

Civil Rights, Revision of Wage Law Seen as Major Battles Facing Congress

By United Press International
Washington - Civil rights, revision of the federal minimum wage law, and federal aid for school construction shaped up Saturday as major battles of the election-year Congress which convenes Wednesday.

Civil rights will pit the north against the south; minimum wage will pit labor against business; and the Eisenhower administration and the Democrats will lock horns in an all-out struggle over the federal government's role in meeting the national classroom shortage.

Lawmakers, anxious to avoid another major controversy in an election year, were hoping that labor and steel management will settle their differences, thereby avoiding demands on Congress for drastic strike legislation.

Midway in the session, Democrats are expected to launch a drive for major liberalization of the Social Security program. Congress has a habit of doing something for the old folks around election time. There's no sign this year it is going to be any different.

No Exuberance

Rank-and-file Democrats assembling for the second session of the 86th Congress are displaying none of the cocky exuberance with which they greeted the first session a year ago. They were then fresh from their 1958 election sweep.

Now, with the national economy booming and the cold war showing signs of thawing under Eisenhower management, Republicans are claiming credit for peace and prosperity. And Democrats

are no longer so confident their party will have the issues with which it can ride to the White House in November. Compounding the Democrats' difficulty in jockeying for a political advantage is (1) four senators are seeking the Democratic presidential nomination and (2) the session is expected to be the shortest in eight years. Congress wants to quit before the national political conventions start July 11.

Big Issues to Face

In the interim it will face these big issues: Civil rights - The Senate has agreed to begin consideration of this controversial topic Feb. 15. A house bill is pigeonholed in the conservative-dominated rules committee. Northern Democrats fear they'll have to resort to a discharge petition to get it to the floor. Congress is expected to enact some kind of moderate program but only after a time-consuming battle. And in the end the best the northern Democrats can hope for is a measure patterned after that recommended last year by President Eisenhower. This would merely neutralize the issue for the election campaign.

School Construction

A Democratic plan to provide one billion dollars in federal grants over the next two years was pending in the Senate when Congress adjourned last September. Democrats are confident they can push it through the Senate early this year but concede they'll have a tough time winning House approval. In any event, the bill would face an almost certain veto. Largely for budgetary reasons, the Democratic plan is opposed by the President. He recommended instead a "pay-later" bond plan which has evoked little enthusiasm among either Democrats or Republicans.

Minimum wage - This probably will provide a replay of the bitter lobbying battle between labor and business which marked passage last year of the labor reform bill. Organized labor, which feels it has nothing yet to show for helping to elect Democrats to Congress, wants the \$1.00 per

hour minimum wage boosted to \$1.25 and the program extended to cover millions of additional workers. Pro-labor Democrats concede privately they'll have to settle for much less and will have a fight on their hands getting even that.

Wants Ceiling Removed

Eisenhower wants the 4 1/2 per cent ceiling removed from the interest the government can offer on its new marketable bonds. He feels this is even more urgent now than last summer when he termed it the most important issue before Congress.

Organized labor's chief goal is enactment of federal standards that would require many states to parcel out more generous unemployment checks to the jobless.

As one pro-labor Democrat put it: "The short session cuts both ways. It'll help conservatives block measures we want, but it'll make it easier for us to stop the interest rate boost the conservatives want."

Other issues confronting Congress: Another Stalemate - Farm surpluses - Another

stalemate is in prospect, with legislation on which Congress can agree likely to be vetoed. The administration wants price supports lowered. Democratic farm leaders favor tighter production controls but want supports raised to offset the resultant drop in farm income.

Housing - Monetary curbs imposed by the federal reserve board to combat inflation have hit the housing industry hardest by boosting interest rates on new mortgages, thereby making it more difficult to sell new housing. Homebuilders, with backing from key Democrats, hope to persuade Congress to pump hundreds of millions of dollars of treasury funds into the mortgage market. The administration is opposed to this.

Economically depressed areas - A Senate-passed bill to aid communities suffering chronic unemployment is pending before the House rules committee. But with the upturn in the economy the drive for the legislation has lost some of its steam. Supporters fear it may be jettisoned.

Police in Morocco Sure Body That of U.S. Girl

Tangier - (UPI) - Moroccan police are convinced that the murdered girl found in a forest near here over two weeks ago is a missing American, Barbara Helana Mueller of New York, a top police source said here Saturday.

The high police official told the UPI he was sure the case would be cleaned up within the next three or four days.

At the same time he shrugged off reports that the decomposed body of a strangled and mutilated girl found in the Kabiria forest Dec. 13 was that of another missing American girl, Elizabeth Harriet Benton, of Ogdensburg, N. Y.

Awaiting Report - "All we are awaiting now," the official said, "is a report from our laboratories which are matching the dead girl's

hair with some we found in her possession.

"But we have much more than just the hair to prove the dead girl is Barbara Mueller," he added. He mentioned clothing recovered from the Tangier hotel in which she had been living.

"And on Monday," he said, "we will be able to talk for the first time with the Englishman in the hospital. We feel that once he has made a statement, the case will become clear."

This was a reference to William Edward Moore, 26, who is being held in connection with the discovery of the body.

Attempted Suicide - Moore attempted suicide after being picked up by police.

"The police will be allowed to talk to Moore by the doctors this coming Monday," the police source said. "We also have a number of clues directly linked with the missing Mueller girl."

Until Moore has made a statement, however, the case cannot officially be made public nor could a positive identification of the dead girl be given out, the source said.

He indicated that among other items, a camera known to have belonged to Miss Mueller was found in Moore's possession.

Not Benton Girl

The police official gave no backing to reports which claimed the murdered girl might be the Benton girl, who disappeared from the yacht "raider" some time after it touched Casablanca on its way to the Canary Islands.

He said the police had checked out the Benton girl's whereabouts, and that though they had no indication as to where she was, they were confident she was not the girl found in the Kabiria forest.

Some Taxpayers Fail To Report Income

Portland - Many federal income taxpayers fail to report income received during the preceding year that is not reported on their W-2 withholding tax certificates, district director, A. G. Erickson of the internal revenue service, said Saturday.

Income which is often not reported, but should be because it is taxable, includes income from part-time work, dividends, tips or other gratuities, interest on savings accounts, and other sources, Erickson said.

Profits on the sale of real or personal property are subject to special rules and must be reported, he added. There are some dividends and other kinds of income that do not need to be reported, but taxpayers should check their instruction booklet or a tax guide to determine what is and what is not to be reported.

Locomotive to Run At Portland Zoo

Portland - (UPI) - A steam locomotive will run at the Portland Zoo Sunday and thereafter when rail fans request it.

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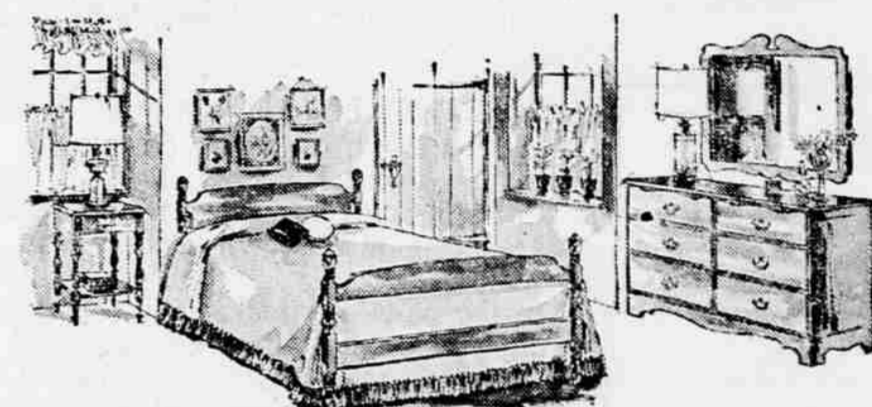
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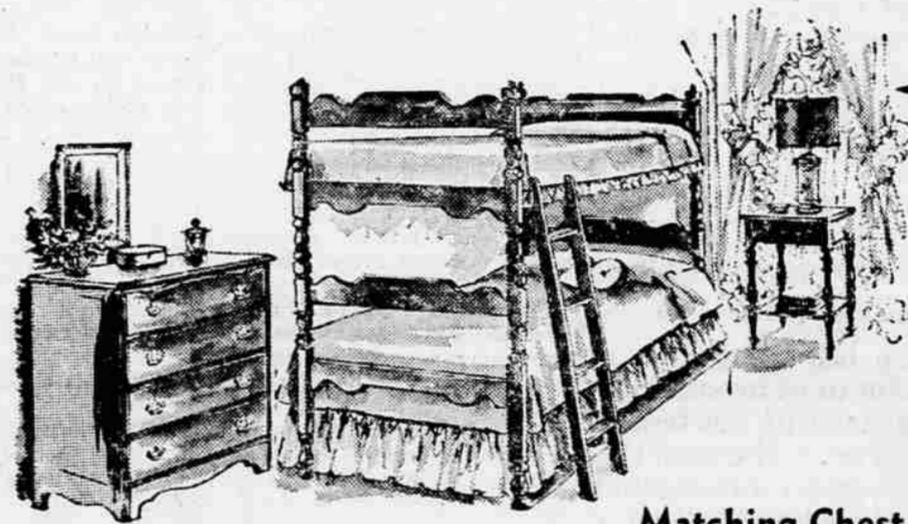
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