

Section 1
1946
LABOR DAY
Number

AFFILIATE
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CENTRAL LABOR
UNION

CHARLOTTE LABOR JOURNAL

Unionists, Do Everything Within Your Power To
Aid In the Southern A. F. L. Membership Drive

AND
CAROLINA

Working For A Better Understanding Between
North Carolina AFL Unions and Employers of Labor

JOURNAL of LABOR

A Newspaper Dedicated To The Interests of Charlotte Central Labor Union and Affiliated Crafts—Endorsed By North Carolina Federation of Labor and Approved By The American Federation of Labor.



"Were it not for the labor press, the labor movement would not be what it is today, and any man who tries to injure a labor paper is a traitor to the cause."—Samuel Gompers.

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LABOR DAY, 1946

By WILLIAM GREEN,
President of the American Federation of Labor

History will record 1946 as the year of transition. It is up to us to make 1947 the year of fulfillment.

On this Labor Day let us forget for the moment the doubts and difficulties we have encountered on the rocky road back to peace and prosperity and chat the progress we have achieved.

Within a year after the fighting ended, America has almost completed the heavy and dispiriting task of reconversion. The way forward should be easier and more rapid from now on. The big reward ahead is full production and full employment, the two essentials to a sound and prosperous economy.

The troubles of the rest of the world are still too much with us, but we cannot escape them nor dodge our responsibility for contributing to their solution.

This year the American people gave generously in time of scarcity to save the people of Europe and Asia from starvation. Hundreds of thousands of American boys are still stationed abroad to keep the peace so dearly won. It is part of our job to help the weaker nations to get back on their feet, and we will not count the price too high if by these efforts we serve the cause of lasting world peace.

Above all, we recognize the truth that war is the greatest enemy of mankind and that without enduring peace the strivings of labor to raise the standard of life and work of the nation's wage earners can be of no avail.

During the early part of this year the members of the American Federation of Labor won substantial increases in wage rates to compensate them for the loss of overtime pay which they enjoyed during the war production drive. However, the soaring cost of living has, to a large extent, cancelled these gains unless prices can be pushed back to their normal levels. This can only be accomplished by greatly expanded production to end existing shortages. It is, therefore, to the interest of all American workers to boost production by every means possible.

Fortunately, the mass unemployment which loomed threateningly after V-J Day failed to materialize. Despite the return of millions of members of the armed forces to civilian life, jobs are plentiful. As production hits high gear, the gateways to more and better employment opportunities will increase. Unless the tide of inflation breaks bounds and engulfs our economy, the danger of a postwar depression will be avoided.

On the legislative front, labor has attained little progress during the year. We had hoped for broadening of our social security system and for the inauguration of national health insurance, but Congress failed us. We strove for the enactment of a long-range housing program which would permit the construction of millions of homes during the next ten years, but Congress fell down on the job. On the other hand, labor was forced to defend itself against a series of hostile moves by Congress which would have undermined the freedom of American workers and handcuffed the trade union movement. Fortunately, the worst of these measures were defeated or vetoed.

In the year ahead, organized labor must concentrate greater effort to win public opinion to its side. The trade union movement enjoys the confidence of the Nation's workers to a degree never before attained. This is evidenced by increasing memberships and the results of collective bargaining elections. The membership of the American Federation of Labor now stands at an all-time high of more than seven million.

We believe that when the public generally understands the high goals sought by labor and the valuable services rendered to the Nation by the trade union movement, it will reject the flood of anti-labor propaganda which reactionary forces have poured out against us. Our enemies are making a last-ditch fight to halt the clock of progress and revive Fascism in this country. They are backed by vast wealth and abundant resources. But the truth will overcome them. And the American people, endowed with good common sense, will recognize and understand the truth before long.

Marine Unions Offer Aid

Chicago.—AFL President William Green, meeting here with the Executive Council, received the following telegram offering aid to suffering millions from the AFL Joint Marine Council of New Orleans:

The AFL Joint Marine Council of New Orleans composed of affiliated unions of Seamen, Longshoremen, Teamsters, Masters, Mates and Pilots, Checkers, Car Loaders, Banana Carriers, Towboatmen, Radio Operators and Warehousemen Carpenters, announced that they are submitting to the UNRRA the following offer:

That they will man a ship with a full crew complement covering all licensed and unlicensed ratings from master to mess boy who will donate their services for any such relief voyage as the UNRRA may designate on any ship of any type the War Shipping Administration will allocate for such purposes.

That the Longshoremen, Teamsters and other maritime workers will donate their services in loading and preparing the vessel for the voyage.

This offer is made with no qualifications of any type whatsoever and the volunteer crew from the AFL marine unions will be the most skilled and efficient men in the industry.

This movement was initiated by both licensed and unlicensed seamen who, more than any other people, know the suffering of the millions of people in the war ravaged countries of Europe and Asia. They feel that their war services in the liberation of these people which resulted in the death of over six thousand American seamen, are not complete until the peace time war against starvation is won.

This plan, initiated by the New Orleans AFL Joint Marine Council, is expected to be adopted nationally by the AFL marine organizations. The council selected delegates to attend the AFL Marine Trades Conference being held in Chicago August 15. The delegates, Stealy White, IJU, and Pat Ryan, AFL organizer, are leaving today by plane from Moisant airport.

Truman Salutes Labor

By HARRY S. TRUMAN
President of the United States

This Labor Day is one of great importance. We can look into the future today with confidence, but not with tranquility.

We still have a big job to do, and a long way to go, to assure the domestic prosperity and international understanding necessary to prevent depressions and war. But we can do it if we keep in our minds constantly that people are our most important asset. We must utilize them and conserve them.

The largest part of reconversion has been accomplished, and much of the credit for the job done goes to the workers of this great Union of States and free people.

Labor Day is a day set aside for labor by Act of Congress; a day to review the accomplishments of working men and women, and to restate the aims and ambitions and needs of all those who work with their hands and minds.

Since last Labor Day these men and women have brought production to new peacetime highs. Their work has produced a flood of goods to meet the needs of the people who did without many essentials and most comforts during the war years. These consumers have upheld price and rent controls during the difficult postwar period of inflationary pressure, and at the same time, as industrial and farm and home workers, they have supported their stand with record production.

As a nation of working people, we can maintain and increase the large production and nearly full employment which we have attained, if we carry on together as we did during wartime.

Labor, management and farmers, with the help of government wherever it could be useful, have made this great start toward peacetime readjustment. If we continue to co-operate, to work, and to produce, we can attain a richness of life that will be a credit



PRESIDENT TRUMAN

and a benefit to all of us now living, and a real hope and promise to those who come after us.

We must retain the safeguards against exploitation which labor won after the last depression. Labor must continue to have the opportunity, through free collective bargaining and free political action, to improve the lot of workers and to increase their participation in public affairs.

Labor, perhaps more than any other group, has consistently supported the objectives set forth in Franklin D. Roosevelt's memorable "Economic Bill of Rights." We must now move forward to full achievement of those objectives:

useful and remunerative jobs for all; incomes high enough to provide adequate food, clothing and recreation; freedom from unfair competition and domination by monopoly; adequate health protection; more effective social security measures; and educational opportunity for all.

Labor, too, has been in the forefront of the battle to end intolerance and wipe out bigotries of race, creed and color.

I salute the hosts of labor for their magnificent job in wartime and in the beginnings of peace, and urge them on to further efforts in behalf of the rights and dignity of mankind.

It's Your Holiday—Enjoy It!



The above picture is reminiscent of the war days when American workers were busily engaged turning out implements of war for their country. This is the scene of a rush for the gate when the whistle blew for a change of shifts. Having finished their day's duties they are homeward bound, to sup with mom and pop or wifey or sweetheart, whichever the case may be. This picture may also illustrate to some degree the need for the people of America laying aside their differences and getting together on some broad plan to keep the masses employed. A successful America must be kept busy with its enormous skilled man power in order that the needs of the country may get back to normal at an early date.

A LABOR DAY MESSAGE

By GEORGE MEANEY
Secretary-Treasurer, American Federation of Labor

Of all the days of the year, labor's own holiday is undoubtedly the most appropriate for workers to do some good hard thinking about the most precious possession they have—freedom. On Labor Day, a full year after the defeat of our nation's enemies, it is natural that sports, recreation and relaxation should have their place on the program, but it is important—very important—that Labor Day should be used also to ponder deeply the meaning and worth of American freedom.

Before the war altogether too many of our citizens took this blessing for granted. Now again there are signs of recurring indifference and complacency. This attitude is unjustified and very dangerous. For always, in times of peace as well as in times of war, there are ugly forces at work attempting to whittle away and ultimately to wipe out the most fundamental and the most important of human rights—the right to live our lives as we see fit and not as some omnipotent dictator commands.

If the people of our country did not live under a system of freedom, there could not be such an organization as the American Federation of Labor—a democratic organization through which, in a period of 60 years, the wage-earners of America have secured the highest standard of living in the history of the world.

Organized labor has had many arduous struggles in the past and it expects to have to wage many tough battles in the years that are to come. The worker and his union have always had to fight for economic advancement. Nothing worthwhile has come without a good deal of exertion on the part of the labor movement.

But the important point to remember always is that we have been free to organize, free to appeal to public opinion, free to use our economic strength, and that it has only been because of our freedom to act that the wage-earners of America are today so far ahead of the world's economic procession. Without this freedom we would still be in the mire. With freedom we shall be able to map programs for further advancement and to



Secretary Meaney

take appropriate action to translate these programs into reality.

What the workers of America have accomplished under the free enterprise system of our country is the envy of the world, yet we often read derogatory utterances concerning our economic system that emanate from the proponents of totalitarianism. Free enterprise proved its efficacy during the recent war when, without enslaving labor, without giving away our cherished rights and liberties, American industry, in cooperation with American labor, outproduced and outfought the Axis. The war showed that the American system was not only the best from the viewpoint of wage-earners in peacetime but likewise the best system for the defense of our national sovereignty during the most terrible war of all time.

On this Labor Day of 1946, the American Federation of Labor stands for the same ideals and principles that have been proven sound and constructive during all the years of its existence. All that we have accomplished, all that we hope to accomplish to bring more and more happiness into the lives of our families and communities—all this depends entirely upon the maintenance and extension of human liberty.

Let us rededicate ourselves on this Labor Day to be alert always to the great value of this possession and to fight with all our strength against those who belittle it and wish to destroy it. Freedom is the foundation. Without it no sound human structure is possible.

AFL Demands United Nations Halt World Trade In Slave Labor Goods

Chicago.—A strong demand that the United Nations bar from world trade the products of forced labor was made by the AFL Executive Council. In a formal statement on this issue the Council declared:

We face new dangers to our freedom as we deliberate on new treaties of peace and decide upon new institutions and rules of world government. The new despotism would destroy faith in freedom. It is a challenge which compels us to hold uncompromisingly to the ways and principles of freedom. If we do not resist we shall find ourselves limited in the exercise of our freedom in the international field and at home.

The need for insisting that the United Nations shall take an uncompromising position against forced labor is made plain by these facts:

Forced labor in the Soviet Union exceeds the entire labor force of the states of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Vermont, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.

The value produced by Soviet forced labor enters into a large number of Soviet export commodities such as timber, gold, chromium and other metals.

In the kind of world foreshadowed by the Charter of the United Nations, trade and economic relationships between all countries should be free and mutually supplementary. Yet unless forced labor is outlawed, competition between free and forced labor might grind all trade and production to the lowest level.

The United States has proposed an international conference on Trade and Employment and has prepared proposals to be submitted. The United States proposal, Section G, No. 6, states: "The undertakings in this chapter should not be construed to prevent members from adopting or enforcing measures relating to prison-made goods."

We should demand an affirmative position outlawing prison-made and forced labor or slave labor products. We should also insist that Congress should condition all increased capital for the Export-Import Bank by a proviso outlawing the repayment of credits in goods produced wholly or in part by prison, slave, or forced labor. We in the United States insist that the United Nations bar to world trade all products of forced and prison labor and that member nations enact like legislation.