

LABOR ACTION AWAITED: 7

# Kling Executive Gives Firm's Stand On Strike

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MAYVILLE—The position of Baumritter Corp. in the strike against Kling Factories, Inc., with plants in Mayville, Falconer and Frewsburg, has been stated by Nathan S. Ancell, Baumritter president, in a letter to a local Chamber of Commerce committee seeking to resolve the impasse between the opposing factions.

About 300 employees at the three locations are affected by the strike which began May 1 in an effort to gain company recognition of Lodge 2278, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers as official bargaining agent for the workers.

Kling Factories are a subsidiary of the New York City-based company which has manufacturing plants in several areas of the east.

Mr. Ancell's letter said in part: "When we purchased the Kling Factories five years ago, we were disturbed to learn the plants had for some time been operating only a few days a week. If you recall, I made a public statement that we would immediately do our utmost to see that the plants operated at least 40 hours a week so our people could earn a livelihood.

"I also stated that as rapidly as time and resources permitted we would modernize and expand Kling Factories so they

could achieve a competitive position without which a secure future could not be insured. This we have done. Contrary to statements made by the union, neither wages nor incentive rates were cut and fringe benefits and wages compared favorably to Jamestown area rates for the furniture industry.

"We have objected to the elections because of misleading statements made by the union which we felt were unfair to the company and the people. Immediately after the election, we stated we would not recognize the union until such time as the courts ordered us to do so and our employees were advised of our intentions.

"In order to reach the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, it was necessary to receive a final decision by the National Labor Relations Board and this has taken a great deal of time. The delay was not caused by any action of the company. It is our expectation that the case will be argued in October. We are unable to say when the court will render its decision.

"In keeping the plants open since the work stoppage began, we have been subjected to acts of violence and malicious damage, all clearly intended to compel us to recognize the union without having a chance to argue our case in the courts. The commission of these acts by a few irresponsible people has been most regrettable. Never before in our long history of association with many communities have we experienced this kind of violence. We have always taken great pride in the wonderful relationship existing between the company and its people.

"It was our feeling nothing could be gained by a strike because, if the decision was adverse to the company, we would be obligated to recognize the union and bargain. Regardless of the outcome, it will take many years for the company and the people to make up the economic loss that all parties have suffered.

"Even if the strike was to end tomorrow, it would take many weeks before full employment and production could be resumed at normal levels.

"To prevent spoilage of lumber and to protect our customers we have moved a large amount of our lumber inventory to other plants where we are now manufacturing the Kling product lines. When all this lumber has been moved, it will take many weeks before it can be replaced and kiln dried.