



# bulletin

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## HAROLD NEWMAN'S CLOUDY CRYSTAL BALL

"When Britain really ruled the waves--  
(In good Queen Bess's time)  
The House of Peers made no pretence  
To intellectual eminence,  
Or scholarship sublime;  
Yet Britain won her proudest bays  
In good Queen Bess's glorious days!

When Wellington thrashed Bonaparte,  
As every child can tell,  
The House of Peers, throughout the war,  
Did nothing in particular  
And did it very well;  
Yet Britain set the world ablaze  
In good King George's glorious days!

And while the House of Peers withholds  
Its legislative hand,  
And noble statesmen do not itch  
To interfere with matters which  
they do not understand,  
As bright will shine Great Britain's rays  
As in King George's glorious days!"

Gilbert and Sullivan  
"Iolanthe"

"It has not been characteristic of all of the legislation affecting labor relations that Congress has produced, that there has been much intellectual eminence or sublime scholarship. On the contrary, to my mind, from the Railway Labor Act whose absurd structure was designed not by a Frank Lloyd Wright, but a Rube Goldberg, to the recent and to my thinking absurdly complex, NLRA hospital amendment, there is no reason to be especially sanguine about labor legislation that may come forth from Capitol Hill.

"As all my readers now know, there is legislation pending in Congress to provide public employee bargaining rights throughout the country. I have no quarrel with this. The problem is that public employee bargaining and private sector bargaining have intrinsic differences and some of the proposed legislation, like the bill which would simply put public employees under the NLRA, pays no attention to the unique characteristics of the public sector. The various state laws which cover public employees are, of course, different from each other, and as Bob Helsby pointed out in his testimony to the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, the statutes vary widely in their approaches. Pennsylvania, Hawaii, and Alaska permit public employee strikes under certain conditions. Michigan, New York, and Pennsylvania impose arbitration for resolution of some kinds of impasses. We are still in the experimental stage in public employee bargaining and each of the state laws is a laboratory experiment. As the states continue to have more experience, they amend their statutes to improve effectiveness and administration. New York State is a good example. I am not sure what kind of federal legislation will finally come to pass, but standards which are suitable for Delaware, North Dakota, and Mississippi may not fit New York. If the intent of the federal legislation is to insure that states which have not passed public employee bargaining laws would be compelled to provide coverage, then a different kind of approach could be made.



"Arnold Weber proposed earlier this year that the federal government design 'basic rules governing management relations, retain a reserve administrative authority, but permit the states the discretion to employ the basic rules and to experiment with different policies in important substantive areas.' Weber went on to suggest that the federal criteria would guarantee the right to organize and engage in collective bargaining and would include the right to join or not join a union. Further, the standards would define unfair labor practices and establish election procedures. Certainly, any state could and should be expected to be in substantial conformity with these standards. But beyond these broad outlines, the states should be free to structure their own legislation. All those involved in the field of labor relations and particularly those active in the public sector ought to inform their Senators and Representatives in Congress about their points of view on this important matter. Otherwise, I fear me, 'noble statesmen will indeed itch to interfere with matters which they do not understand.'"

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It is with both sorrow and frustration that I must again remind the Panel that if any change results in their status vis-a-vis, public sector neutrality, the PERB office is to be informed in advance. Twice in the past month panel members have accepted advocate positions in the public sector without prior communications. We would like to write in letters of flame across the sky that every panel member has a responsibility to advise the Acting Director of Conciliation in advance that he intends to assume advocate status.

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N.Y.S. Manufacturing Production Worker Average Earnings up to \$180.52 in August, \$14.20 or 8.5% above those in August 1973. A rise in average hourly earnings to \$4.57, an 8.8% increase, overshadowed a 0.1 of an hour drop in the average workweek. (Source: N.Y.S. Department of Labor)

In the United States, the percentage changes in wages and benefits in major collective bargaining settlements for the first nine months of 1974 were:

Wage Rates Alone (1,000 Workers or More)

First-Year Changes		
All Industries		9.6%
Contracts with escalator clauses	9.4%	
Contracts without escalator clauses	10.0	
Annual Rate of Change Over Life of Contract		
All Industries		7.2
Contracts with escalator clauses	5.9	
Contracts without escalator clauses	8.9	

Wages and Benefits Combined (5,000 Workers or More)

First-Year Changes		
All Industries		10.1
Contracts with escalator clauses	9.7	
Contracts without escalator clauses	10.9	