

TORRANCE HERALD

January 30, 1947

Torrance, California

SECTION B

IT'S SPRINGTIME AT BENSON'S

Wage Agreement Between Steel, C.I.O. Extended

Benjamin F. Fairless, president of United States Steel Corporation, Friday made the following statement:

"In the first conference today with the negotiating committee of the United Steelworkers of America (C.I.O.), our representatives proposed that the labor agreement which terminates Feb. 15, 1947, be extended until April 30, 1947, in order to provide additional time to conduct effectively collective bargaining on the terms and conditions of a new agreement.

"The union accepted our proposal.

"The proposal was made and accepted because of the desire on the part of both parties to make a contribution to the national welfare. This action assures continuity of our steel operations until April 30, 1947. During the period of the extension there may be clarification of matters now constituting issues between the parties which vitally affect wage and other costs.

"Our companies have been sued for over one-half billion dollars for alleged past portal-to-portal liability. The claim is made in these suits that our employees should now be paid retroactively as far back as 1938 for walking to work on company property, for changing clothes and for time spent in washing. The amount of these activities is computed at overtime rates and then is doubled under the penalty provisions provided in the Wage and Hour Law. No one contends that the employees were not paid their full wages in accordance with the terms of the then existing labor contracts for all time actually worked, as work was then understood and accepted by both parties.

"In the midst of this situation, had the union not agreed to the contract extension we would have found ourselves facing an immediate demand to raise wages without knowing how long an individual employee works each day, and how much he is entitled to receive at the end of the day—if the portal-to-portal pay theory is to be imposed. The union's demand for a substantial wage increase and its separate demand for portal-to-portal pay both involve higher wage costs. They must be considered, together.

"This situation and these law suits are not peculiar to us. Many other companies, small as well as large, have been sued all over the country. The solvency of many may be threatened. This critical problem has been recognized by the Congress and bills are now under consideration. If legislation or further court decisions correct the present confused situation, both parties should be able to negotiate a labor contract with some understanding of the legal requirements and financial consequences.

"Until this matter is clarified, the parties plan to continue collective bargaining conferences in an attempt to reach agreement on changes proposed for the new agreement either by the companies or the union which do not relate to cost aspects.

"No understanding has been reached that any contract terms ultimately agreed upon will be retroactive. This is a subject for further negotiation, along with all the other matters to be negotiated."

Correction of Wage Inequities Among U. S. Steel Subsidiaries Announced

United States Steel Corporation announced Sunday that its five principal steel-producing subsidiaries have concluded agreements with the United Steelworkers of America (C.I.O.) on substantial and basic parts of a program involving correction of intra and inter-plant and inter-company wage inequities. The companies believe that this constitutes a constructive step forward which should be helpful in improving future relations between the employers and employees.

Under the agreements, more than 25,000 widely varied steel mill jobs are grouped into thirty general labor classifications, with a proper relationship established between the respective wage rates for these various classifications. The resultant wage scale will consist of thirty standard hourly wage rates ranging up to \$1.98 an hour in Classification 30 in all plants in which the common labor rate is now 98 1/2 cents an hour.

Employees of the American Steel and Wire Company, Carnegie-Illinois Steel Corporation, Columbia Steel Company, National Tube Company and Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company whose rates have been lower than the newly agreed-to standard wage scale which will be effective in their companies will benefit from new agreements. The agreement also applies to the Ironton, Utah plant of the Geneva Steel Company.

In November, 1944, the National War Labor board directed these subsidiaries and the union to negotiate wage scales to eliminate alleged intra-plant wage rate inequities, the adjustments to be retroactive to Jan. 4, 1944, these companies and the union agreed that the cost of the intra-plant adjustments would be limited to an average of 3% cents per employee-hour, using the third quarter of 1943 as the base payroll period. The contracts just signed put that understanding into effect and provide for retroactive payments in excess of \$30,000,000. The agreements also provide for the elimination as to the future of inter-company wage inequities which were not embraced in the directive of the War Labor board.

The effect of the elimination of inter-company wage inequities is the equivalent of a 1 1/2 cent hourly wage increase to a large percentage of the companies' steel workers. Employees who benefit from the upward revision in wage scales will receive retroactively, for all time worked since Jan. 4, 1944, 70 percent of the total hourly adjustment which will be applicable to them in the future.

The new standard wage scale is scheduled to become effective in the first pay period beginning after Jan. 31, 1947, and the retroactive payments are to be made in lump sums to individual employees as soon as practicable.

County Plans To Outlaw Pinball Machines, Report

Possession of a pinball machine would be prohibited in unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County under an ordinance submitted to the Board of Supervisors by County Counsel Harold W. Kennedy. The supervisors are expected to delay action on the ordinance, pending a public hearing.

The ordinance was ordered drafted by the supervisors several weeks ago when they announced intention to withdraw official county licenses for the devices.

It was not until today that it became known that even the possession of pinball machines would be illegal. This assertedly would mean that individuals having such machines even in their homes would be violating the ordinance, officials said.

The supervisors named as their reason for outlawing pinball games the allegation that they are used for gambling purposes.

Attorneys for pinball interests have asked a chance to present the case of the small businessman who depends on the marble games for his living.

You Pay Double For Automobile Plates Feb. 5

Less than one week remains in which to apply for vehicle registration renewal without paying penalties.

With this warning, local officials of the Department of Motor Vehicles reminded motorists that midnight, Feb. 4, is the deadline. After that applicants must pay double registration fees and 50 per cent more on vehicle license fees.

Serially numbered receipts are being issued in lieu of license plates, which are held up because of steel shortages. Plates will be mailed to applicants later. Many have already received them.

Applicants must present their 1946 Registration Cards and the amount of the fee as shown on the lower left hand corner. Personal checks are not accepted either over the counter or by mail. Persons applying by mail should send the Registration Card and remit the fee by postal bank or express money order or cashier's check. Currency should not be mailed.

Elementary Principals To Meet in L. B.

More than 500 elementary school principals from San Diego to Santa Barbara assemble in Long Beach next Saturday to attend the joint conference of the State Department of Education and the California Elementary School Principals' Association, Southern Section, at Woodrow Wilson High School.

Roy E. Simpson, state superintendent of public instruction, will head the list of leading California educators who will address the school principals on "Frontiers in Education" at 9:30 Saturday. Following the general meeting, 18 committees which have prepared reports based on "Characteristics of the Good Elementary School" will participate in workshop sessions. Reports of these committees are to appear as chapters in the yearbook of the association.

Surplus Materials Coming to City

All surplus aircraft materials from the Southwestern United States is being moved to Torrance by the War Assets Administration, according to William Bratton, Pacific Electric agent here.

He said that the centralization of this material is now going on, the government utilizing the former Aluminum Company of America plant for the purpose. It will be stored and sold at that point, it was said.



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PEDESTRIAN WARNING
Pedestrians are warned to observe extra caution when crossing streets just after sundown. Visibility is very poor during early evening hours, so when roaming in the gloaming, wise pedestrians cross only at intersections after looking both ways for approaching vehicles.