

WIRE or WRITE to
Your Congressman in
Protest Against All
ANTI-LABOR Bills!

C H A R L O T T E LABOR JOURNAL



VOL. XVII; NO. 24

CHARLOTTE, N. C., THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1947

Subscription \$2.00 Per Year

TRUMAN PRAISES LABOR; WARNS OF BUILDING CRISES

San Francisco. — In praise of American workers, President Truman said that "without the patriotic support of the workers of America" the nation's recent victories over tyranny abroad and want in this country would not have been possible.

Mr. Truman declared we are enjoying a prosperous period which has brought full employment and new levels of production, but he warned that the housing and inflation crises must be solved before we "can maintain a stable and prosperous economy."

In a message of greeting to the AFL's convention here, the President said the AFL, in addition to the welfare of its own members, is vitally interested in the welfare of the nation as a whole, in the broadening of the social security system, and in the establishment of an adequate health insurance system.

A part of the President's message was devoted to the "critical conditions which threaten the well-being of the entire world." He expressed assurance that labor could be depended upon "to co-operate with an all-out effort to help feed the hungry across the seas in the months ahead."

The text of the President's message follows:

"Please convey my greetings to the officers and delegates of the American Federation of Labor in attendance at the 66th annual convention of your organization. I wish them and you a successful meeting.

"Since your first convention, the United States has grown in power and prestige until today we are the most powerful and prosperous nation in the world. That power and prosperity bring with them added responsibilities not only to our own people, but to the needy and oppressed people in other lands. Our economic and political problems and those of Europe are now interlocked in a manner undreamed of in the early days of your organization.

"People in many parts of the world are looking to us for aid until they can again become self-supporting members of the community of nations. I feel sure that the working men and women of America do not begrudge our sharing of our abundance with those less fortunate, especially in view of the fact that our production today is greater than ever before in peacetime.

"I know, too, that labor and industry, recognizing the seriousness of the situation abroad, will co-operate to raise the production level still further to help meet the critical conditions which threaten the well-being of the entire world. I feel sure that America can depend upon its workers to co-operate fully and generously in an all-out effort to help feed the hungry across the seas in the months ahead. The need for grain in many countries in the year ahead will be even more acute than in the past. The United States must export large amounts of food if this need is to be met—but to do so will require the conservation of food by every American. The President of the American Federation of Labor is a member of the Citizens Food Committee which is helping the government plan ways and means of conserving essential food, and I am sure that the members of your unions are squarely behind the effort to provide the food that will enable the people of other countries to hasten their rehabilitation.

"We in the United States have pledged the signers to register.

COUNCIL RESTATES VETERANS POLICY

San Francisco.—The Executive Council declared that public policy concerning veterans should not only adjust their legitimate grievances but should create an atmosphere of goodwill in which both veterans and non-veterans receive equal treatment as citizens.

"Veterans and non-veterans alike must realize that this country will prosper only if all groups are prosperous," the Council's report declared.

"For the American Federation of Labor, we urge that every possible action be taken to cement friendly relations between veterans and organized labor. Although much progress has been made in this, it is important to realize that any substantial drop in employment is likely to create new tension.

"A return to the era of unemployment and job competition will be disastrous to all workers. But the veterans will look upon it as their betrayal. If this nation neglects its responsibility of maintaining full employment, the 'bonus marches' of 1932 are certain to be repeated on a greatly magnified scale.

"Soldiers and sailors of yesterday are workers and citizens of today. As workers and as citizens they must make common cause with organized labor in furthering policies which would avert another depression and help build a nation strong in peace, able to yield a better life to all."

The Council reviewed the policies of the AFL towards the problems involved in the veteran's reintegration into civilian life and discussed the work of the AFL Veterans Committee. It said:

"The American Federation of Labor Committee on Veterans, composed of Vice-President Woll, Secretary-Treasurer Meany and Robert J. Watt, translated these objectives into specific policies and procedures adopted by virtually all of our unions. Initiation and reinstatement fees have been waived or drastically reduced, membership in good standing maintained without dues, benefits paid, apprentice training requirements relaxed, and special contract clauses written in order to make the transition period easier for the veteran and to give him better protection on his job.

"Through the mechanism of the collective agreement, the veteran's right to his job and all improvements in terms of employment secured by the union in his absence have been protected. Spe-

(Continued On Page 4)

LIBERALS PLAN DRIVE ON TAFT-HARTLEY LAW

New York City.—Leaders of the Liberal party announced the start of an intensive campaign for repeal of the Taft-Hartley law and preparation for the 1948 national election.

Party leaders, including David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, conferred with labor officials for the purpose of establishing political units in the various unions and their locals. The units will not be identical with the union organizations thus avoiding any possibility of violating the Taft-Hartley law's ban on political activity by unions.

As part of their activities the Liberal party organization plans an intensive drive to register all eligible voters. Unions have co-operated in this endeavor by distributing literature and cards pledging the signers to register.

RUSSIAN TACTICS CALL FOR PLAIN TALKING, SAYS AFL

San Francisco.—The Executive Council declared that labor must interest itself in "national foreign policy" and called for "plain speaking" in our relations with Soviet Russia which nation has blocked all efforts toward world peace and security.

In a section of its report dealing with foreign policy the Council declared:

"The time is past when the labor movement of any country can safely refrain from interesting itself in national foreign policy and maintaining positive standards by which that policy should be determined. We can no longer be satisfied merely with the absence of war, for while war is a catastrophe we earnestly wish to avoid, we have learned that only in alert and tireless planning to maintain peace lies security. We are constantly made conscious of how national policies are related to foreign policies and how foreign policies impact on national policies."

Criticizing Russia for her obstructionist tactics in blocking European recovery and other moves toward world peace, the Council said:

"We have witnessed Soviet tactics in preventing even formulation of the Austrian peace treaty; in blocking action in the Security Council on a security military force to enable that body to perform its duties under the charter; in attempting to block investigation of obvious efforts at aggression in the Balkans, etc. Such experiences have brought our government to a realization of need for positive action to assure democratic countries opportunity for economic and hence political recovery.

"When it became obvious that Soviet Politburo intended to extend its control by pressure on Greece and Turkey, the President asked for appropriations to enable us to safeguard these key states. The purpose of the President's plan was later embodied in Secretary Marshall's proposal for economic recovery of Europe.

"However, the USSR refused to co-operate and has effectively forbidden its satellite border nations to participate, thus dividing Europe.

"Since the Potsdam Conference in 1945 there have been no further conferences between the heads of the United Nations and no further conferences between the officials responsible for policies since the Moscow conference of last spring which the Soviet representatives made futile by obstructive and dilatory tactics. It is obvious that the USSR does not want peace in Europe and either does not understand democratic procedures with the give and take necessary to reach agreement or finds the methods of force and aggression more suitable to its objectives.

"In United Nations meetings, the agents of the USSR have 11 times blocked majority decisions by use of its veto power. Such abuse of power which was intended for reluctant use in serious situations, makes plain that the Charter must be amended or become a farce.

"The American Federation of Labor is gratified to note the extent to which our government has abandoned a policy of appeasement and adopted a policy of plain speaking."

Turning to a discussion of the United Nations the Council's report urged amendment of the Charter of the United Nations to "abolish the veto power of the five nations and to substitute majority rule for all determinations."

The Charter should be amended further, the Council declared, to provide for direct participation of labor in the United Nations to prevent its development as a bureaucracy responsible only to the governments of the member nations. The report stated:

"The American Federation of Labor believes that the work of

ARIZONA FEDERATION BACKS CO-OP MOVEMENT

Tucson, Ariz. — The Arizona State Federation of Labor went on record in support of the co-operative movement and set up committees in each local to study ways and means of furthering it.

The annual convention of the federation adopted a formal resolution declaring the co-operative movement to be the only practical method in sight which will bring a "semblance of democracy to our economic order."

PROBERS URGE CURB ON FOOD SPECULATION; ASKS PROFITS TAX, WAGE LAW

New York City.—A joint congressional subcommittee, probing into the causes of rising living costs urged President Truman to take decisive action to curb speculation and margin buying on the nation's food commodity exchanges.

At the hearing conducted by the committee the Congressmen heard William Collins, AFL Regional Director, urge similar action by Congress as a means of stifling the upward trend in food prices.

Mr. Collins testified on behalf of the Central Trades and Labor Council of Greater New York. He portrayed vividly the losing battle being waged by the average American worker against the ever-rising price level and put forth a concrete program for halting inflation.

He urged congressional action to curb commodity speculation, the encouragement of consumer co-operatives to reduce excessive profits reaped in the distribution of products, a vigorous campaign against wastage of food, reimposition of the excess profits tax, and immediate passage of a 75-cent an hour minimum wage law.

Members of the committee hit at speculation in basic foods, terming such action a "crime against our civilization" and "ridiculous." After consultation, following the hearing, they dispatched the following telegram to President Truman:

"It has become clear to the members of the Eastern subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Prices that grain and commodity speculation is accentuating market fluctuations instead of decreasing them, and that presently it is supporting food prices at unjustifiable levels.

"We therefore urge that your Administration use every means within its power to restrain this dangerous activity. In so doing you will have full support. It is incredible that so large operations in the necessities of life should be permitted on such small cash margins. These margins could be greatly increased to the benefit of consumers' food prices, if special provision were made for normal millers hedging operations.

"We also urge careful study of the manner and timing of governmental food purchases, whether for foreign relief or for the armed forces, in order that their speculative effect may be minimized."

Signing the telegram were Senators Ralph E. Flanders of Vermont, Raymond E. Baldwin of Connecticut, and Francis J. Myers of Pennsylvania; and Representatives Robert F. Rich of Pennsylvania, Clarence E. Kilburn of New York, and Edward J. Hart of New Jersey.

NAVY PER DIEM WORKERS TO GET PAY BOOST SOON

Washington, D. C.—The Navy Department said wages of its 200,000 per diem employees will be raised within the next few weeks.

The wage increases are expected to match salary increases given employees in private industry who do similar work. Under the law, the Navy Dept. is required to pay its per diem employees the same private industry rates prevailing in the areas where Navy installations are located.

TRANSPORT WORKERS WARY OF JOINING RED-DOMINATED WFTU

Washington, D. C.—The International Transport Workers Federation does not intend to allow itself to be swallowed up by the World Federation of Trade Unions which is dominated to a large extent by Russia.

The executive committee of the ITWF meeting here for one of its regular executive sessions adopted a declaration indicating its reluctance to become affiliated with the WFTU on terms set out by the latter organization.

In a statement the committee, representing some 3,000,000 workers in many nations, said negotiations carried on since 1945 "have not contributed to narrowing the gap between the divergent points of view."

The ITWF has resisted steadfastly efforts on the part of the WFTU leadership to force affiliation of the two groups under regulations promulgated by the WFTU and submitted to the ITWF and other international groups for ratification. The ITWF maintains that "the question of international organization by trade or industry is one to be decided by the individual organizations themselves."

The action taken by the ITWF executive committee may be supported by some 16 similar international labor organizations comprising more than 35,000,000 workers in many fields, all of which face the same problem of preserving their autonomy when considering affiliation with the WFTU.

These organizations have had a long existence in Europe but American unions have been slow to affiliate with them. The bodies comprise workers in specific crafts and occupations, united on an international basis to further their economic interests by raising standards of wages and working conditions.

The Transport Workers Federation, for example, consists of railroad men, dock workers, seamen, and road haulage workers. The General Secretary of the federation is J. H. Oldenbrock of Holland.

In the background, but not discussed in negotiations, is the fear of many officials of the various international labor groups that Russia may gain an upper hand, on the basis of claimed membership, in the activities of their organizations if they affiliate with the WFTU. This parallels the stand taken by the American Federation of Labor when it refused to have anything to do with the WFTU on the grounds that the Russian trade unions are not free trade unions, but are merely tools of the Soviet government.

For this reason the ITWF has been wary of affiliation with the WFTU. Meanwhile, it has built up its strength by welcoming into its fold 1,500,000 American railway employees, members of the Railway Labor Executives Association. Discussions have also been held relating to the possible affiliation of the AFL's teamsters' organization.

The IFT also welcomed the 350,000 German railway workers in the United States, British and French zones. This was done despite the Russian policy of forming only a single, unified labor organization in all the occupied zones.

RY CARMEN EXTENDS BARGAINING RIGHTS

Chicago, Ill.—Bargaining rights of the AFL's Railway Carmen on the Burlington have been extended to another group of employees within the union's jurisdiction, those in the railroad's stores department at Havelock, Neb.

A poll by the National Mediation Board showed a substantial majority wanted representation by the Carmen, and the board, therefore, amended a previous certification of the Brotherhood to include the additional unit.

AFL CALLED ON TO INTENSIFY HOUSING WORK

DENHAM ISSUES COMPLAINT AGAINST TWO AFL UNIONS

Washington, D. C.—Robert N. Denham, general counsel for the National Labor Relations Board, utilized the powers given him by the Taft-Hartley law and swung into action against two AFL unions.

Two complaints issued under Denham's direction charged the International Typographical Union with refusal to bargain, and the United Brotherhood of Carpenters with staging a secondary boycott. Both of the actions alleged in the complaints are illegal under the Taft-Hartley law.

In Baltimore, Maryland, the NLRB regional director issued a complaint against Typographical Union No. 12 on a charge made by The Graphic Arts League, an organization of 22 employers formed for the purpose of conducting negotiations with the union.

The complaint alleged that Local 12 and the international union "have at all times since on or about August 26, 1947, refused and continue to refuse to bargain collectively in good faith with the Graphic Arts League, acting on behalf of the companies in respect to rules of pay, wages, hours of employment or other conditions of employment of the employees in the unit set forth."

The complaint further alleged that the union had "restrained and coerced" the printing establishments in the exercise of rights guaranteed under the act.

The complaint issued against the Typographical Union is the first test of the union's policy, adopted at its recent convention, to refrain from signing new contracts under the Taft-Hartley law and to merely post in the employer's establishment "conditions of employment" satisfactory to the union.

In the secondary boycott case another NLRB regional director asked the U. S. District Court in Chattanooga, Tennessee, for a mandatory injunction, against Local 74 of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and its business agent. Under the Taft-Hartley law the NLRB general counsel has no discretion concerning action taken on alleged secondary boycotts. He is required to seek an injunction from the court.

In the petition presented to the court, it was alleged that the union interfered with completion of a building on which the floor, wall and floor coverings were being installed by Watson's specialty store of Chattanooga. The work was being done by non-union employees.

The allegation stated that the

(Continued on Page 4)

AFL COUNCIL TO ISSUE ADDITIONAL REPORTS

San Francisco.—The Executive Council let it be known that it plans to submit several vitally important supplementary reports to the AFL convention after the sessions get under way. Among these are:

1—A report outlining plans for an integrated political drive in 1948 to defeat the enemies of labor.

2—A report recommending how funds can be raised for carrying on political activities and for financing a broad educational and public relations campaign in 1948.

3—A report giving the conclusions reached by the officers of affiliated national and international unions at their special conference in Washington last July on dealing with the new handicaps placed upon labor by the Taft-Hartley Act.

San Francisco.—Mr. Lee F. Johnson, executive vice-president of the National Public Housing Conference, called upon the AFL to spearhead a renewed, intensive drive for passage of the General Housing Bill, originally sponsored by Senator Robert F. Wagner.

In an address before the AFL convention, Johnson attacked the real estate lobby and other employer groups in the construction industry for their failure to provide decent low-cost homes for American workers and their efforts to place the blame for present high construction costs upon organized labor. He declared:

"Labor costs cannot be blamed honestly for the tremendous rise in housing costs today. Of course there has been an increase, there must be, but the wage increase of building tradesmen is small indeed in comparison to the profits that are being taken all along the line by the privileged interests which are calling the shots in the Congress today.

"We are faced with the unbelievable fact that an America that could produce millions of homes to house war workers, and carry on the fight that we had to carry on, is apparently impotent in times of peace.

"The contribution that the building trades made in providing war housing is one that should be recorded as among the heroic deeds of the war. Homes were produced over night, not anything very fancy, but decent shelter which made possible the employment of labor to produce tanks, ships, and guns. That job was done by union labor. The houses were there in time to save the nation. And I ask myself sometimes, to save it for what?"

"We knew that we had to do something about saving the democracy, that we talked so much about when peacetime came. We knew that the greatest and most immediate need would be for homes for returning veterans and their families. Most of them newly created families.

"We met and resolved and held conventions, and elected a Congress that is the complete tool of those who say that industry must be served first, that real estate operators must get their cut first, that the long fought-for basic rights of labor must be reconsidered. We elected a Congress with all of the Tory instincts, but none of its enlightened self-interest.

"We the people, are in a very bad spot today, and you and I have permitted it to happen. We have the potential strength of the vast majority of American voters, if we work as a team."

Mr. Johnson said the National Public Housing Conference stands ready to co-operate with labor in a drive to rid the nation's cities of slums and to stimulate home building through a campaign to enact the Wagner-Elender-Taft general housing bill.

"We must not," he said, "we shall not, stop our fight for adequate homes for all American families until the American people have won."

TRUMAN SENDS MESSAGE TO PADWAY'S WIDOW

President Truman sent the following telegram of sympathy and condolence to Mrs. Joseph A. Padway:

"I am shocked and saddened by the death under such tragic circumstances of your devoted husband, who was my faithful friend of many years. Please accept for yourself and for all who mourn with you this assurance of heartfelt sympathy."