

BOARD OF GOVERNORS
OF THE
FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM

Office Correspondence

Date June 18, 1937.To Chairman EcclesSubject: Meeting with John L. LewisFrom Lauchlin Currie*LC.*

When I last talked with you, you were undecided as to whether you would see Lewis now. I have been thinking it over and have talked with Coyle, and it seems to me that it would be well worth your while. I gathered from Coyle that the idea was not to canvass any particular point, either with respect to the Labor Standards Bill or anything else, but rather merely to get acquainted and to learn something of each other's viewpoints.

If I were in your place and the occasion seemed to call for it, I'd take the attitude that my primary concern was in making the system work decently. This involves labor getting its fair share of the fruits of technological improvements and increasing efficiency. On the other hand, if labor demands more than is justified by its productivity the result will be rising prices with all the disadvantages rising prices entail. Again, if labor demands too short a work week, the productivity and standard of living of the whole community will suffer. The most favorable circumstances for labor to secure its fair share and yet not pursue policies that will be detrimental to the interests of the whole community would be for it to be well-organized on industrial lines under a leadership that will recognize and accept its national responsibilities. Hence, I am not in sympathy with the independent steel companies' attitude. The problem of making the system work satisfactorily is broader than labor policies. It entails working out coordinated monetary, price, labor, public spending, and taxation policies, in all of which organized labor, as representing such a large portion of the community, has a vital stake.

I have had Mr. Bassie prepare a brief digest of the Labor Standards Bill, together with a brief statement of various problems raised by it, and Lewis' attitude as revealed by his testimony on the bill. This particular question may not come up, but I thought you would be interested in having something on it in any case. I will send it over to you tomorrow.

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