

Economic Power Held A Basis For Labor Progress

St. Paul.—The menace of a totalitarian Communist party and the trend toward regimentation of the lives of individuals were singled out as the chief threats to the principles of the American Federation of Labor in the Executive Council's report to the 68th AFL convention meeting here.

The council called for a resurgence of "devotion and dedication to the cause of labor that characterized the work of the pioneers who founded our movement" as the best defense against these twin evils.

Urging greater self-reliance and initiative, the report declared that the basis for all labor progress "rests on organized, disciplined economic power." The council said:

Sometimes in our eagerness for results we forget that some achievements can only grow out of our own initiative and resourcefulness in using our economic power. The larger the number in our labor movement as well as in the nation that remain

self-directing and responsible, the more dynamic and constructive we become.

"During the past two years a considerable body of labor legislation has been enacted which was intended to underwrite and supplement economic organization and collective bargaining. We believe it would be wise to consider the effects of this legislation upon trade unions and their responsibilities and functions, as a basis for future policy.

"We should evaluate our experience to distinguish between the type of problems which lend themselves to legislative action and those problems for which economic action is best.

"We should review our various objections to determine whether they are outdated or unwise. Our guide in this study should be the effect of the method or objective and its administration on human character and progress."

In the introduction to its detailed report on legislative and economic affairs at home and abroad, the council summed up the situation as follows:

"Nationally as well as internationally the past year has been one of important struggles for standards without immediate decisive gains. At home, labor's major struggle has been to repeal the Taft-Hartley Act with its un-American discrimination against wage earners as a group of citizens and its restrictions upon their right of free contract to promote their economic welfare.

"Although the party whose platform committed it to repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act, won the election, members of that party joined with the Republican party to defeat the Democratic party's pledge to make good on its commitment.

"Our economy is only now adjusting to more normal production orders with competition developing in buyers' markets because buyers refuse to buy overpriced commodities. The process of reducing costs to facilitate price declines makes for better management and more economical production with co-operation between management and labor.

"Profits are still at high levels, some prices have dropped; wages, rates and earnings have remained at high levels and the employed labor force is still close to 60,000,000. Our union membership is at peak levels and a new aggressiveness promises to regain freedom of contract. There is everywhere a deeper realization of the need to rely primarily on economic power and to seek information on how to use that power most effectively.

"In the international field the ideological conflict continues unabated. To territorial and economic aggression has been added war on religion aimed primarily at the Roman Catholic church, which has directed a world-wide attack on the materialistic and godless principles of Communism. The Kremlin has developed new techniques for its inquisition to which priests and other dissenters are submitted to the process of so-called trials.

"The democracies of the world have blocked Soviet aggression in Europe primarily as a result of economic reconstruction and because Communist despotism can no longer conceal its ultimate

Vic Vet says

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Metal Trades Dept. Votes Vigorous T-H Repeal Drive

St. Paul.—An all-out campaign for repeal of the Taft-Hartley Act was enthusiastically voted by the delegates at the annual convention of the AFL Metal Trades Department just concluded here.

"This buzzsaw has just begun to cut into the flesh of labor," said President John P. Frey. "It will dig much deeper and hurt a great deal more unless it is repealed soon."

Whole-hearted support from the Truman Administration in the repeal fight was pledged by Assistant Secretary of Labor Ralph Wright. He told the delegates:

"President Truman and Secretary of Labor Tobin are resolutely determined to continue to work for Taft-Hartley repeal until that law is erased from the statute books."

Wright charged that enemies of labor have spent \$100,000,000 on propaganda first to enact the Taft-Hartley law and then to prevent its repeal.

The convention went on record in favor of a long-range shipbuilding program to strengthen national defenses. It demanded that a fair share of the government's existing construction contracts be allotted to West Coast shipyards.

President Charles J. McGowan of the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers charged that the steel trust, which dominates the Atlantic yards is responsible for the present discrimination against Pacific yards.

"Monopoly rules the roost in the shipbuilding industry," he declared.

Other resolutions adopted by the delegates urged improvements in working conditions in the navy yards, adjustment of inequities suffered by workers in the Canal Zone, enactment of legislation providing unemployment insurance for laid-off federal workers and the inclusion of disability benefits in the social security laws.

All incumbent officers of the department were re-elected without opposition, including President Frey, Secretary-Treasurer James A. Brownlow and the members of the executive council.

LABOR DEPT. READY TO AID RESERVES REGAIN OLD JOBS Washington.—The Labor Department said it will make every effort to regain civilian jobs for the 12,000 reserve officers soon to fall under the Defense Department's economy axe.

Secretary of Labor Maurice J. Tobin wrote the Reserve Officers Association that the discharged officers will have the "full co-operation" of the 17 field offices of the department's Bureau of Veterans Re-employment rights.

Brig. Gen. E. A. Evans, ROA executive director, had asked Secretary Tobin to help the reservists return to their former jobs. General Evans said many are not aware they have reemployment rights to the jobs they left to enter service.

WINS NEW WAGE GAINS Cincinnati.—The 6-day-old strikers' strike against the three daily Cincinnati newspaper ended under a compromise wage settlement.

purpose. On the other hand, Communism has made extraordinary gains in Asia, with Northern China under its control and the road to Southeast Asia gravely threatened, while Communist agitators are busy hoping to seize control of the rich natural resources of Malaya, Indonesia, French Indo-China and Thailand."

NLRB RULES EMPLOYER VIOLATED TAFT-HARTLEY

Washington.—The National Labor Relations Board ruled 2 to 1 that an employer violated the Taft-Hartley law when he asked three employes to comment on his speech supporting an independent union against the AFL's Teamster Union.

They overruled Trial Examiner William F. Schnarikow, who recommended dismissal of the teamsters' complaint.

Reynolds, Jr., ordered Trans-Oil Co., Baltimore, to cease and desist from asking its workers about their membership and activities in behalf of Local 355 of the Teamsters Union.

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