WAR LABOR POLICIES BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 3, 1919.

Present: Mr. Frankfurter, Chairman
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Ehrman
Mr. Frayne
Captain Morton
Mr. Smyth
Mr. Wilcox
Mr. Bell, Executive Secretary

I. The Chairman announced that the Secretary of Labor had approved the recommendation of the Board to have representatives on the Board appointed from the Department of Commerce, the Department of the Interior, the Post Office Department, the Treasury Department and the Vocational Education Board.

II. The Chairman also announced that the Secretary had asked him as Assistant to the Secretary to take charge of the stimulation of public works by states and cities.

III. There was a general discussion of the weekly report on labor conditions.

IV. The Executive Secretary read a report on probable emigration of foreign born residents of the United States, prepared by Mr. Marcus of the Employment Service in cooperation with the Executive Secretary.

Moved by Mr. Smyth and seconded by Mr. Wilcox that the Chairman be authorized to submit the report with the recommendations contained therein to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Labor and the Postmaster General and to do everything within his power to see that the recommendations are carried out. Unanimously carried.

Moved by Mr. Smyth and seconded by Mr. Wilcox that the Chairman direct the Administrative Staff of the Board to make an investigation as to the possibilities of the Federal Government controlling misrepresentation and exploitation by steamship agencies who are attempting improperly to induce the emigration of foreign born residents. Motion carried unanimously.

On motion duly made and seconded, meeting adjourned at 12:00 M.

George L. Bell

Executive Secretary.
Mr. Smyth reported a progressive increase in unemployment with an acute situation in the industrial sections of Connecticut relieved somewhat by the absorption of skilled workers in the Shipping Industry. Among the problems with which the Employment Service is confronted he reported (1) the disposition of workers who had been trained to perform a single operation to regard themselves as skilled workers and to refuse employment as common laborers; (2) a disposition on the part of men discharged from the cantonments to refuse to return to their homes, to congregate in the large cities, to refuse their old jobs and to insist upon employment in other lines upon a scale of wages which the situation rendered impossible; (3) the refusal of the War Department to demobilize key men whereby in many instances the full resumption of industries in which some of the unemployed might be absorbed was prevented.

It was unanimously resolved that the Chairman and Mr. Smyth be directed to confer with the Secretary of War and to present to him the view of the Board that a uniform policy favoring discharges of key men in industry and agriculture be adopted and enforced throughout the cantonments.
II. In connection with the general employment situation Mr. Frame reported that strikes had been caused in New York by the attempts of certain small business houses to increase hours and reduce pay and also that in one instance one of the larger firms had succeeded in employing laborers sent to it by the Employment Service at 30¢ an hour as against the heretofore prevailing rate of 45¢.

III. Mr. Diamond reported that a critical situation was being created in the coal industry by the Railroad Administration which was compelling the mines to deliver coal to it at a price below the cost of production as ascertained by the Federal Trades Commission. He summarized the situation as follows: The railroads absorb about 1/3 of the bituminous coal produced in the country. Through the control of coal cars the Administration is practically in a position to dictate the terms at which coal shall be delivered to it. It has exercised this power to compel the delivery at an arbitrary price below the cost of production. These facts were presented to the Fuel Administration by the Executive Committee of the National Coal Association representing 80% of producers of bituminous coal and has been the subject of protest also by representatives of the coal miners. The Fuel Administrator has investigated and is satisfied that the complaint is well founded and is endeavoring to persuade the Railroad Administration to abandon the policy. Unless the policy is abandoned there will result either an attempt to reduce wages which will probably result in a strike and the shutting down of mines, or a large increase in the price charged to the general consuming public.

It was unanimously resolved that the Chairman be authorized
to make such investigations as he might deem appropriate and to report at the next meeting of the Board in order that the Board might make appropriate recommendations to the Railroad Administration and take such other steps as might be deemed advisable to procure a reversal of this policy, with power in the interval to take such steps to that end as he might deem appropriate.

IV. The Chairman reported that pursuant to the resolution adopted at the meeting of January 3, 1919, he had submitted to the Acting Secretary of State the report on the probable emigration of foreign born residents of the United States to the Balkans and that the Acting Secretary had announced his intention of forwarding the report to the peace mission.

V. Mr. Frazee expressed views upon the probability of an influx of women immigrants and it was resolved that the Chairman should suggest to the State Department the advisability of directing the consular service to seek information on the subject.

On motion duly made and seconded the meeting adjourned at 12 N.

HOWARD S. GAMS,
Secretary Pro-tem.
WAR LABOR POLICIES BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 17, 1919.

Present: Miss Anderson
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Ehrman
Mr. Smyth
Mr. Wilcox
Mr. O'Brien
Mr. Bell, Executive Secretary.

I. The Executive Secretary stated that the Chairman had been called to New York on urgent government business and could not be present at the meeting.

II. Mr. Smyth presented a chart of the labor situation and, after discussion, it was the sense of the meeting that the Chairman of the Board should be directed to confer with the Secretary of War with regard to making changes in the demobilization plans in order that more emphasis shall be placed on Order 77 of the War Department.

It was also the sense of the meeting that the Chairman should urge upon the Chairman of the Council of National Defense that the Council make a study of the situation in all industries and encourage and aid in re-establishing the industries on a peace basis.

III. Mr. Diamond reported that the Railroad Administration had agreed to cease the practice of forcing the sale of coal at less than prevailing market prices and that therefore this matter need not be further considered by the Board for the present.

On motion duly made and seconded the meeting was adjourned at 11:15 A. M.

George L. Bell, Executive Secretary.
WAR LABOR POLICIES BOARD

MINUTES OF MEETING

January 24, 1919.

Present: Mr. Frankfurter, Chairman
Mr. Diamond
Mr. Ehrman
Mr. Howe
Miss Van Kleek
Mr. Wilcox
Mr. Gans
Mr. O’Brien
Mr. Gaus, Acting Secretary.

1. Mr. Frankfurter presented the labor situation in the needle trades in New York City and outlined the settlement of the garment workers' strike.

2. A general discussion of the present labor situation facing the various departments and the necessity for unanimous consideration and action was held.

3. It was the sense of the meeting that the Chairman invite Secretary Morrison of the American Federation of Labor to be present at the next meeting of the board to present the International program of the Federation.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 P. M.

John M. Gaus,

Acting Secretary.
MEMORANDUM FOR DISCUSSION AT THE JOINT MEETING
OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
OF THE UNITED STATES AND THE WAR LABOR POLICIES
BOARD.

July 1918.

1. It is proposed that the discussion of the following points be taken up
not in the spirit of representatives of groups coming together for
negotiation, but in the spirit of individuals meeting as individual
citizens to talk over with one another certain problems facing the
nation. It is proposed that we do not today attempt to find a solution
for all these problems but that, after getting the problems thus before
us, we adjourn with the understanding that we have individually been
commissioned to work out a solution for the nation. We shall return,
with certain powers delegated to us by our respective organizations,
on, to compare notes on our respective solutions and
to see if we can arrive at some solution which seems to all of us the
best one we can now work out.

2. Is it necessary to have permanent, continuing boards in view of the fact
that interpretation, explanation, administration and control of wage and
other decision is a day to day task?

3. If it is decided that there must be permanent continuing boards, should
these matters be left to the board?
   (a) The determination of wage rates and working conditions.
   (b) The determination whether the standards fixed should be nation-wide
or should be by districts, and if by districts what territory should
be included in each district?
   (c) The determination of the appropriate differentials, if any, between
building trades and metal trades; and between shipyard workers and
outside workers.
   (d) The determination of the application of the eight-hour day.

4. What should be the composition of these boards?
   (a) Is it necessary to have a representative of employers on the building
trades board?
   (b) Is it necessary to have a representative of employers on the metal
trades board in case this metal trades board assumes jurisdiction
only over firms having government contracts?
   (c) Is it necessary to have an employer on the metal trades board in case
this board assumes jurisdiction over firms not engaged in government
work?
(d) In the case of both the metal trades board and the building trades board, what general principles should guide in determining the size of the board?

5. What do we mean by standardization of rates and working conditions?

(a) Does it mean a standard which will make allowance for different local conditions?

(b) Does it mean a standard which will permit individuals now receiving more than the standard to continue to receive this excess amount?

(c) Does it mean a maximum as well as a minimum rate?

(d) Does it mean a definitely fixed rate which may be exceeded to the amount of \( x \) per cent in the case of \( y \) per cent of the men is given occupations in the plants?

And is the whole matter of what is meant by standardization one which should be left to the board to determine?

6. In the case of the shipyard adjustment, control and execution have been relatively simple because the Emergency Fleet Corporation has agreed to foot the bills involved in increased wage costs. How can control and enforcement be exercised outside the shipyards?

(a) Can it be done by the insertion of reimbursement clauses in new contracts with an extension of the same to sub-contracts?

(i) Will the production departments of the government be able to do this with their present appropriations?

(ii) Can new appropriations be secured for this purpose?

(iii) Will contractors be willing to take such contracts when they will lose on their commercial business by so doing?

(b) Whatever may be the case in new contracts, how can there be enforcement in the case of contracts already existing?

(i) Would the production departments be able to meet the increased cost out of their present appropriations?

(ii) Can new appropriations be secured for this purpose?

(iii) Even if funds are available or can be made available, will the comptrollers' decisions permit the funds to be used in this way?
(c) Since so much depends upon interpretation and enforcement, what is the machinery which should be set up either in individual plants or in districts which will meet the situation. Note in this connection that the machinery of the Shipbuilding Labor Adjustment Board will require elaboration and expansion to cope with the situation even in the relatively simple case.

7. How is it to be determined what board has jurisdiction in a given case? For example, who will fix the rate of a machinist in a textile mill? Perhaps another way of asking this question is to ask whether the boards should be industrial boards, plant boards, craft boards, or boards on some other basis.

8. In the case of the metal trades board, if such a board is to be established.

(a) Would it be feasible to extend the jurisdiction of the Shipbuilding Labor Adjustment Board to government contracts in which metal trades predominate and then have an outside metal trades adjustment board which would deal with sub-contracts and with firms doing a commercial business?

(b) Would it be feasible to extend the jurisdiction of the Shipbuilding Labor Adjustment Board to government contracts in the metal trades and stop at that point?

(c) Would it be feasible to have a shipbuilding labor adjustment board and a metal trades board with the same chairman in order to secure uniformity of action with an arrangement by which the two boards were to be fused into one as soon as powers of enforcement could be made as extensive as the jurisdiction involved?
EXHIBITS

Exhibit A  Government Standards.

Order No. 13 of the Chief of Ordnance and the Quartermaster General

Standards of the War Labor Board.

Exhibit B  Legislation

Employment of women of all ages prohibited.

Employment of girls under 21 years prohibited.

Exhibit C  Messenger and street car service.

New York Messenger Law

Rulings of Industrial Commission of Wisconsin on employment of women by street car companies.

Presentment of Kings County Grand Jury.
New York June, 1918.


Exhibit D  Employment of older men.
Some recent examples.
Exhibit A.

Government Standards.

The Official Bulletin - Wednesday, Nov. 21, 1918.

The following is a summary of General Orders, No. 13, issued by the Chief of Ordnance November 15, 1917. A similar order has been issued by the Quartermaster General.

While circumstances are not such as to render appropriate the issuance of definite orders upon his subject at the present time, the following suggestions are commended to the careful consideration of arsenal commanders and manufacturers executing orders for this department:

In view of the urgent necessity for a prompt increase in the volume of production of practically every article required for the conduct of the war, vigilance is demanded of all those in any way associated with industry, lest the safeguards with which the people of this country have sought to protect labor should be unwisely and unnecessarily broken down.

Safeguards of Efficiency.

It is a fair assumption that for the most part these safeguards are the mechanisms of efficiency. Industrial history proves that reasonable hours, fair working conditions, and a proper wage scale are essential to high production. During the war every attempt should be made to conserve in every possible way all of our achievements in the way of social betterment.

In the preparation of the following memorandum no effort has been made to establish, or even to suggest, definite rules of conduct. The memorandum presents what may be considered a fair, if tentative basis of action.
The department wishes to be assured that schedules of hours obviously excessive or wage scales distinctly unfair or working conditions such as should not be tolerated will certainly be brought to its attention.

V. STANDARDS FOR EMPLOYMENT OF WOMEN.

1. Hours of labor.- Existing legal standards should be rigidly maintained, and even where the law permits a 9 or 10 hour day, effort should be made to restrict the work of women to 8 hours.

2. Prohibition of night work.- The employment of women on night shifts should be prevented as a necessary protection, morally and physically.

3. Rest periods.- No women should be employed for a longer period than 4-1/2 hours without a break for a meal, and a recess of 10 minutes should be allowed in the middle of each working period.

4. Time for meals.- At least 30 minutes should be allowed for a meal, and this time should be lengthened to 45 minutes or an hour if the working day exceeds 8 hours.

5. Place for meals.- Meals should not be eaten in the workroom.

6. Saturday half holiday.- The Saturday half holiday should be considered an absolute essential for women under all conditions.

7. Seats.- For women who sit at their work, seats with backs should be provided, unless the occupation renders this impossible. For women who stand at work, seats should be available and their use permitted at regular intervals.

8. Lifting weights.- No woman should be required to lift repeatedly more than 25 pounds in any single load.

9. Replacement of men by women.- When it is necessary to employ women in work hitherto done by men, care should be taken to make sure that the task is adapted to the strength of women. The standards of wages hitherto prevailing for men in the process should not be lowered where women render equivalent service. The hours for women engaged in such processes, of course, should not be longer than those formerly worked by men.

10. Tenement-house work.- No work shall be given out to be done in rooms used for living purposes or in rooms directly connected with living rooms in any dwelling or tenement.
I. HOURS OF LABOR.

2. Overtime.— The theory under which we pay "time and a half" for overtime is a tacit recognition that it is usually unnecessary and always undesirable to have overtime. The excess payment is a penalty and intended to act as a deterrent. There is no industrial abuse which needs closer watching in time of war.

6. Holidays.— The observance of national and local holidays will give opportunity for rest and relaxation which tend to make production more satisfactory.

7. One day of rest in seven.— One day of rest in seven should be a universal and invariable rule.

II. STANDARDS IN WORKROOMS.

1. Protection against hazards and provisions for comfort and sanitation.— Existing legal standards to prevent danger from fire, accident, occupational diseases, or other hazards, and to provide good light, adequate ventilation, sufficient heat, and proper sanitation should be observed as minimum requirements.

2. Location of toilets.— All toilets should be sanitary and readily accessible.

3. Extreme temperatures.— Those processes in which workers are exposed to excessive heat — that is, over 80°; or excessive cold; that is, under 50° — should be carefully supervised so as to render the temperature conditions as nearly normal as possible. When extreme temperatures are essential workers should not only be properly clothed but avoid sudden changes.

4. Lights.— If any light is at the level of the worker's eyes it should be so shaded that its rays will not directly strike the eyes.

III. Wages.

1. Wage Standards.— Standards already established in the industry and in the locality should not be lowered. The minimum wage rates should be made in proper relation to the cost of living, and in fixing them it should be taken into consideration that the prices of necessities of life have shown great increases.