

New Challenges To Labor Cited By Schwellenbach

(The following Labor Day message was issued by Secretary of Labor L. B. Schwellenbach):

Labor day is an appropriate occasion to examine the status of the wage earners of the country. It is a time to count the gains of the past and to list the needs of the future.

A year ago, on this first Monday in September, hostilities just had ceased and we were facing a period of readjustment and rebuilding. It has been a period of strain and doubt to millions of wage earners and millions of men and women in the armed forces. Every one realized that the physical task of shifting back to peacetime produc-

tion was tremendous. But uncertainty prevailed as to how smoothly and how quickly reconversion would take place.

Now most of the job is near completion—and successfully. The output of civilian goods and services has been lifted virtually to record peacetime levels. This period of reconversion has not been without its serious aches and pains. There have been disputes and disagreement which cannot be minimized. But it is good for all of us that labor has preserved its strength through this trying year.

There should be nothing surprising about this feat, for American labor has always conquered ob-

stacles successfully. The first Labor Day celebration occurred in September 1882 under the leadership of Peter J. McGuire of the Carpenters' International Union in New York City. Today after many battles, the wage earners' right to organize and bargain collectively is protected by law and sanctioned by custom. It is guarded by the strength of 14 million union members. These members and their leaders have made collective bargaining one of the basic procedures of our democracy.

This is a tremendous achievement, one which touches the lives of all within the ranks of labor. It carries much wider responsibilities than many of us realize. And like every gain that labor has won, this newly acquired right to speak for so many millions has not gone unchallenged. More and more, as collective bargaining and union agreements determine the relationship between labor and management, critics are demanding that this right be curtailed. These critics say that organized labor's motives are selfish, that its aims are not directed toward the common good.

If I believed that charge I would not be Secretary of Labor. But it is you, the members and leaders of organized labor, who must meet this challenge by maintaining a

Sen. Wagner Calls On Labor To Fight For Progressive Objectives It Seeks

By ROBERT F. WAGNER,
U. S. Senator from New York

The basic freedoms of democracy have come to take on a new meaning in a modern industrial society. They now include the right to security against economic misfortunes as well as the right to security against physical mistreatment. They include the new economic bill of rights as well as the older political bill of rights.

Much progress has been made, particularly since the last great depression, in securing and advancing these economic rights. But we are a long way from perfection. We need to make further efforts. These efforts should be shared in by all the people, but much of the leadership should come from the Congress of the United States, because it passes the basic laws which set the pattern for economic advancement and social justice.

Unfortunately, one cannot fairly say that the Congress since the end of the war with Germany and Japan has been fully alert to its responsibilities.

It has failed to act upon the long-range housing program embodied in the Wagner-Ellender-Taft bill, which would have set us on the way to a 10-year program to clear the slums and to provide a decent home for every American family.

It has not acted upon the comprehensive program for health insurance and better medical care. It has yielded rather to the lobby of a highly organized, well-financed few.

It has not acted satisfactorily upon the temporary continuation of price control, to protect the aver-

age American family from being victimized by inflation.

It has not acted to prevent discrimination in employment.

It has been at times irresponsible to the needs of the people, and responsive to the clamor of real estate lobbies and other selfish interests.

My message to working people on Labor Day therefore, is that they continue and increase their intelligent interest in public affairs and make it clear that they will not tolerate the neglect of the progressive objectives which they legitimately share with the country as a whole.

We have in this country an abundance of all the things needed to provide job opportunities at

good wages for every willing worker; to do a 100 per cent job on social security rather than a 50 per cent job; to build houses that the average family can afford; to increase our national income and our standards of living year by year without interruption; and to maintain the prosperity of our system of individual enterprise.

These objectives require, under our democracy, a strong and progressive and humane government. The people of the country have, on numerous occasions in the past, demonstrated that they want and need that kind of government. If they continue to demonstrate this, their interests will be preserved and advanced. If they do not demonstrate this, reaction will take over.

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