

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

INFORMAL HEARINGS ON METAL MINING COMING

Economic studies were begun today at the Wage and Hour Division for two informal fact-finding hearings on the metal mining industry which will be held in the near future. The studies were ordered by Colonel Philip B. Fleming, Administrator of the Division, after conferring with executives of the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers (C.I.O.)

One of the hearings will be in Birmingham, Alabama; the other will be in a western city convenient to the metal mining industry of the mountain states. Details of the hearings will be announced soon, Colonel Fleming said.

Facts found at the hearing will be used in arriving at administrative determinations on whether the work day begins and ends when the worker enters and leaves the mine or when he arrives at and leaves his work place in the mine.

Colonel Fleming in July announced that in carrying out its enforcement duties in the bituminous coal industry, the Division will accord great weight to any reasonable standards for determining working time which represent the prevailing custom and practices and are supported by a long history of bona fide collective bargaining agreements. In line with this policy, Colonel Fleming announced at that time that the computing of working time on a "face to face" basis in a bituminous coal mining industry would not be held unreasonable. "Face to face" means at the exposed vein of coal where the work is done.

A consent decree entered in the United States District Court for the Western District of Washington, Northern Division, on May 3, enjoining the Cornucopia Gold Mines contained a stipulation that time spent by employees in traveling from the "portal" or entrance of the mine to the "face" or place where they work and back is to be deemed time worked.

Officers of the Union who conferred with Colonel Fleming ask that he apply the stipulation regarding hours worked in the Cornucopia case to all subsurface metal mining. Colonel Fleming's conferees included Reid Robinson, President of the International Union, and Benjamin Riskin, Research Director, both of Denver, Colo.; Van D. Jones, member of the Union's International Board, and W. B. Lemley, W. C. Gunmin, John Hill, J. L. Robinson, James Lipscomb, Louis Tarrant, Asbury Hower, Jessie Gaines, all of Bessemer, Alabama; and E. A. Sisemore of Powderly, Alabama. The last named all are officers or representatives of locals operating in the mines of Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company, the Sloss Sheffield Company, Woodward-Iron Company, and Republic Steel Company.

###