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National Catholic Welfare Group Condemns Taft Hartley Slave Proposal

Washington, D. C.—In an official statement sent to President Truman and Congressional leaders the Social Action Department, National Catholic Welfare Conference, expressed strong opposition to the "mild as murder" labor bill.

The Catholic group said, "The Taft-Hartley Bill does little or nothing to encourage labor-management co-operation. On the contrary, it approaches the complicated problem of industrial relations from a narrow and excessively legalistic point of view. It runs the risk of disorganizing and disrupting industrial relations by hastily and completely recasting the whole range of federal labor legislation just at the time when industrial stability is most desperately needed and, ironically enough just at the time when collective bargaining shows definite signs of moving towards collective cooperation for the common good. Instead of encouraging labor and management to work together in harmony for the general economic welfare, the bill just a number of legal restrictions on collective bargaining and particularly on the activities of trade unions — restrictions which will almost inevitably lead to industrial strife and unrest. The bill is an open invitation to management to have recourse to the courts and to the Labor Board at also every turn and thus to side-track or evade the normal processes of constructive collective bargaining. It will also result in strikes of all sorts during the long period in which the administration and the legality of the bill are being clarified. It will create the sort of confusion which prevailed in American industry during the period in which the National Labor Relations Act was being tested in the courts. There is no sufficient reason to risk such wholesale confusion, at the present time."

The N. C. W. C. group made four specific objections to the measure: (1) That the wholesale prohibition of the closed shop is an invitation to "legitimate rebellion on the part of organized labor;" (2) that denial of the right of foremen to organized is unethical and impractical; (3) that the act, in effect, encourages the separate States to enact anti-labor legislation; and (4) that the provisions requiring union officers to disclaim under oath any Communist Party affiliation would "lead to serious confusion . . . and play into the hands of the communists."

HARTFORD DIOCESAN LABOR INSTITUTE URGES VETO OF THE TAFT-HARTLEY BILL

Hartford, Conn.—In a letter to President Truman the Executive Board of the Diocesan Labor Institute, Catholic Diocese of Hartford, urges him to veto the Taft-Hartley bill because it is "so contradictory of our American ideals."

The letter, signed by Rev. Joseph F. Donnelly, Director of the Labor Institute, and the directors of its chapters in New Haven, Hartford and New Britain, begins as follows:

"The final form of the Labor-Management Relations Act of 1947 which has been submitted for your signature prompts this statement by the Diocesan Labor Institute of the Diocese of Hartford, an organization which in the

fourteen principal cities of Connecticut conducts educational programs dedicated to the improvement of labor-management relations.

"It is our considered opinion that the answer of the Eightieth Congress to our serious and urgent problems of industrial relations is inadequate, immature and biased, and that it will give rise to greater problems than those which it attempts to solve.

"Certainly it is the common opinion of the American people that some adjustments are needed in the laws which govern industrial relations. Rusting and creaking joints in the machinery need lubricating and some sections are obviously in need of re-designing. However, it is equally certain that it is the opinion of the vast majority of the American people that the processes of collective bargaining which during the past generation have developed effective and direly-needed protection for the economic rights of millions of Americans should not be weakened or destroyed. The pitiful status of workers without the protection of unions are shameful pages in our economic history. We do not

need fewer and weaker unions; we need more effective and enlightened unions which will bring to those millions of Americans whose rights are now abused the protection of this collective security now sanctioned by the law of the land."

Continuing, the letter condemned the forces which supported the enactment of the Taft-Hartley bill as those which in the past fought every proposal for social and economic reform designed to give some measure of security and well-being to the people of our country.

The same forces, it said, opposed the Wagner Act a decade ago and have continued to oppose necessary legislation such as social security, minimum wage and unemployment insurance laws. Never have those forces initiated any decent legislative reform and now they are attempting to weaken the ability of the working classes to protect and promote the standards for which they strove against great odds, the Catholic group declared.

While supporting a few constructive features of the bill, the Diocesan Labor Institute condemned the use of union-crippling law suits and injunctions and called for a veto because the "net effect of this bill will be a serious weakening of the bargaining power of American workers and that it can and will lead to lower wages, unemployment and a consequent depression."

FOOD COSTS LESS IN CAN.

Washington, D. C.—According to a survey revealed by the Canadian Wartime Prices and Trade Board, food prices in Canada, still under controls, are far below those in the United States.

Since August, 1939, the cost of living in Canada has increased approximately 30 per cent and since V-J Day the increase has been held to 6 per cent, the survey shows. This compares with an increase of 54.8 per cent from 1939 to date in the United States.

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