

**A Look at Labor**  
**'Going Rates of Pay'**

By A. C. Tuohy

The American Telephone and Telegraph Company and all its filiates throughout the country have consistently refused to grant their employees any new wage increases for 1948. It is likely that the telephone unions will not gain any of their wage demands. Nor will they repeat the unsuccessful strike of 1947.

The telephone companies uniformly have made two arguments against granting a new wage increase. They say (1) the cost of living has not gone up sufficiently to justify an increase, and (2) they are paying the "going rates" anyway.

**THE FIRST ARGUMENT** does not hold much weight for the average housewife who can speak bitterly on the cost of living. Nor can the argument stand up against the latest figures which show our cost of living to be the highest ever.

Nor can the telephone companies ignore the fact that the large corporations, including U. S. Steel, General Motors, and General Electric, have already granted increases based mainly on the increased cost of living. But it is the second argument which deserves great consideration.

**"THE GOING RATES"** of pay is a new concept. It was developed during the war. It was the result of wartime government policy which froze wages at their 1942 levels.

In 1942 many employees working for the same and different employers received different rates of pay. A man might earn \$40 a week and another \$30 for doing the same work. To correct these inequities, the National War Labor Board studied wages in particular areas and established "going rates of pay," i. e., rates which ordinarily were paid to employees for doing a particular type of work in a definite area.

**THESE RATES OF PAY** were never the highest rates. The War Labor Board in arriving at these rates included companies, shops and offices which paid poorly because they themselves were poor.

The poor wages paid by some employers lowered the going

rates. But they were the highest rates of pay possible under wartime wage stabilization.

The telephone companies now want to stick to the idea of the "going rates." The reason for their preference is obvious. The "going rates" are now becoming the lowest rates. In time of rising prices wages never keep pace with prices. Going rates, therefore, will never reflect the needs of employees.

**POPE PIUS XI** used three criteria in determining the adequacy of a salary or wage. The needs of the individual and family, (2) the condition of the business, and (3) the requirements of the common good.

The A. T. & T. thus far has refused to consider the cost of living factor. It cannot claim that it is financially unable to withstand such increases. Nor has it said that such increases are bad for the country. It merely has affirmed its decision not to grant increases. And that is that.

**OF COURSE**, the telephone unions are not as strong as the coal miners, the steel or the automobile workers. Henry Ford would not dare look upon the UAW as lightly as the A. T. & T. looks upon the telephone unions. Part of the reason for the obduracy of the A. T. & T. in present negotiations, and in past ones too, is its refusal to allow the unions to gain credit for any economic advance made by telephone employees. It is time for these unions to recognize this fact.

**K. of C. Plans Excursion**

New York, N. C.—An excursion to Houston, Texas, scene of the 66th annual meeting of the Supreme Council of the Knights of Columbus, August 17 to 19 has been arranged by the New York chapter of the fraternal organization. It has been announced here. The trip includes a stop in New Orleans and an optional extension of eight days in Mexico.

**'If Freedom Fail'**

**AFL Unionists Hear Cardinal's Plea For Labor and Capital Cooperation**

**Address of His Eminence, Francis Cardinal Spellman, Archbishop of New York, at the opening of the eighty-fifth annual convention of the New York State Federation of Labor, Hotel Commodore, Tuesday, August 2, 1948.**

I come before you today a minister of God and a son of the soil of America, begotten from the loins of sons of toil that have helped make our country great. I come to call not alone upon you, citizens of our own New York State, but upon every loyal citizen of every State within our nation to unite in solving a most vital problem, a cause which in its consequences affects us all—the relationship between Capital and Labor, the cause of Liberty and Justice, the cause of America itself.

Fortified by my feeling that you believe in my love of God and of my country, I come to ask that with friendly hearts and open minds you ponder my reflections founded on the sacred principles of my priesthood and my patriotism, and then to do what the soul of each man counsels him to do.

If each man to his own self be true, "it must follow as the night the day," he cannot then be false to any man. Thus will he live faithful to God and true to his neighbor, publicly avowing by his words and his works an eternal enmity to godless tyranny and evil and an everlasting loyalty to justice and democracy.

The burden and solution of the problem of unity and equity between Labor and Capital belong jointly to us all. It matters not where we live, or what position rich or poor, Negro or White, Protestant, Jew or Catholic, employer or employee, by our works we must prove our faith in God, our country and our fellowman.

And I am confident that the majority of Americans have the determination, jealously to guard their country, their neighbors and themselves against the wily power of foreign influence which history and experience prove is the most fearsome foe of republican government.

I am confident that they have the determination to go forward together, to live and work together for the welfare and peace of their selves and their countrymen, a determination which I believe to be all important to the survival of each and every American and to the unity and survival of democratic America itself.

**CITIZENS BY BIRTH** or choice of a common country, we have in war and in peace fought together in common causes against common dangers, shared common sorrows and sufferings, triumphed in common successes, and the independence of liberty which we now possess are the works of combined councils and united efforts, resulting in benefits to all. This unity is the source of our strength, the core of our liberty, the foundation of our peaceful living. It is therefore a great and grave mistake to assure that any one class of Americans is naturally and inevitably hostile to any other class, that the wealthy and the workingman, employer and employee are destined to live in mutual conflict.

This morning I pray Almighty God, as every morning of my priestly life I have prayed, that every man living upon American soil, sharing American freedom, will forever be loyal to her democratic government founded upon the principles of faith in God and reason and justice. And what is this American democracy for scraps, which, over the youthful span of our nation's life, millions of our

sons have fought and died to preserve and protect? On the political side we all know the answer—by instinct perhaps, rather than by definition.

We have learned and lived the magnificent phrases that symbolize and enshrine democracy's prime principles: "The Bill of Rights"; a government of laws, not of men; Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness; Government of the People, by the People, for the People.

Yes, of political democracy, we have full and familiar concept. But what about economic democracy? Totalitarianism have their plan and their own purpose in economic matters, and a very great segment of the human race is ruled in accordance with their theory and practice that economic advance and social welfare can be had only at the sacrifice of freedom. America denies this theory! For what avail the plough or the sword, or life, if freedom fail?

**DOWN THROUGH** the years America has lived to give life to all who would deny that in unity and justice for all reside the strength, wealth and peace of our United States and all its varied peoples, who, living and working as one, have made and kept our country one. And upon our continued productive activity and efficiency depend the maintenance and the improvement of our standards of living. But there can be no mutually profitable productive activity without cooperation between employer and employee—the cooperation motivated by the social and spiritual incentive of justice, based on the great commandment of the Divine Law: to do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

As Capital and Labor recognize and organize in accordance with this God-inspired principle, all Americans will benefit hundredfold in a rapid march of material progress in providing food and shelter for every citizen; to maintain him in health and give him opportunities for the education of his children, and finally give to him the assurance that the blessing of children will not bring with it the hardships of poverty. These are each citizen's rights—all these, and freedom too!

But think you man can attain these rights without fulfilling his corresponding duties to the will of God and to society. I tell you no! Show me a man who reveres and follows God's way and I will show you the man who respects his fellowmen and strives to do them service. And I beg of all men to seek guidance of God for the good of themselves and their fellow-workers.

The man who listens to God is inflamed of heart and enlightened of mind for the Lord teaches knowledge without confusion and he who listens quickly becomes wise. Man is ensnared with many passions, held fast by many fears, worn with many burdens, tormented with want. He yearns to be freed from the bondage of these cares and trials, secure in liberty and peace. But if he is to enjoy freedom's gifts, first he must learn to obey God's laws and strive to help his neighbor—because it is in God Himself that our rights and duties and our peace and our freedom are founded, for, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is Liberty."

Is it not a satisfying feeling for man to look upon the eighty, many-headed works of labor and industry lofty cathedrals which, over the youthful span of our nation's life, millions of our



CARDINAL SPELLMAN

fort, sturdy ships, trains and automobiles, airplanes built to race the sun and carry man from one clime to another—is it not good to look upon all these and to know that employer and employee—engineers, architects, tradesmen, men of every profession—laborers all-shared their united efforts, and insofar as is humanly possible, have kept pace from God's own handwork to make man's life livable, peaceful and prosperous. God alone can do anything, but men to build a peaceful, prosperous world must enlist God's help and unite their efforts with one another's.

**AMERICA'S PROSPERITY** and happiness can be attained only through the full cooperation between Labor and Capital with equal employment and fair wages. Yet millions of people are being taught—and tricked into believing—that like manna from Heaven.

I beg these people who are being thus deceived that they cease to be terrified, stunned or confused by Communist or Communist-inspired agitators who, with sharp sickle-strokes seek to murder democracy, strifle free enterprise and destroy world peace. I beg of them that with firm resolve and the might of free democratic citizens they unite in the common cause of our safety and survival of our country and the welfare of one another.

I am confident that all true Americans believe with me and stand ready to live by the pure democratic credo: that property should be the servant and not the master of the nation, and that every man born of woman should have a fair chance to make of himself all that in him lies to reach the highest point to which his capacities can carry him, and to receive for himself and his family substantially what he has earned.

A nation that gives to each of its citizens equal chances to earn his own and his family's keep has its right to receive from each of its citizens the highest service of which he is capable. And any man or group of men who does not give full service for full pay contributes to the price of inflation, increases prices for his neighbor and himself, jeopardizes economic stability and invites corrupt Communist disruption.

The right to regulate the use of wealth in the public interest is universally admitted. But in the essential interest of the common good for the common man we must also admit the right to regulate the terms and conditions of labor, and in the interests of

the working man himself we need set our faces like flint against mob-violence just as against corporate greed; against the lawlessness of workers, just as much as against the lawlessness of employers, remembering always that each must render justice to the other.

Democratic governments are established not for the aggrandizement of particular individuals or special groups, but for the general good of all citizens, and I contend that it is the duty of every loyal American to obey the nation's constitution and its laws, until through just democratic processes, they are amended or repealed. Obedience should be each citizen's principle and practice, since disobedience to a law because a man thinks the law is bad might be used to justify another man in the disobedience of a good law.

This principle should hold true in all organizations set up within the framework of our democratic nation. But, I believe with the mighty poet Milton who inspired the deathless dream of Washington, Jefferson and Lincoln, that a disposition to controversy in a nation is no proof of sedition or degeneracy if in controversies which affect countless people, leaders exert every lawful means and pursue every reasonable avenue to effect peaceful decisions and just settlements.

Down through the years, as Labor has struggled for its rights, an effective economic weapon has been evolved—the strike weapon—recognized in this and many other nations of free men, as lawful. However, this powerful legal, economic weapon should be used less frequently as Capital and Labor continue to work out their problems and differences in mutual respect and enlightened understanding, following the principles of collective bargaining which jointly they have adopted for the well-being of all parties.

In fair collective bargaining rests America's greatest hope for future peaceful labor relations, but in its processes men must guard themselves against selfish, domineering minority groups of pose to our democratic form of government, groups that refuse to solve their problems through this just device and use strikes as smokescreens to wage political war against America.

In no business nor profession nor craft nor institution in America is there room for any man with a divided allegiance. Nor can we Americans afford to blind ourselves to the actual conflict which faces us today. The issue is obvious and we must solve it or disintegrate.

The hope of all mankind rests with us, and if it should be proven that our example of equitable settling problems between Capital and Labor through fair collective bargaining has become an argument against the expert, and if we strike ourselves out of prosperity and peace, the knell of liberty and civilization would be sounded throughout the earth.

As I bring to a close these reflections for which I have begged your thoughtful and prayerful attention, may I express my personal and my official gratitude to the leaders and members of the Building Trades Union of New York City and of Westchester County with whom I have had continuous close and cordial contacts.

When employment was slow and builders were hesitant in May of 1947, I promised to try to swim against the tide and to expend twenty-five million dollars for new construction in the Archdiocese of New York. In April of

1948, I was pleased to announce publicly that this promise had been fulfilled. At the time I made this commitment, the Building Trades Councils of New York City and of Westchester County pledged—

"Not to interrupt the work by stoppages due to disputes between unions or between union and employer."

"To give a day's work for a day's pay. And"

"To supply sufficient mechanics to carry forward the work."

Fortified with those pledges, I authorized work to commence on a number of projects chief of which was a high school for boys in White Plains, New York, dedicated to Archbishop Stepinac, the persecuted victim of godless tyrants in Communist-conquered Yugoslavia.

**AND I AM HAPPY** and proud today to testify to Labor's complete fulfillment of its pledges, and that on the 12th of next month, in record-breaking construction time, the Archbishop Stepinac High School, built at a cost of four million-two-hundred-thousand dollars, will open its doors for thirteen hundred and sixty boys. I thank also the architects and builders of this school whose work has won first prize in a nationwide competition for America's best designed high school.

In New York City we are building an addition to St. Vincent's Hospital, dedicated to the memory of the late beloved Governor Alfred E. Smith. As part of the work, we are completely renovating the older portions of the hospital, while the full routine of the care of the sick is maintained. This involves many difficulties for the workmen, the hospital staff and the patients. The successful solving of all such difficulties is attested by the courtesy and efficiency of the workmen and their care for the comfort of the patients. To those men also, I express my heart's gratitude.

Yet, in contradiction to this proven program achieved only because all of us have worked in complete "harmonious agreement," I quote William Z. Foster who said:

"A program based on class peace would be a first class disaster to the workers and the people generally, as well as to our party. . . . The aims of the trade union struggle cannot be achieved by a harmonious agreement between Labor and Capital."

That is the Communist credo. It is not mine. And I know it is not yours, nor can it ever be the credo of any patriotic American! But I do here repeat the credo for Capital and Labor which is mine, and I believe and pray will be your credo and the credo of every loyal citizen for the security, survival and peace of our America.

I believe in a system of government which encourages Labor and Capital to function freely under God, giving full measure of deed and devotion for the common good of the common man in loyal, concerted service to our common country! This, I believe, taking God as my inspiration and God's laws as my guide.

Six days God labored for man, dividing the light and the darkness, studying the skies with sun and stars, stocking the forests with birds and beasts, sowing the plains with fertile seed, storing ore and oil in the earth. Then did God create man to His own image and likeness, and blessed him.

But in disobedience and defiance man sinned God. Yet did a forgiving, merciful God bestow upon His only Son in humanity, investing His only Son in humanity, making the world livable and life lovable for man's own end.

his children's sake. In His great goodness, God quickened the earth with riches for man's use, not for his sake, for his rise, not for his fall, and Labor and Capital can reap the rewards of God's goodness only if Labor unselfishly produces with the skills with which God has blessed him, and if Capital unselfishly distributes the produce of Labor for all men's welfare.

Labor has the right and duty to expand its service and usefulness to the social body and to progress through orderly processes. Capital too has its right and duty to increase its usefulness to society through free enterprise, fair competition, and reasonable profits. Thus may Labor and Capital together glorify God in this fair and beautiful world, fulfilling their duty to man, their duty to God, and their duty to "revere man's needy estate."

God has gifted man with brain and brawn, with the power to rich earth and the fruits thereof, opening before him widening avenues for service to all human kind. Possessed of these gifts, it is the sacred duty of Labor and Capital, faithfully to remain the repository and stronghold of God's trust, rendering unselfish service to society—service which can prosper and endure only if steady production and fulsome distribution.

By God's decree man labors for bread by the sweat of his brow, tilling fields and tending flocks, mending machines and building homes. Thus by simple obedience to God and honest work with his neighbor, man himself is saved, enriched and ennobled.

Christ, Who is God, sanctified Labor by toiling as a carpenter and it is Labor's duty to keep toll blessed, giving unbounded service for the happiness and prosperity of man as an avowal of his faith and trust in God. So too did Christ sanctify Capital, by calling laborers to work in His vineyard, paying to them their just hire. Shareholders with Labor, if is Capital's duty to work for man's happiness and prosperity, for no man should be slave nor master to another, but each should be servant to God and helpful to his neighbor.

If Labor and Capital are to thrive and survive, they must serve as members of one social body, with a common purpose and diversity of functions, united in the strong bond of service for the good of mankind, inspired by reverence and love of God—working together so that God's will on earth as it is done in heaven. For Labor and Capital are destined to maintain standards of living harmonious with God's will, and only thus shall posterity glean the legacy of God's glory.

God in His infinite wisdom, mercy and justice implements His plans for man's welfare through human effort, and Labor and Capital are His special instruments impelled by God's guiding hand to lead and to help man on the Road to Peace.

All this I believe, taking God as my model, for the law of His life is the law of love.

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