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## Repeal Of Taft-Hartley Law Means Defeating Labor Foes

New York.—The 8,000,000 members of the American Federation of Labor must throw themselves wholeheartedly into the fight to "change the personnel of Congress" if the workers of the nation are to get rid of the Taft-Hartley Act. George Meany, secretary-treasurer of the AFL, said here in an address before the New York City Central Trades and Labor Council.

He urged every trade unionist to participate in labor's political education program with "enthusiasm and zest," warning that the Taft-Hartley law—vicious though it is, represents merely the beginning of what the enemies of labor have in store for the nation's trade unions.

"If the enemies of labor should find that Congress is still in their possession next January," he said, "they will pass such legislation as will make the Taft-Hartley Act look like the most advanced law since Magna Carta."

Speaking to a capacity audience composed not only of delegates to the council but large numbers of other trade unionists, Mr. Meany said:

"We have to do the job—let's do it. Let's do it with the same determination, courage and zest that Sam Gompers and the other pioneers of labor put into the battles that they were forced to wage.

"We, too, have to fight in order to live, in order to keep our free trade unions alive and effective for the protection of the millions of our people who work for wages."

Declaring that organized labor doesn't have any "choice," Mr. Meany said:

"Labor is in politics to stay. We must fight. We will never succeed in changing anything in the Taft-Hartley law in labor's favor until we change Congress, until we change the personnel in Congress.

"There is only one way of accomplishing that. It must be done at the ballot box, in the American way.

"The enemies of labor have thrown a challenge at us. We are accepting that challenge."

In a special appeal directed at the many officers of local unions who were in his audience, Mr. Meany said:

"The whole political education effort of organized labor will succeed or fail at the local level. That is where the money has to be collected. That is where our people vote.

"I know I am speaking to an audience in which there are a large number of local union officers, and I want to make this appeal to you just as strong as I possibly can. I know you men are busy, most of you are very busy, just trying to keep abreast of your regular union work, servicing your membership, handling grievances, participating in negotiations, taking care of your office work and doing all the dozens of other necessary tasks which go with the job of being a local union officer or representative. I know what the problem is because I have been a business agent myself.

"You don't have much spare time, I know that—but political education is so vital, so important to the welfare of every one of us, that in my judgment it must be put on a par with every one of your basic activities."

Mr. Meany flayed "the willingness of Congress to ride herd on the working people of the nation" and lashed reactionary Big Business for its support of "anti-labor moves of every kind." The Taft-Hartley Act, he charged, was fashioned by "the architects of our national calamity of 1929."

The reference was to the Wall Street crash and the years of bitter depression which followed.

The AFL secretary ridiculed claims by Senator Taft, Senator Ball and the National Association

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## RISING PRICES THREAT TO U.S.

St. Paul.—Boris Shishkin, AFL economist, declared that high wages are not the prime cause of inflation, the continuation of which threatens to choke off the market for manufactured goods.

In an address before the Controllers Institute of America, Mr. Shishkin placed the blame for soaring prices on the excessive volume of money in circulation in relation to the price level.

The AFL economist said in part:

"Continuing rise in price inflation is presenting an increasing threat of choking off the market

for manufactured products, especially consumer durable goods, while the buying power is increasingly diverted to food, rent, and other indispensable necessities. But the prime source of this inflation is the excessive volume of money in circulation in relation to prices.

"Wages are not a direct or sole force responsible for high prices. In fact, quite often, even generally, prices far outstripped wage costs. Consider the fact, for example, that in May, 1947, the labor cost per ton of coal was \$1.65 and in November, 1947, \$1.84, a rise of 19 cents a ton. Allowing an addition for a 5-cents-a-ton payment for the welfare fund, added since May, the maximum increase in the labor cost per ton of coal was 24 cents. Yet during the same period the wholesale price per ton of coal rose \$1.18 while the average retail price in 34 cities rose \$2.40 per ton. Here is a perfect illustration of how a 24-cent increase in the labor cost per ton was universally represented as the direct cause for the price increase which in reality was 10 times as great.

"As a long term proposition, labor and management must agree that expanding productivity is a national necessity. It is in the long-term interest of all to pay labor progressively higher wages in relation to prices; to do this by progressively increasing productivity per man-hour; and to reduce hours of labor and increase real income while increasing the volume of production and distribution.

"To translate this policy into reality, genuine union-management co-operation, should begin, not in the congressional hearing room in Washington, or at the company headquarters, but right at the local plant level where collective bargaining is initiated."

### MARRIED WOMEN IN JOBS EXCEED SINGLE WOMEN

Chicago.—A man with a briefcase full of statistics put the damper yesterday on any girlish hopes that marriage is the logical way to keep out of the wage-farmer class.

"For the first time in history," said Paul C. Glick of the United States Bureau of Census, "married women now outnumber single women with paying jobs." He spoke at the University of Chicago.

### SEN. TAFT HELD COOL TO OLEO TAX REPEAL

Washington.—According to press reports, the chances for passage of the oleo tax repeal bill are fading.

Most of the bill's supporters blamed Senator Robert A. Taft for what they called his "lack of enthusiasm" for the measure. Taft has said he favors it.

The repealer has been passed by the House and reported favorably by the Senate Finance Committee.

## Votes Down Change In Taft-Hartley Law

COMMITTEE ACTION KILLS PROPOSED CHANGE FOR THIS YEAR

Washington.—The Congressional "Watch-dog" Committee on Labor-Management Relations voted to do nothing about the Taft-Hartley law this year.

Thus, in effect, the committee gave its blessing to the law as it stands despite the overwhelming evidence presented by labor spokesmen showing the ill-effects of the law upon labor-management relations throughout the nation.

The action was taken by the committee after one week of the scheduled three weeks of hearings called by Senator Joseph H. Ball to consider proposed amendments to the law. Meanwhile since announcement of the committee's decision, a parade of industry witnesses has appeared before the committee using it as a sounding board to support the present law or to recommend "tougher" amendments.

The one amendment on which there appeared to be some chance of success called for the elimination of the requirement that the National Labor Relations Board conduct elections before a union shop contract can be negotiated. Even this went by the board in the committee's decision to do nothing.

Senator Ball was reported to have said that he saw no need to change the election procedure as suggested by Senator Irving L. Ives of New York and Representative Gerald W. Landis of Indiana.

Although the machinery of the NLRB has broken down hopelessly under an avalanche of union shop election petitions, and despite the fact that unions have won 99 per cent of the elections conducted so far, Ball said he expected the board "to be over the hump by next fall."

Senator Ball's decision was supported by Ray Smethurst, counsel for the National Association

of Manufacturers, who urged continuation of the election procedure.

On the other hand, representatives of the construction industry supported Richard J. Gray, president of the AFL's Building and Construction Trades Department, in opposition to the union shop polls.

James D. Marshall, assistant managing director of the Associated General Contractors of America, Inc. told the committee that the requirement of the union shop authority election under conditions where the closed shop had recently prevailed in the construction industry "is only a most complicated, time-consuming and expensive process of demonstrating a foregone conclusion."

Ralph A. MacMullan, secretary-manager of the Associated General Contractors of America, Detroit Chapter, Inc. told of the procedural difficulties of holding elections where the life of the bargaining unit was no longer than the life of the project.

The NAM spokesman, testifying on other proposed amendments, urged the complete ban on industry-wide bargaining and endorsed the idea of making unions liable under the anti-trust laws. He also supported a proposal advanced by Senator Ball to ease the burden on the NLRB by channeling labor cases into the federal courts.

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