

Collective Bargaining In Danger

South Bend, Ind.—Anti-labor legislation pending in Congress at this time is not designed to cure industrial unrest, but is directed against the very process of collective bargaining.

This was the key of the message delivered here by Boris Shishkin, economist of the American Federation of Labor, in an address before the Midwest Conference of Political Scientists of the University of Notre Dame.

In a blunt appraisal of efforts in Congress to curb labor freedom, Mr. Shishkin told the conference:

"It is not an empty phrase, but a matter of grim reality that the American system of enterprise and the American institution of political democracy are undergoing a test on the outcome of which depends their very survival.

"The war itself and the technology born of war have broken down the last barrier isolating our nation from the rest of the world. From now on the economic and political fate of the United States is inextricably bound up with that of other nations. This new postwar world, of which America is irrevocably and inseparably a part, is torn by a far-reaching conflict—a conflict between dictatorship and self-government.

"This conflict of ideas is rooted in the economic life of nations. It is not merely a conflict between political democracy and political dictatorship. More fundamentally, it is a conflict between economic democracy and economic regimentation.

"If it is to survive this historic test, the profit system of capitalist enterprise must adjust to the realities of a highly developed modern industrial society.

"First of all, it must clearly define its goals. The enterprise system must recognize that it is not an end in itself but a means to an end. That end is the welfare of the people, material, cultural and spiritual, welfare based on free choice expressed by the rule of the majority.

"Second, it must recognize that private enterprise has increasingly become a collective enterprise. Concentration of economic power in the United States today is not so much in the hands of individual corporations. And not so much in the hands of individual corporations but of aggregates of corporations. These large concentrations of wealth and property carry with them corresponding responsibilities—toward labor and toward the community. If private means are not present to assure economic equity, public controls cannot be escaped. Political decisions are substituted for economic decisions and independence of private enterprise gives way to political domination.

"Third, it must accept the private collective contract—the union agreement—as the prime instrument of national labor policy and the foremost tested guarantee of sustained economic peace. Collective bargaining is meaningless, unless it leads to collective agreement. Self-governing and mature unions, effectively representing the will and the needs of the workers are an institution without which our enterprise system cannot long survive."

DETROIT TEACHERS GIVEN RAISE OF \$400 A YEAR

Detroit, Mich.—Approximately 3,700 students in East Detroit schools have returned to their classrooms as 115 teachers ended a week-long strike. The teachers, members of the American Federation of Teachers (AFL) voted to return to work after the Board of Education agreed to increase salaries \$400 annually.

The board established a new salary schedule of \$2,400 to \$4,000 a year from a previous scale of \$1,800 to \$2,850.

ELECTRICIANS GET RAISE

St. Louis, Mo.—Approximately 1,000 members of Local B-1256 of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (AFL), employed at the General Cable Corporation here, have been awarded a wage increase of 11-12 cents an hour across the board, retroactive to April 13.

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A Survey Of Labor Legislation In South Carolina General Assembly

WORKERS' LEGISLATION MAKES LITTLE HEADWAY

Friends of Workers in South Carolina Spend Much Time In Efforts to Defeat Anti-Labor Proposals.

By EARL R. BRITTON, Carolinas AFL Organization Director

Legislation for the benefit of the workers in South Carolina made practically little headway in the State during the 1947 session of the General Assembly. The main reason was because the two major bills before the legislative body were designed to destroy labor unions in the State, and the friends of the working people spent the major part of their efforts to defeat these two proposals.

The most controversial bill was the Rivers' "Right to Work" bill, House Bill No. 286. Many called this the "Anti-Closed-Shop" bill, but to call it by that name is a misnomer, as the bill really prevented any kind of bargaining contract by labor unions and management that maintained any kind of membership clause.

On March 27th the House passed the Rivers bill by a vote of 63 to 41 and sent it to the Senate. It was referred to the Senate Commerce and Manufacturers committee, which gave it a majority favorable, minority unfavorable report. It remained on the Senate calendar for about three or four weeks without the Senate ever taking a vote on the second reading. It is on the calendar of the Senate for the 1948 session.

A spokesman for labor was heard to comment that though the South Carolina Senate had never been considered a body to pass favorable legislation to the labor groups, it had always demonstrated that it was fair to labor, and would never be stampeded into hasty legislation against any group, especially when there was a doubt as to the necessity of this legislation proposed by Representative Rivers of Jasper.

The "Anti-Check-Off" bill, Senate No. 40, introduced by Senator Cantwell of Williamsburg county early in the session was referred to the Senate Judiciary committee. On February 25th a public hearing was held by the committee. The bill remained in committee hands for several weeks, finally came out with a majority unfavorable, minority favorable. Several stormy sessions developed on the floor of the Senate, but the proposal never received a second reading, and on the last Thursday of the General Assembly's lengthy session, the bill was carried over to the first day of the 1948 session. Senator Wallace of Charleston county had held the floor for a little over two hours on that day in opposition to the bill.

So these two anti-labor bills did not pass in the South Carolina General Assembly, though many predicted that they would pass, especially the press in the State.

Below are the recorded votes (Please Turn to Page 4)

INDIAN JIMCROW FIGHT

Marysville, Wash.—AFL unions here have pledged their support to American Indians who are segregated in a Jimcrow section of the Marysville Theater. The Indian people, whose ancestors have resided in this region for centuries, are being backed by Local 3146 of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters (AFL) and the AFL Lumber and Sawmill Workers Council and others.

IS A GESTAPO COMING TO THE U. S. A.?



Rail Unions Stand to Lose 92 Millions By Repeal of Crosser Amendments

Chicago.—Sound warning that repeal of the Crosser Amendments would rob them of \$92,000,000 in pensions, of their sick benefits and aid for widows and their children was issued by the Railway Employees Department of the AFL to its entire organization.

In a statement addressed to all general chairmen, system Federation officers and the railroad field staff, the statement, entitled "What Employers Stand to Lose Should the Crosser Amendments be Repealed," declared that such action would:

1. Take away all payment for sickness or accidents.
2. Reduce the number of days for which Unemployment Insurance is paid per year from 130 to 100.
3. Reduce the maximum daily benefit rate for Unemployment Insurance from \$5 to \$4. In other words, you ask to have your benefits reduced \$1 per day, and these three items cost you absolutely nothing, for they are paid out of funds collected from company.
4. Go back to the old system, whereby it was necessary to be in service August 29, 1935, in order to qualify for prior service.
5. Eliminate the employees who were absent on account of sickness or disability on August 29, 1935.
6. Carry, at your own expense, all the dead-heads who were on furlough August 29, 1935, but who did not return to railroad service when recalled. (Those absent August 29, 1935, because of disability are not eliminated under the amended act.)
7. Return to the old system of minimum annuity, requiring an employee to have at least 20

years' service and be in service at age 65.

8. Discontinue liberalized disability provisions and return to old system where an employee had to either have 30 years' service or be 60 years old and, in either event, be totally and permanently disabled for regular employment for hire.

9. Tell them to take away all monthly benefits for widows, children and dependent parents, and return to old plan of payment of 4 per cent lump sum payments.

10. Return to system of having death benefits eaten up by annuity and have no death benefits after a year of retirement.

11. And, finally, take out of your pension fund, \$92,000,000 a year and return it to the employers.

Do you want to give up your sickness benefits, your monthly payments for widows and children, your minimum annuity and your liberal disability provisions or should you register a protest?

RETURNS FINE TO CALIFORNIA CARPENTERS

San Francisco, Calif.—Federal Judge Michael J. Roche has ordered the return of \$37,000 in fines paid by the United Brotherhood of Carpenters in 1941 in an anti-trust suit. The U. S. Supreme Court reversed the conviction.

MAP ANTI-LABOR BILL FIGHT

Des Moines, Iowa.—A policy committee of 100 AFL leaders in this area are mapping out labor strategy in connection with new Iowa anti-labor laws.

EX-REP. FITZGERALD DIES; LONG ALLIED WITH LABOR

Norwich, Conn.—William J. Fitzgerald, former Representative and long a leader and champion of the cause of the American Federation of Labor, died here following a long illness at the age of 59.

Mr. Fitzgerald, for 25 years a member of the International Molders' Union of North America (AFL), and for four years first vice president of the Connecticut State Federation of Labor, served in the Connecticut State Senate from 1931 to 1935 and was responsible for some of the most valued labor legislation passed in that State during his tenure.

In the National Congress, Mr. Fitzgerald, who served two terms, placed 100 per cent for every bill voted before the House which would benefit labor.

He endorsed measures favoring railroad retirement, low rent housing, relief appropriations, the AFL Wage and Hour Bill for 40 cents an hour and 40-hour week on a national basis, continuation of the Un-American Activities Committee, and opposed a wide range of bills which would have hamstrung labor and imposed Government restrictions which would have had the effect of nullifying the beneficial acts which had been approved.

On eight of the major issues presented to Congress his two terms, 1937-39 and 1941-43, the vote of Congressman Fitzgerald was in full accord with the position taken by the AFL.

Mr. Fitzgerald, during his service in the Connecticut State Senate from 1931 to 1935, was instrumental in securing enactment of a number of labor laws which

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Unions Meet To Work Out New Problems

Washington, D. C.—Representatives of 12 unions, whose members are associated with the entertainment industries, opened conferences here this week to set up machinery for adjudication of jurisdictional disputes in the motion picture and other amusement fields without resort to strikes.

The conference was called pursuant to Resolution No. 187, adopted unanimously at the last national convention of the American Federation of Labor. This resolution provided:

"Resolved, that the American Federation of Labor through its Executive Council undertake to set up within the motion picture and amusement industries and with the sanction and agreement of all unions working in those industries; ways and means for the purpose of examining, considering and, after deliberation, setting up machinery, with the sanction and agreement of the national and international unions affected, which will insure the peaceful settlement, without work stoppage, of all jurisdictional disputes within the structure of the motion picture and amusement industries."

After polling the unions in- volved and ascertaining their willingness to participate, Mr. Green arranged the conference for next Tuesday. The unions invited to send representatives follow:

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees and Moving Picture Machine Operators of the United States and Canada; Associated Actors and Artists of America; Building Service Employees' International Union; United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; United Association of Journeymen and Apprentices of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry of the United States and Canada; Brotherhood of Painters, Decorators and Paperhangers of America; American Federation of Musicians; Office Employees International Union; Radio Directors Guild; International Union of Operating Engineers, and the Operative Plasterers and Cement Finishers International Association of the United States and Canada.

ENGINEER SCARCITY SEEN SLOWING ROAD BUILDING

Washington, D. C.—The Nation's postwar construction program will be retarded and normal improvement in technical development will be restricted, unless new engineers are attracted to the highway field, according to the American Road Builders' Association's engineer-director, Chas. M. Upham.

Highway transport in the United States or any other country can only be as efficient as the engineers who are responsible for its development, he declared.

"Since a state highway department is charged with the responsibility of spending large sums of the public's tax money, salaries for engineers should be commensurate with this responsibility," Mr. Upham continued. "Low salaries will not attract ambitious young engineers to the highway field and without these engineers, millions of dollars can be wasted. Salaries in industry are carefully adjusted to the amount of responsibility carried by the individual. Losses caused by mismanagement are voided by fixing salaries that obtain maximum efficiency," he added.

Railway Clerks Report Gains In New Members

Cincinnati.—More than 1,000 delegates from all parts of the Nation, and from Canada and Newfoundland, converged on this city for one of the most historic conventions of Brotherhood of Railway Clerks (AFL) to hear reports of the great strides made by the union in the last four years and to chart the course for the future.

The reports, in their highlights, showed an amazing growth in membership, a sound financial position and broad gains in the field of collective bargaining.

The report of President George M. Harrison, a Vice-President of the American Federation of Labor, showed a membership gain for the union of more than 82,000. This brings the total membership of the organization to an all-time high of close to 350,000. The Harrison report revealed also that the union now is the bargaining agent for 450,000 workers.

These gains were registered not only on the railroads proper, but in all the related fields in which the Clerks are active—that is, express service, airline, freight forwarding companies, steamship lines, motor transport and bus terminals.

"We have greatly strengthened our organization, financially and numerically," the Clerks' chief-tain explained. "We have enjoyed a splendid increase in members and are now the largest organized group of railway workers."

"We have expanded our contractual relations with the employers in our industry. Several substantial general wage increases were obtained. Numerous grievances and other complaints have been adjusted. Protections and benefits were secured for many members affected by abandonments, co-ordinations, mergers and consolidations.

"Substantial and valuable improvements were made in our social security system through the recent amendments to the Railroad Retirement and Unemployment Insurance Acts.

"We enjoy good relations with all of the employers of our members. The general condition of the Brotherhood was never better."

"These major achievements are milestones marking our progress and development. They are tributes to the service, sacrifice and co-operation of our members and officers, and demonstrate the value of an efficient and progressive labor organization."

The Clerks' leader told of the great role played by members of the Brotherhood in keeping transportation rolling during the war and in speeding the day of victory. He stressed, too, that the members "did their share of the fighting"—that more than 38,000 served in the armed forces and 875 were killed in the conflict.

Harrison related how the Brotherhood has gone the limit in protecting the interests of its members in military service. Their dues were waived. Their re-employment rights, plus accumulated seniority, were protected by contract. The union saw to it that "all benefits won by the Brotherhood in their absence were applied to them in full."

Also, the Clerks paid out a quarter million dollars in death benefits to families of members who made the supreme sacrifice during the war.

UNDER-SCALE BOSS JAILED

Long Beach, Calif.—A restaurant operator, Leslie Dekom, will spend the next six months in jail for failing to pay an employe the scale provided in his contract with Hotel and Restaurant Employees International Union (AFL). Dekom ignored repeated warnings from the State Division of Law Enforcement.