

MINUTES

LABOR AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
April 14, 1977

Members Present: Chairman Banner
Mr. Goodman
Mr. Dreyer
Mrs. Gomes
Mr. Robinson
Mr. Weise

Members Excused: Mr. Bennett

Guests Present: Stanley Jones, Nevada State Labor Commissioner
Lou Paley and George Hawes, Nevada State AFL-CIO
Clint Knoll, Nevada Association of Employers
Bob Warren, Nevada League of Cities
Ernest Newton, Nevada Taxpayers Association

Chairman Banner called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m. and stated the Committee would take action on bills.

COMMITTEE ACTION

ASSEMBLY BILL 606

Mr. Goodman moved for Do Pass, seconded by Mr. Dreyer. The motion passed unanimously with only Mr. Banner, Mr. Goodman, Mr. Dreyer and Mrs. Gomes present.

ASSEMBLY BILL 594

Mr. Dreyer moved for Do Pass, seconded by Mr. Goodman. The motion passed unanimously with only Mr. Banner, Mr. Goodman, Mr. Dreyer and Mrs. Gomes present.

ASSEMBLY BILL 462

Mr. Dreyer moved to amend the bill with Amendment 756A and to Do Pass As Amended. The motion was seconded by Mr. Goodman, and passed unanimously with only Mr. Banner, Mr. Goodman, Mr. Dreyer and Mrs. Gomes present.

HEARING - ASSEMBLY BILL 71

Mr. Banner called upon Stanley Jones, State Labor Commissioner, to testify and then turned the chair over the Vice Chairman Goodman.

Mr. Jones said that an amendment he requested to this bill had just been received by the Chairman of the Committee. He then read a prepared statement, including a letter and newspaper articles, attached hereto as Exhibit "A". Mr. Jones stated that A.B. 71 would bring Nevada's minimum wage into line with the federal minimum wage, and that the amendment provides that the Nevada minimum will not exceed the federal. Mr. Weise asked if there were any problems with age discrimination in the proposed bill, but Mr. Jones said in his

estimation there are none; there have been differentials in age categories in past years. Mrs. Gomes commented on the minimum living standards, as set forth by the U.S. Department of Labor, which delineate the minimum necessities to exist without the ability to buy such things as insurance and clothing. In reference to a letter Mr. Jones read from a casino worker, Mr. Dreyer asked if casinos usually pay only the minimum wage. Mr. Jones said most do.

Clint Knoll, representing the Nevada Association of Employers, testified in opposition to the bill, stating that minimum wage legislation was originally intended to eliminate sweat shops and provide a penalty on overtime, not to provide a standard of living. He also said there are few employees not now covered by the federal Fair Labor Standards Act and that Nevada should follow the guidelines of the federal law.

Ernest Newton, Nevada Taxpayers Association, testified in opposition to A.B. 71. He said Nevada should completely abolish the minimum wage or at least not pass this bill. Mr. Newton said if the idea of a minimum wage is to better the lives of the poor, the wage would have to be raised to \$5-6 per hour. Mrs. Gomes asked how Mr. Newton would establish wages if there is no minimum, and he said by the market place; a worker would get whatever the employer can afford to pay for a particular job.

Lou Paley, representing Nevada State AFL-CIO, testified in support of the bill and the amendment. He said if Nevada does not raise its minimum, in line with the federal government, more and more people will go on welfare. He strongly suggested the Committee should hold hearings on this matter at a time and place that the public can more easily attend.

Mr. Weise asked what areas of employment in Nevada are not covered by the federal wage laws, and Mr. Jones said those employers grossing less than \$250,000 per year. Mr. Robinson suggested that every time the minimum wage is raised, those employers who are already operating marginally have to fire some of their work force to make ends meet and some are put out of business. Mr. Jones said there are no statistics to either prove or disprove this, but he felt this argument is just used to defeat increases in the minimum wage. However, Mr. Robinson thought these increases do have an impact on the small businessman; it makes it harder for him to compete. Mrs. Gomes said she thought the small businessmen generally fail because they are not able to compete with the buying power of the larger companies. Mr. Weise asked what the status of the minimum wage would be for the next two years if this bill is not passed, and Mr. Jones said it would remain at \$2.30 per hour.

There being no further testimony, Vice Chairman Goodman adjourned the meeting at 4:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Campbell

Sandra Campbell, Assembly Attache

THE NEVADA STATE LABOR COMMISSION HAS HAD THE PRIVILEGE OF SPEAKING TO YOU ON MANY SUBJECTS RELATING TO LABOR AND INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS LAWS.

WE HAVE NOT ALWAYS AGREED ON THOSE MINIMUM STANDARDS OF DECENCY AT THE WORKPLACE.

AT TIMES WE MAY HAVE ASKED TOO MUCH AND AT TIMES YOU MAY HAVE GIVEN TOO LITTLE. IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, IT IS YOU, WHO HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF DECIDING WHAT IS RIGHT AND WHAT IS NOT. WHAT IS ENOUGH AND WHAT IS NOT.

IN THE MATTER OF MINIMUM WAGE WE ASK YOU NOT TO PASS THE BUCK.

THERE HAVE BEEN MANY CHANGES IN THE COST OF LIVING DURING THE PAST 16 MONTHS AND UNFORTUNATELY EACH OF THOSE CHANGES HAS BEEN UPWARD BOUND. THOSE MORE RAVISHED BY THIS ASTRONOMICAL COST OF LIVING SPIRAL ARE THE POOR AND IMPOVERISHED WORKER. THE WORKER LEAST ABLE TO HELP HIM OR HER SELF.

MY REMARKS TO YOU TODAY ARE REALLY AN OUTGROWTH OF SEEING FIRSTHAND THE RESULTS OF THE TRAGEDY OF POOR PEOPLE BECOMING POORER.

ONE OF THE PRIME ROLES OF GOVERNMENT IS TO FIND WAYS TO IMPROVE THE LIFESTYLE OF ITS PEOPLE AND TO ENCOURAGE AND PERSUADE MANAGEMENT TOWARDS THE MORE DESIRABLE LIFE EXPECTANCIES.

I HAVE BEEN BOTH ENCOURAGED AND DISCOURAGED IN THE PURSUIT OF AIDING OUR STATE WORKFORCE THROUGH THE ACTION OF THE NEVADA LEGISLATURE.

HISTORY SHOWS US THAT MORE OFTEN THAN NOT THE RICH AND AFFLUENT TEND TO FORGET THE UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE ON THE LADDER OF LIFE BELOW THEM.

I AM SADDENED TO SEE THE NUMBER OF TIMES WHERE THE OLD GAME OF PASSING THE BUCK IS PLAYED. PASSING THE BUCK BETWEEN VARIOUS STATE AGENCIES AND THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE WORKER.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE BUCK PASSING IS USUALLY MERELY AN EXCUSE TO GET RID OF SOMETHING WHICH IS POLITICALLY EMBARRASSING.

EXHIBIT "A"

I SUGGEST TO YOU THAT FAILURE TO PROVIDE NEVADA'S WORKFORCE WITH AN ADEQUATE MINIMUM WAGE WOULD BE PASSING THE BUCK.

ONE OF THIS SESSION'S MOST RIGID CONSERVATIVES RECENTLY SAID, AND I CERTAINLY HOPE IT WAS NOT JUST MORE POLITICAL RHETORIC, HE SAID, "LEGISLATORS AREN'T TRYING TO WIN A POPULARITY CONTEST, BUT MEET THE HEALTH AND WELFARE NEEDS OF THE PEOPLE".

I SUBMIT NOTHING COULD MEET THOSE NEEDS MORE THAN ASSISTANCE IN THE TAKE HOME PAY OF OUR PEOPLE.

TAKE A FRANK AND HONEST LOOK AT JUST WHO IT IS THAT OPPOSES MINIMUM WAGE. IT'S THE SAME PEOPLE WHO SUPPORT SO-CALLED RIGHT-TO-WORK. WHAT A TERRIBLY TWISTED WEB THAT WEAVES. ON THE ONE HAND THEY'RE SAYING WE DON'T BELIEVE IN UNIONS AND AT THE SAME TIME THEY'RE SAYING "BUT WE DON'T BELIEVE IN MINIMUM WAGE EITHER". WHAT THEY MUST THEN BE SAYING IS WE BELIEVE THE WORKER SHOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO WORK FOR LESS AND LESS AND LESS.

RATHER IRONICALLY, IT'S ORGANIZED LABOR THAT HAS SUPPORTED IMPROVEMENT IN MINIMUM WAGE. NOT FOR ANY SELFISH REASON THAT THOSE WHO OPPOSE IT DREAM UP BUT FOR THE VERY REAL REASON THAT IT IS A PEOPLE LAW. PEOPLE WHO HAVE NO ONE TO SPEAK OUT IN THEIR BEHALF.

IT'S TOO EASY TO BLAME EVERYTHING THAT'S WRONG ON MINIMUM WAGE. SINCE THE ENACTMENT OF MINIMUM WAGE THE SAME OLD RED FLAGS HAVE BEEN WAVED BY THE SAME OLD GROUP OF PEOPLE, BLAMING ALL THE SAME UNEMPLOYMENT OF MINORITIES, MINORS, AND OTHERS ON MINIMUM WAGE. THE SAME UNEMPLOYMENT OF MINORITIES, MINORS, AND OTHERS THAT EXISTED BEFORE MINIMUM WAGE BECAME THE WHIPPING BOY.

THE NEVADA STATE LEGISLATURE IS NOT BEING ASKED TO DO ANY MORE THAN WILL BE DONE BY THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

YOU ARE BEING ASKED TO MAINTAIN A PARITY WITH FEDERAL STANDARDS OF DECENCY AT THE WORKPLACE FOR ALL NEVADA WORKERS. NOT JUST A PART OF THEM.

IT IS HOPED MY REMARKS TO YOU TODAY HAVE STIMULATED SOME THOUGHT AS TO THE CONSIDERATION FOR OTHER HUMAN BEINGS.

I HOPE THAT I HAVE REKINDLED OR HELPED FAN IN SOME OF YOU THE SPARK OF DECENCY TO OUR WORKER.

IF I HAVE NOT DONE SO AND ANYONE LEAVES HERE WITH THE THOUGHT THAT MINIMUM WAGE IS ANYTHING BUT AN OUTRIGHT NECESSITY IN TODAY'S LABOR MARKET AND IN TODAY'S ECONOMIC SPIRAL; IF YOU LEAVE HERE WITHOUT PASSING A.B. 71, OUR STATE IS DOOMED TO MEDIOCRITY, OR WORSE.

IF I HAVE SUCCEEDED IN MY TASK, THE ENERGY AND BELIEF IN EQUITY AND JUSTICE WILL AT LEAST PROVIDE A RAY OF HOPE TO OUR WORKERS THAT TOMORROW MAY, MAY BE BETTER THAN TODAY.

ANNUAL FAMILY POVERTY INCOME;

PERSONS PER FAMILY 3.5 = \$5,050.00 PER YEAR

PERSONS PER FAMILY 4.0 = 5,500.00 PER YEAR

PERSONS PER FAMILY 5.0 = 6,400.00 PER YEAR

PERSONS PER FAMILY 6.0 = 7,300.00 PER YEAR

PERSONS PER FAMILY 7.0 = 8,200.00 PER YEAR

(SOURCE: US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR)

AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS PER WEEK = 36.2

(SOURCE: US DEPARTMENT OF LABOR)

HOURS PER YEAR FROM WEEKLY AVERAGE = 1882

AVERAGE MANUFACTURING HOURLY WAGE, NEVADA = \$5.51 PER HR.

AVERAGE GAMING HOURLY WAGE, NEVADA = \$4.17 PER HR.

HOTELS, GAMING AND RECREATION INDUSTRIES EMPLOY THE LARGEST NUMBER OF PEOPLE. (SOURCE: EMPLOYMENT SECURITY DEPARTMENT)

MINIMUM HOURLY WAGE REQUIRED TO REACH LOWEST POVERTY FAMILY INCOME IS \$2.68 PER HOUR, OR 49 PERCENT OF AVERAGE HOURLY MANUFACTURING WAGE, OR 64 PERCENT OF AVERAGE HOURLY RATE FOR HOTELS, GAMING AND RECREATION. ($2.68 \times 1882 = \$5,043.76$) THESE STATISTICS ARE ALREADY MORE THAN 6 MONTHS OUTDATED; CURRENT ESTIMATES ARE 3 TO 5 PERCENT HIGHER.

RECEIVED - 12 - 76.
SEP 14 1976

LABOR COMMISSIONER

Dear Mr. Jones,

Upon reading the article in the Sun today about the Base pay and the not being voters, I would like to mention the fact , weather we vote or not we do all have to eat and try to live decently and how can you do this on \$ 2.30 per.

People who draw huge salaries get a cost of living raise frequently, while the persons making the min. wage that really need it, never get it.

Until recently I have had to support myself and Son on the Min. wage and a lot of the time we did not eat. at age nine he mowed yards to help out then he sold news papers also, because he did not want to be on welfare. I tried to tell him we would have a lot more on welfare and food stamps , but he said No: This is his second year of going to school and working eight hrs. a day five days a week and going to school.

I work for a casino, and who makes more money than the casinos ? but thats all they will pay.

If the Min. wage was raised enough, people like us could buy some of the things we need so badly which in turn would help our sick economy.

It is no wonder there are so many people on welfare, and food stamps, they come out way ahead. can you blame them?

How about it? Give the little guy a cost of living raise.

Respectfully


Violet M. Vita

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The Good Old Days—They Were Terrible!

- **Boy Factory Workers Had Water Splashed In Their Faces to Keep Them Awake**
- **Young Miners Earned 25 Cents for a Danger-Filled 14-Hour Day**
- **Girl Workers Were Exposed to Poisons That Wrecked Their Health**

Children toiling as sweatshop slaves, women working for a loaf of bread — these were shocking realities of the so-called "good old days" which are dramatically depicted in another exclusive ENQUIRER installment, together with photographs and an illustration, from Otto L. Bettmann's fascinating new book, "The Good Old Days — They Were Terrible!"

By OTTO L. BETTMANN

Less than 100 years ago working conditions in America were appalling.

Children worked in factories, running machines late at night. They were sometimes kept awake "by the vigilant superintendent with cold water dashed into their faces."

For employers the tiny workers were a bargain at \$1.50 to \$2.50 a week.

Some textile-mill boys were so small they had to stand on boxes to service the twirling spindles, their hands in constant danger of being caught.

Young mine workers who were frequently exposed to poisonous dust and injury, earned 25 cents for a 12- to 14-hour day.

For everyone, work in the "good old days" was often dangerous. In 1892 President Harrison observed: "American workmen are subjected to peril of life and limb as great as a soldier in time of war."

The railroad industry was one of the most lethal to its workers, killing in 1890 one railroader for every 306 em-

ployed, and injuring one for every 30 employed.

There was one industry in the Gilded Age where instead of death and maiming, exhaustion or starvation was offered. This was the garment industry, and at its heart was the sweatshop.

At the risk of his health a man could make \$9 to \$10 a week for pressing and delivering new garments to the wholesaler; and a woman could earn \$7 for the punishing job of seaming three dozen shirts.

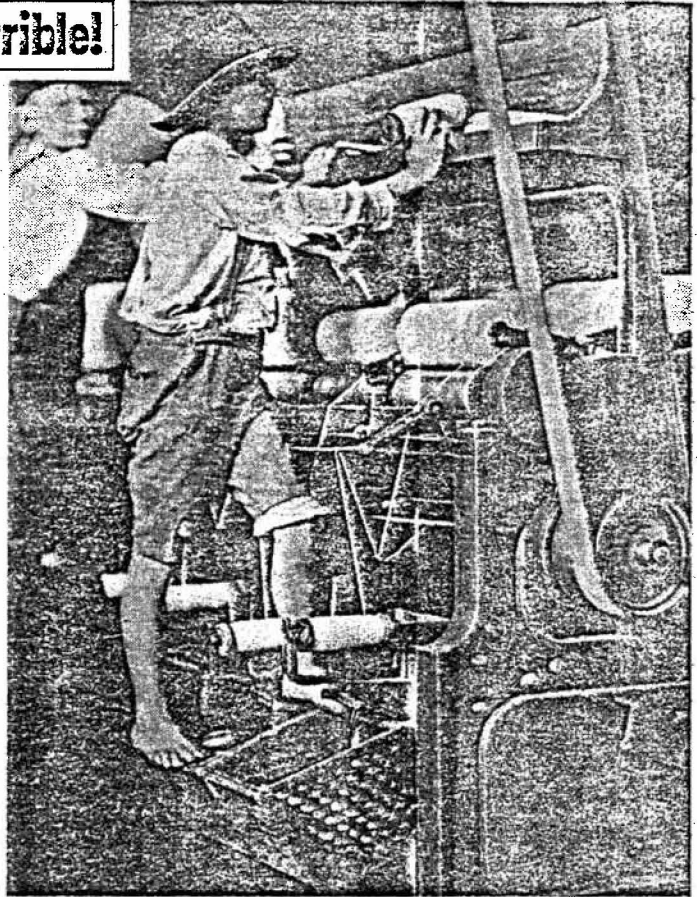
The standard wage for a girl was \$3 to \$5, which yielded her no more than a loaf of bread, a cup of tea and a bed in a tenement attic.

And in the flower-making workshops, arsenic, liberally applied to produce vivid colors, wrecked the appearance and health of thousands of girls with sores, swelling of the limbs and nausea.

NEXT WEEK: Criminals swarming the streets, thuggish police wielding brutal nightsticks — more hazards of the "good old days."

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BOOK BONUS



DANGEROUS JOB in Georgia cotton mill in 1890s required boys to stand on a box to reach spools. If caught in whirling spindles, they could be badly injured. If they complained, they were told to "get out."



SWEATSHOP: Fines were imposed for talking, smiling, breaking a needle. To reach their quota, women and girls working on New York's Lower East Side in 1888 had to put in a 84-hour week for 5 cents an hour. The working pace hardly left them time to eat or sleep.



BOYS AT NIGHT WORK: They worked as molder boys for 10 hours at a stretch in this Indiana glass factory in 1908, from 5 p.m. to 3 a.m., replacing men who quit because they had found the work too hot.