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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION
Washington

LUGGAGE AND LEATHER GOODS COMMITTEE APPOINTED

Appointment of a committee to recommend a minimum wage for the luggage and leather goods industry was announced today by Colonel Philip B. Fleming, Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, United States Department of Labor. (Federal Register, May 17, 1940.)

As defined, the "Luggage and Leather Goods Industry" employs some 18,000 wage earners. The definition is:

"(a) The manufacture from any material of luggage including, but not by way of limitation, trunks, suitcases, traveling bags, brief cases, satchel cases; the manufacture of instrument cases covered with leather, imitation leather or fabric including, but not by way of limitation, portable radio cases; the manufacture of small leather goods and like articles made from fabric or imitation leather, except imitation leather made from paper; but not the manufacture of bodies, panels, and frames from metal, wood, fiber or paperboard for any of the above articles.

"(b) The manufacture from leather, imitation leather or fabric of cut stock and findings for any of the articles covered in Section (a)."

Explaining the definition, a memorandum to Colonel Fleming from Burton D. Oppenheim, Director of the Industry Committee Branch of the Division, states:

"It is intended to cover in this definition the operations and products characteristic of trunk, luggage plants and such portion of the manufacture of leather goods as has not already been allocated elsewhere by . . . industry definitions, or belongs in some other industry, not yet defined, such as the manufacture of saddlery, harness, and whips."

Members of the committee were selected after consultation with both trade associations and union groups active in the industry. John J. Murray, a Boston attorney, as a public member will be Chairman of the Committee. Mr. Murray formerly served as Chairman of the Massachusetts State Board of Arbitration.

Other public members of the committee are Harry W. Newburger, former Vice-President and Director of Bamberger & Co., New York City; George Thomas Brown of

the Department of Economics, Catholic University, Washington, D. C.; Tipton R. Snavelly, Professor of Economics, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia; William G. Rice, Jr., Professor of Law, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Wis.; and Joseph A. McClain, Jr., Dean of the School of Law, Washington University, St. Louis, Missouri.

The committee members representing the employees are: Samuel Laderman of Chicago, General Secretary-Treasurer of the International Ladies' Handbag & Novelty Workers' Union (A.F. of L.); Joseph Israel Levitsky of Philadelphia and Jack Weiselberg of Brooklyn, New York, both members of the general executive board of the same union; E. A. Barker of Petersburg, Virginia, and John Peterson of Racine Wisconsin, also members of the same union; and A. M. Reuter of St. Louis, Missouri, representing the Luggage and Leather Workers Union (C.I.O.).

For the employers: George S. Bernard of American Hardware Co., Inc., Petersburg, Virginia; Stanley Klein of Mendel-Drucker, Inc., Cincinnati, Ohio; S. H. Lifton of the New Rexbilt Leather Goods Corporation, New York City; Robert H. Rolfs, of the Amity Leather Products Corporation, West Bond, Wisconsin; Louis Lefkowitz of L. Lefkowitz & Brother, Inc., New Brunswick, New Jersey, and Milton W. Draub of the Boyle Leather Goods Company, Inc., New York City.

Under the Fair Labor Standards Act the committee is authorized to recommend the highest minimum wage up to 40 cents an hour which will not cause substantial curtailment of employment in the industry. Any wage recommendation of the committee will be the subject of a public hearing at which any interested party may appear before a wage order for the industry is issued. The initial meeting of the committee will be announced in the near future.

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