

## Labor Line Stiffened

By WILLIAM J. EATON

WASHINGTON — The Johnson Administration is taking a tougher line with the powerful AFL-CIO building trades unions in an effort to hold down increases in labor costs and open up more craftsmen's jobs for Negroes.

Secretary of Labor W. Willard Wirtz has been assigned the key role of "persuader" in a move to accomplish the changes without a public slugfest.

Strong opposition to any federal formulas for wage restraint of admission of Negro apprentices has developed among national leaders of the 18 construction unions in the big labor federation.

The first target is the king-size wage-benefit packages now being obtained by building trades negotiators in major settlements. They averaged 4.1 per cent in 1965 — far above the administration's non-inflationary guideline of 3.2 per cent — and threaten to go even higher this year.

New Jersey contractors recently protested that the operating engineers demanded — and got — a 65 cent hourly pay increase in the first year of a new contract.

Union craftsmen can hardly be counted in the low-wage category. They earn almost \$4.50 an hour, on the average, and pay in some cities like New York is usually \$6 an hour or up.

John Dunlop, chairman of the Harvard Department of Economics who is also chairman of the Construction Industry Joint Conference, has devised a procedure to deal with the situation. He has suggested that local unions be required to submit their demands to a labor-management panel composed of national leaders before a strike could be called.

In its recent report to Congress, the President's Council of Economic Advisors branded prices and wages in construction as "inflationary" and still rising faster than ever.

"Restrictions on entry not only retard the growth of the industry but also have adverse social effects, since they tend to keep Negro youths out of attractive types of employment," the council said.

This form of job-control — limiting the entrants into the craft — has been a staple of building trades unionism since it started at the turn of the century. So

labor leaders are not going to give it up lightly.

But the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is being used against the AFL-CIO construction unions in St. Louis. In a federal court lawsuit, filed in St. Louis, they were accused of halting work on the St. Louis Arch Project because Negro members belonging to an unaffiliated union were hired on the job.

The suit, filed on Feb. 4, is the first of its kind brought under the Fair Employment Practices section of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The law bans discrimination in employment. It permits a suit to be filed where there is an indication of widespread discrimination.

The case involves the construction of a visitor center at the Gateway Arch Park in St. Louis. The arch, a monument built chiefly by the United States Department of the Interior, honors Thomas Jefferson and pioneers who passed through St. Louis on the way to the West.

Workers walked off the project on Jan. 7, when a Negro plumber under contract to the Hoel-Steffen Corp., which was building the center, reported for work with two Negro helpers. They had been hired at the government's insistence.

The defendants in the case are the Building and Construction Trades Council of St. Louis and five of its member locals — pipefitters, electrical workers, sheetmetal workers, plumbers and laborers. The government charged the locals refused to recruit and to accept Negroes on the same basis as whites.

Wirtz also has taken action to tighten non-discrimination requirements in government contracts — including those involving construction of highways, bridges and buildings.

He told heads of 21 agencies to make sure that contractors take affirmative steps to ensure equal employment opportunity before a contract is awarded — a new departure.

The new offensive is sure to be on the minds of the building trades leaders when they assemble in Miami Beach, Fla., for their annual mid-winter meeting this month.

## shes Family Planning

of a patient are that she be married and have had at least one child before seeking help from the state.

An application for participation in the program states its purpose "is to prevent pregnancy, although this result has not been guaranteed." Both husband and wife must sign it. If they are illiterate, they must affirm the application has been read to them.

The state employs local physicians to operate the clinics. They are paid an hourly wage and usually work two hours at a time. The centers are open in the least populous counties once or twice a month, but may be available once or

twice a week in the most populous counties, Dr. Herron said. The doctors see from six to eight patients an hour.

"Most of the doctors are enthusiastic about the centers," Dr. Herron said. "They realize this is something that needs to be done."

The doctors must be especially trained in the use of the coil, he said, and the women who use it are checked once a year. The possibility of it leaving the body inadvertently is slim, he said.

Pulaski County (Little Rock) has three clinics. Others are scattered about the state.

## St. Louis Arch Construction Problem

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Sat, Jan 26, 2019