

DOCUMENTS NOTED

LABOR-MANAGEMENT RELATIONS, Joint Committee on Labor-Management Relations, 80th Cong., 2d Sess. (Sen. Rept. No. 986, 1948).

The Taft-Hartley Act established a joint Congressional Committee on Labor-Management Relations to "conduct a thorough study and investigation of the entire field of labor-management relations, including but not limited to" the means for securing "permanent friendly cooperation between employers and employees" and achieving "greater productivity and higher wages", the internal organization and administration of labor unions, the labor relations policies and practices of employers, the desirability of welfare funds, the methods and procedures of collective bargaining and the "administration and operation of existing Federal laws relating to labor relations." The Committee was required to report not later than March 15, 1948 "the results of its study and investigation together with such recommendations as it may deem advisable" and to make its final report by January 2, 1949.

To the naive it might appear that legislation so drastic and controversial as the Taft-Hartley Act should follow rather than precede such a study. But the naive may now be comforted. The Committee has made its first report; its members are satisfied that they were right in the first place. The majority finds nothing wrong with the Act and recommends no changes; the minority finds the Act all wrong and recommends that it "be repealed."

Three quarters of the majority Report consists of seven "plant study reports." These are sketches of the development and present status of labor relations at the unionized plants of Botany Mills, B. F. Goodrich, George A. Hormel, International Harvester, Murray Corp., R. J. Reynolds Tobacco and the non-union plant of the Lincoln Electric Co. Though neither detailed nor profound, they are interesting. They constitute an appendix which seems to have in no way influenced the Report itself.

The body of the Report is devoted almost exclusively to phases of the "administration and operation" of the Taft-Hartley Act. It makes no attempt at reevaluation. While recognizing that experience and administration in the first six months provides answers to only the barest few of the questions involved, it proceeds to make large and unwarranted claims of beneficial effects—which the minority reproachfully denies—and subtly warns the enforcement agencies that their performance is being watched. Perhaps the first report was required too soon. It is clearly not the result of the "study and investigation" directed by the Act.

H. S.

HOUSING STUDY AND INVESTIGATION, Final Majority Report of the Joint Committee on Housing, pursuant to H. Con. Res. 104, 80th Cong., 2d Sess. (House Rept. No. 1564, 1948).

The Joint Committee has submitted its recommendations (pt. 1) and a mass of statistics on which they are based (pt. 2). Combining previously scattered information in a single piece, the latter volume presents a reasonably complete picture of the housing situation. The picture is still as dismal and staggering as that portrayed in the reports of other Congressional committees and the National Housing Agency two, three and four years ago. The legislative recommendations are substantially those contained in the ill-fated Wagner-Ellender-Taft bill of 1946, with similar advances and similar

deficiencies. Yet however inadequate—and the proposal for public housing is patently so—these recommendations represent a beginning which would be gladly embraced by discouraged proponents of a national housing policy.

PREJUDICE AND PROPERTY, U.S. Department of Justice (Brief Against Racial Covenants Submitted to the U.S. Supreme Court by Tom C. Clark and Philip B. Perlman, Public Affairs Press, 1948).

The Supreme Court has decided unanimously that the enforcement of racial restrictive covenants is unconstitutional. The Justice Department's brief in this litigation has been reprinted in book form with a four page introduction by Wesley McCune, relegation of the footnotes to the back pages and a slight change in the order of presentation. Its excellence, as both brief and book, lies in the clarity of writing and thoroughness of documentation. The exposition proceeds in an orderly step-by-step progression and takes stock directly of opposing arguments; much of the other writing condemning covenant enforcement as unconstitutional requires for its effectiveness readers already sympathetic to that conclusion. The brief ably treats the various legal issues and documents its arguments fully with social and economic as well as legal authorities. Recent Government sources are tapped to portray the housing need of minority groups and the role of restrictive covenants. The brief appears to be the best piece of legal writing on a highly controversial problem.

UNITED STATES PETROLEUM REFINING, WAR AND POSTWAR, U.S. Department of Commerce (Industrial Series No. 73, prepared by Winona Patton, 1947).

A useful and carefully considered analysis of our present refining capacity, against the background of a full study of estimated future demand. The conclusion is that we must increase refining capacity and other capital facilities in the oil industry by a least 20%, and perhaps 30%, during the next few years, even without large military consumption. The Report does not consider the feasibility of concentrating this increase in the independent rather than the major-company sector of the industry. But its study of cost data readily permits such judgments to be made.

E. V. R.

NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION INQUIRY: PUBLIC AID TO AIR TRANSPORTATION, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, U.S. House of Representatives, 80th Cong., 2d Sess. (House Rept. No. 1612, 1948).

This report, part of the continuing National Transportation Inquiry, details the extent of public aid to air transportation and complements the studies of public aid to surface and water carriers by the Federal Coordinator of Transportation and the Bureau of Investigation and Research. Recent data is presented on expenditures for air-mail carriage, airports, airways and aids to aerial navigation; an attempt is made to ascertain the presence of actual elements of subsidy and the justification, economically and politically, for such a program.

TRANSPORTATION IN ALASKA, Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce, U.S. House of Representatives, 80th Cong., 2d Sess. (House Rept. No. 1272, 1948).

A concise but thorough historical review of Alaskan transportation problems with emphasis on the complete interdependency of the system of air, water and land routes which must be maintained and improved if the economy of the Territory is to function at all and if this western rampart is to be adequately defended against armed attack. The great cost of transport facilities, clearly beyond the financial capacity of the Alaskans, must be met by a Federal program. Perhaps the greatest value of the report is in presenting as a whole the problems that have been handled separately and even competitively by various Federal agencies in the past. A distinct transportation authority for Alaska to assure this over-all view is recommended by the committee.

HEARINGS ON THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE PRESIDENT WITH RESPECT TO INFLATION AND H. J. RES. 273 (ECONOMIC STABILIZATION AIDS), and HEARINGS ON S. J. RES. 157, TO PROVIDE FOR THE REGULATION OF CONSUMER CREDIT FOR A TEMPORARY PERIOD, Committee on Banking and Currency, U.S. House of Representatives, 80th Cong., 1st Sess. (1947).

These two volumes include the important debate between Marriner Eccles and several banking spokesmen on the procedure and the potential effectiveness of various monetary and fiscal techniques for controlling inflation, as well as a wealth of material on other aspects of the problem.

E. V. R.