of industry, which has the effect of stunting the growth of the economy. Such wage control destroys the market process of wage determination. It makes bargaining illegal. It rules out the only possible method of finding that market wage which best satisfies both the employee and his employer.[10]

These are some of the reasons why governmental wage control doesn't work. And in a rising market, at least, employees generally seem to understand the value of the flexibility afforded through bargaining. If this lesson can only be retained, so that employers and employees will also recognize the advantages of wage flexibility in a declining market, then it may be truthfully said that the American people have made progress toward the prevention of mass unemployment. All that is necessary is that the employer and the employee cooperate to find a wage which is agreeable to both.

Bargaining Representatives

Any employer or any employee who feels that he is personally unqualified to gauge the conditions of the market owes it to himself to seek the services of a qualified bargaining representative. And a qualified bargaining representative will be one who understands that his job is to find the right wage level—the one which just clears the market without bringing compulsion against a single person.

Bargaining has indeed helped to provide many of the material blessings available to American consumers today. And some of this bargaining has been of a "collective" nature in the sense that one party to the bargain has spoken in behalf of a number of cooperative individuals whose common and unanimous interest is in a specific action not designed to hurt someone else. However, much of what has passed for bargaining in America has not been bargaining at all, but a kind of compulsory collectivism which prefers coercion to voluntary agreement.

Bargaining is not facilitated by a powerful membership organization of competitors, whether they be competing for wages or for profits or for anything else which is scarce enough to have market value. It is a highly risky thing to delegate one's own right to bargain to any representative who pretends that such organizational control of competition is either necessary or desirable. A bargainer is one who cooperates with those who are willing; for that purpose, he needs no power of compulsion. He doesn't need coercive control of competitors. Such controls are the tools of persons who will use force if bargaining doesn't go to suit them. Those who are still free to bargain, and who like it that way, will think carefully before placing in the hands of others those personal rights and responsibilities which might be perverted into weapons of coercion.[11]