

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

INACTIVE

COLONEL FLEMING HEADS WAGE-HOUR GROUP SAILING TO STUDY
PUERTO RICAN WAGE PROBLEM

A special industry committee appointed under the recent amendment to the Wage and Hour Law to deal with the problem of Puerto Rico, will sail today from New York for San Juan on the S. S. Coamo from Pier 15, East River at 3:00 o'clock, P. M. Monsignor Francis J. Haas, Dean of the School of Social Sciences, Catholic University, is Chairman of the Committee.

Colonel Philip B. Fleming, Administrator of the Wage and Hour Division, U. S. Department of Labor, also will leave for Puerto Rico. Colonel Fleming will open the Committee proceedings in San Juan after the Committee members are sworn in, and he will charge the Committee on its duties at the opening session.

Under the amendment passed by the present Congress, the special industry committee will recommend minimum wage rates which may be less than the 30-cent statutory minimum now in force in the continental United States and in other territories and possessions. The wage recommended, however, must not be such that it will give the Islands a competitive advantage over industries in the continental United States. Under the procedure contained in the Fair Labor Standards Act, these industry committees, on which employers, employees and the public are equally represented, make a recommendation after a study of the industry involved. In this case the Committee is specifically studying the needlework industry in the Island.

When the Committee makes its recommendation, the Administrator will hold a public hearing. If he finds the recommendation supported by the evidence presented to him, the Administrator may then issue a wage order, which gives the rate the force and effect of law. The Administrator, if he does not approve the recommendation, may refer it back to the same committee for further study or appoint a new committee to do this work.

Other members of the Committee sailing on the Coamo, are David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union, Prudencio Riviera Martinez, Insular Commissioner of Labor; and Frank M. Mayfield, president of the National Retail Dry Goods Association of St. Louis. Mr. Mayfield is head of Scruggs-Vandervoort-Barney, Inc., St. Louis department store.

The full membership of the Committee is as follows: Public members: Monsignor Haas; Dr. Jose M. Gallardo, Insular Commissioner of Education; Martin Travieso, Justice of the Insular Supreme Court; Employer members: Mr. Mayfield, Maria Louisa Arcoley of Mayaguez, engaged in needlework; P. J. Rosaly, Manager of the Bank of Ponce; Labor members: Mr. Dubinsky; Sr. Martinez and Sherman H. Dalrymple, Vice-President of the Congress of Industrial Organizations.

The Committee will hold its first meeting in the Chamber of Commerce, San Juan, on Friday, September 27th.

The party sailing today will include, in addition to the Industry Committee members and Colonel Fleming, Burton E. Oppenheim, Director of the Industry Committee Branch of the Wage and Hour Division; Charles D. Evans, Industry Committee Counsel, and Thomas D. O'Keefe, Principal Economist.

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