

UNIONS REJECT NO-STRIKE APPEAL; PUBLIC EMPLOYEES' PAY IS FROZEN; EUROPE SPLIT IN MONETARY CRISIS

U.A.W. CHIEF IRATE

AUG 19 1971

Labor Leader Warns Against Extension Beyond 90 Days

~~NYTimes~~

By **DAMON STETSON**

Striking unions in many sections of the nation defied yesterday the Nixon Administration's call for a return to work during the 90-day wage and price freeze imposed last Sunday.

Other unions, not on strike, warned against any extension of the freeze beyond Nov. 12, the end of the 90-day period. Labor leaders were almost uniformly critical of the Administration's sudden moves aimed at ending the inflationary spiral.

One of the strongest outcries came from Leonard Woodcock, president of the United Automobile Workers. He warned that his independent union would terminate its contract with the auto companies if the wage-price freeze was extended and workers were not granted wage increases due them under the agreement.

"If this Administration thinks that just by issuing an edict, by the stroke of a pen, they can tear up contracts, they are saying to us they want war. If they want war, they can have war," Mr. Woodcock declared.

Bridges Is Adamant

Another sharp attack came from Harry Bridges, president of the longshoremen's union on the West Coast. He announced that the 48-day dock strike there would continue "in full force."

George Meany, president of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, was reported seething with anger because of Secretary of Labor James D. Hodgson's comment Tuesday that "Mr. Meany appears to be sadly out of step with the needs and desires of America's working men and women."

Mr. Meany and his 35-member Executive Council are scheduled to meet with White House representatives in Washington today in what is expected to be an angry confrontation.

Phone Strike Continues

Among the fast-breaking developments in labor's fast-growing rebellion were the following:

¶ Striking members of the Communications Workers of America, representing 38,500 plant employes of the New York Telephone Company, continued their strike here but agreed to meet with a Federal mediator and start a new round of bargaining with the company.

¶ Striking Western Union employes, also represented by the Communications Workers of America, continued their strike in New York.

¶ In California, an official of

Continued on Page 22, Column 5

Continued From Page 1, Col. 8

the teamsters' union said that his union would not remove picket lines at this time and end a strike that has idled 50,000 workers and tied up most of Northern California construction.

The back-to-work plea had been issued by J. Curtis Counts, director of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. Mr. Counts said Tuesday that the Administration was asking for a halt to all current strikes and a moratorium on new ones during the freeze, and he hinted that legal action might be used to bar walkouts.

Late yesterday, however, the Secretary of Labor, Mr. Hodgson, issued a statement in Washington saying "we intend to continue our policy of urging strikers to go back to work and negotiate, but we have no intention at the present time of using sanctions."

Administration officials said the Government had only limited authority to end strikes. If a strike causes a national emergency, the Government could invoke the Taft-Hartley Law with its 80-day cooling off period. Also, they said, the Government could order a union to halt a strike if it was aimed at forcing an employer to violate the wage-price freeze.

Almost without exception, according to available reports, striking unions refused to go back to work, but leaders of some said that they were consulting their attorneys and seeking further information before making a final decision.

One plumbers union local in New Mexico reportedly went

back to work without settling its strike, but the action was reported to have taken place before Mr. Counts issued the Government's appeal that all strikes be stopped.

Officials of unions still on strike acknowledged that any wage increase agreed upon could not be paid until the end of the 90-day freeze. They expressed concern that, even then, there was the prospect of an extension of the freeze or the imposition of some wage limitation by the President's Cost of Living Council.

And no one knows, they said, whether a negotiated wage increase could be made retroactive.

U.A.W. Raise Due Nov. 22

Mr. Woodcock, head of the 1.3-million-member auto union, said he did not know of any law that permitted the Government to say that a corporation "shall not pay money to its workers but instead put it in its own coffers."

About 750,000 auto workers are due to receive a pay increase of 3 per cent on Nov. 22, 10 days after the freeze ends. Mr. Woodcock said the U.A.W. would not necessarily strike if the freeze was extended and these workers were denied their increase, but he added that the union would then consider itself "free to take any action we want."

Some unions asked the White House for special exemptions from the wage-price freeze. One such union was the State, County and Municipal Employees, headed by Jerry Wurf.