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U. S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION
Washington, D. C.

Administrator Elmer F. Andrews of the Wage and Hour Division, Department of Labor, today (Friday) issued the following statement:

"Millions of Americans look forward to Monday----the effective date of the Fair Labor Standards Act----as the beginning of a new advance in the Nation's offensive against exploitation, and hardship.

"These millions welcome the opportunity to help inoculate our economic system against the virus of sweatshops.

"Unfortunately, however, there is a small and scattered minority who apparently are unwilling or incapable of contributing to the common good. These delinquents, whose number and importance are magnified by their isolation, resort to subterfuge in an effort to camouflage their selfishness and blame the Fair Labor Standards Act for their own anti-social conduct.

"For example, certain members of this selfish minority group have announced that they will close their plants Monday because of what they call their inability to comply with the wage and hour provisions of the Act.

"One employer, who pays his 275 workers between \$3 and \$8 a week, has demanded that 80 percent of these employees be classified as 'learners' so that he may continue to pay them less than 25 cents an hour. Many of his employees have worked for him four years.

"Another employer, who has been paying many of 6,000 workers 22 cents an hour, has threatened to shut down rather than boost the wages of those employees to 25 cents an hour. Still another would call every worker over 40 years of age 'handicapped' and continue to pay him a sub-standard wage.

"Some plants have been run at capacity for weeks to build up inventories preparatory to a shutdown which would be blamed on the Fair Labor Standards Act. Several shutdowns which have been attributed to the Act have in fact resulted from the completion of seasonal operations.

"These suspensions of operations seem to have been timed in an effort to bring the law into disrepute, evidently, with the hope of intimidating the Wage and Hour Division in its administration of the law's provisions.

"It must be plainly understood, however, that the Fair Labor Standards Act is the law of the land, with severe penalties for its violation, and that the Wage and Hour Division has no choice but to carry out the will of Congress.

"In translating that will into action, the Wage and Hour Division will enforce the Act uniformly and compellingly, with forbearance but without partiality.

"This determination has been reinforced by the helpful, cooperative attitude of the overwhelming majority of employers, employees and other persons affected by the Act. They are willing to play their parts. The Wage and Hour Division intends to do all in its power to protect them in their efforts to help make our country a better place in which to live, work and do business."
