobs, more consumption of the products of our factories and hence greater purchasing power all around."

He pointed out that this expenditure did not include the chain store payrolls, nor the huge outlays for lighting, trucking, advertising and other services. "In all," Johnson said, "chain stores spend \$406,000,000 a year in Pennsylvania."

Announcing that the closing days of "Pennsylvania Days" would be marked by further intensification of the effort to increase consumption of Keystone State products, Johnson predicted that the lasting effects of the chain store campaign would prove a needed spur in turning Pennsylvania into the road to recovery.

JOHN L. ELDER WITHDRAWS APPLICATION FOR POSITION HIGHWAY SUPERINTENDENT

Withdrawal of his application for the position of Cambria County roads maintenance engineer, State Highway Department, was announced Monday by John L. Elder, Ebensburg engineer. "After careful consideration, I have decided to withdraw my application," Mr. Elder said. "I have found that my own business would take too much time so that I would not be able to devote my entire time to the state highway position. I wish to thank my many friends who have been so loyal to me in my efforts to obtain the position."

Apple syrup is a new rival of maple syrup.

SLIDE OF CULM STOPS WORK AT HEISLEY MINE

Approximately 900 miners of Nanty-Glo, and vicinity, were idle on Monday of this week as the result of a tremendous slide of "boney" from the culm bank at the Heisley mines of the J. H. Weaver Coal Company, Philadelphia. The slide occurred about three o'clock on Sunday morning, sending approximately 15,000 cubic yards of reject coal thundering down the mountainous slope, covering the railroad and choking the channel of Blacklick Creek, which borders the coal company's spur of the Cambria and Indiana railroad.

INROADS FROM MINE MACHINES A BAD FACTOR

United Mine Workers Will Gird for Some Changes in Matter at Wage Parley.

Pittsburgh — The problem of labor saving devices which eliminate the work of hundreds of soft-coal miners will be discussed by the United Mine Workers union leaders in preliminary wage-scale conferences in New York this week end.

According to P. T. Fagan, president of District No. 5 of the U. M. W. A., head of the wage-scale committee from the Pittsburgh district, mechanical loading machines have displaced hundreds of loaders, cutting production costs. The miners feel these benefits should be passed on to the worker through increased benefits.

Now working a 35-hour week, the miners will seek a 30-hour week from operators, in accordance with the policy adopted by the union's last international convention, and a better wage scale. Wage rates now range from \$4.40 a day for greasers, trappers, flaggers, switch throwers and slate pickers to \$7.60 a day for loading and cutting machine operators.

As an argument for the shorter work week, the miners plan to point to the fact that last year bituminous coal production fell off 100 million tons from 1937, principally because of increased use of fuel oil as a substitute for coal.

DIVORCE POLITICS FROM STATE WPA

Harrisburg—First effects of a congressional resolution regulating political activity on the federal works program reverberated in Pennsylvania last Thursday with a warning to 16 directors and branch office managers that official affiliations are definitely "out."

Everett C. Smith, acting state WPA administrator, issued the ultimatum to members of his staff that they are not to retain any office with any political organization or committee.

Smith's action came from an interpretation of the resolution making it unlawful for any person employed by a federal agency paid by the funds of the emergency relief appropriation act of 1938 "to take active part in political management or in political campaigns."

Directors and branch managers under Smith were asked to return signed statements before March 15 to the effect that all administrative and project supervisory employees had chosen either to retain their political affiliations or their WPA employment.

Smith hastily pointed out, however, that WPA employees can become members of a political club or organization but not officers.

COAL COMMISSION REVEALS FINDINGS

Washington — The National Bituminous Coal Commission, resisting attempts of a group of operators to repeal or make drastic changes in the Federal law under which the agency is attempting to stabilize the industry made public a collection of views supporting its policies.

These were copies of six letters recently written by coal operators to John A. Howe, chairman of the Committee for Amendment of the Coal Act. Replying to Mr. Howe's request for recruits in the amending campaign, the operators in general expressed faith in the coal commission and urged that a fair trial be given to the minimum prices it is attempting to set up.

TWO FATALLY HURT IN FALL OF ROCK AT MINE NEAR CLYMER

Two miners, employed in the Wilmore Coal Company mine, near Clymer, died in the Indiana hospital on Saturday, as the result of injuries sustained in a fall of rock. They are Michael Puzh, 56, and Andy Zello, 64, both of whom resided on farms near the village of Penn Run.

MINERS READY TO OPEN WAGE SCALE PARLEYS

Union Delegates from District No. 2 and Officers Are Now in New York.

Officials of District No. 2, United Mine Workers of America, and the district scale committee named to represent approximately 45,000 Central Pennsylvania miners, left for New York City on Wednesday of this week, to participate in the parley starting today on union wage rates.

Spokesmen for District No. 2 joined with the scale committees of the other districts in the nation and for 3 days—Thursday, Friday and Saturday—these representatives will meet in executive session to shape up a national policy and draft United Mine Workers of America demands which will be laid before the representatives of the National coal operators in joint session on March 14th.

Heading the district No. 2 contingent is James Mark, district president, together with Richard Gilbert, Clearfield, secretary-treasurer; Edward Sweeney, Lilly, vice president, and John Ghizzoni, Homer City, International Board member. The scale committee for central Pennsylvania consists of Andrew Pokarcic, representing Indiana, Centre and Clearfield counties; Harry Sheets, Huntingdon, Bedford, Blair and Somerset Counties; John Sloan, of Ehrenfeld, representing Cambria county.

Present contract between Appalachian operators and the United Mine Workers expires March 31. The joint session scheduled March 14th is for the purpose of agreeing upon terms of the new wage and hour agreement.

While hundreds of resolutions from all union districts will come before the union's national scale committee at the New York meetings this week, the committee is under mandate from last year's constitutional convention of the United Mine Workers of America to demand:

Changes in district or local agreements.
Six hour day and thirty hour week.
Abolition of wage differentials.
Increases in wages.
Solution of mechanization problems.

JOBLESS ADVISED TO MAKE CLAIMS

Thomas V. Hayes, manager of the State Employment Office and the Unemployment Compensation Division of Cambria County, has warned jobless men an women who have received jobless insurance checks during the past year or more, to file new claims if they are still eligible for benefits.

Persons eligible to file a second original claim may be disqualified if their claims are not made by March 11, Mr. Hayes said. This is due to the fact that a claim filed after March 11 will be based on a different series of calendar quarters.

"A claimant who was laid off during the fourth quarter of 1937 or early in the first quarter of 1938, might be eligible for unemployment compensation on a second original claim if he files that claim before March 11," Hayes explained. "He might be ineligible if he files on or after that date."

Unemployed persons were cautioned to determine whether or not they are eligible to file claims for benefits, even though they received their maximum amount during 1938 and have not been regularly employed. Hayes said some eligible claimants may find themselves disqualified as a result of a shifting in the base year.

PLAN MINE TESTS AT COUNTY SEAT

Ebensburg — Examinations for applicants seeking certificates of qualification as mine foremen, assistant foremen, chief electricians and fire bosses will be held April 3 and 4 in the First Presbyterian Church, Center Street, according to an announcement by State Mine Inspector W. H. Filer of Ebensburg, chairman of the examining board.

Applicants for second-grade and chief mine electrician certificates will attend the examination on April 3, while those seeking first-grade certificates must attend both days. Those for fire boss certificates will be examined April 4.

The tests will be for applicants who reside in the Eighth, 10 and 18 Bituminous districts. Those planning to take the examinations must notify Inspector Filer by letter or card prior to the dates of the tests.

To show how anesthetics deaden pain, a full-sized mechanized model of a man will be shown on an operating table at the New York World's Fair medical exhibit.

The name measles comes from a Dutch word meaning spots.