

CHARLOTTE LABOR JOURNAL

VOL. XX; NO. 8

CHARLOTTE, N. C., THURSDAY, JUNE 29, 1950

Subscription Price, \$2.00 Per Year

AFL Leaders at ICFTU



Brussels, Belgium.—Irving Brown, AFL representative in Europe, makes an observation to AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany (left) and J. H. Oldenbroek, secretary-general of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, at recent executive board meeting of the world labor organization.

Granddad Gompers Liked "Stuffing"

By FLORENCE GOMPERS MCKAY

(Granddaughter of Samuel Gompers, founder and first president of the AFL, sets down some of her recollections for the Washington, D. C., Trades Unionist. First of two articles.)

WASHINGTON.—The life and works of Samuel Gompers have been covered in numerous volumes by fine writers, among whom were many of his fellow workers in the labor movement. In his autobiography he has outlined his career and much of his personal life in considerable detail. My contribution, therefore, can be only of my own unique relationship with him. In fact, this might well be called "I remember granddad, for as I look back there comes to mind many precious memories of my childhood and young adulthood during all of which time my grandfather played a very vital part in my life and thinking.

To the world he was a labor leader; to me and the others of his large family he was the best possible father, grandfather, great grandfather. There was no phase of our lives that was not of the keenest interest to him. Since I was the only one of his many grandchildren whose permanent home was in Washington, it was my privilege to be with him a great deal and we were pals. He took a keen interest in the doings of my generation and liked to have me tell him any new jokes I had heard. He wanted to know about my life and more than once helped me with my school assignments. I distinctly recall the time in high school when I was given, oddly enough, the affirmative side of a debate on "Should Labor Have the Right to Strike?" Grandfather came to the rescue, I filled pages with notes as the words flowed from him, and needless to say my side won hands down. He was very critical of my speech. He emphasized the importance of carefully chosen words, clearly and well pronounced, and had no patience whatsoever with the slangy jargon of the day. However, once in a while a particularly expressive and pithy slang word would capture his fancy and he would occasionally use it with a great air of wicked enjoyment. To grandfather his home was his castle. No detail of the home and its inhabitants was beneath his notice. He was interested in

his family and all that pertained to them. Although he gloried in their successes and grieved with them at their reverses they were all strictly on their own. He would never lift a finger to help them secure a coveted position or favor of any sort. He said "I cannot ask a favor of anyone; it is not myself I should be obligating but the American Federation of Labor and this I shall never do."

It was at grandfather's instigation that my family purchased a piano for me and started my having lessons at an early age. Although I never possessed any talent, he took an interest in my progress and insisted on hearing my newest pieces. He would listen patiently to my faltering renditions and offer encouraging criticism. Although I never became a pianist, it was in that home that my taste in music was formed. Grandfather had one of the early Victor machines and a superb collection of fine records, and many evenings we spent listening to the magic of Caruso, Schumann-Heink, Tetrizini, Kreisler and the other great artists of that day.

Above all else he liked to gather his friends in his home and enjoy an evening of music, a game of cards or just good conversation. Sunday, when grandfather was in town, was

(Continued on Page 4)

Meany Visits Rome



Rome, Italy.—AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany, as he alighted from train, was greeted by officials of the Italian Confederation of Free Trade Unions, I. to r., Appio Claudio Bacchi, vice-secretary; Enrico Parri, secretary, and Giovanni Canali, secretary.

AFL Works Around World To End Poverty and Slavery

Washington.—The American Federation of Labor is engaged in the most far-reaching endeavor ever undertaken by an American labor organization to end poverty and slavery in the world and bring peace.

The voices of AFL officials, speaking for 8,000,000 free democracy-loving Americans, have been raised this summer in behalf of better conditions for all workers everywhere at meetings from Washington to Bombay.

AFL men and women have been pressing the American point of view in dealings with workers and governments of more than 70 nations in Brussels, Geneva, Berlin, Rome, Havana, Florence, Bombay and other far places.

Some of these activities at a glance:

1. AFL members composed the United States worker delegation at the International Labor Organization in Geneva pledged to raise worker productivity in the more than 60 countries in the organization so that wage earners in those lands may have more food and economic comforts.

2. Gordon W. Chapman of the AFL State, County and Municipal Workers is enroute to southeast Asia with a commission from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions to encourage resistance to communist infiltration and aggression.

3. AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany attended ICFTU executive board meetings in Brussels and conferred with Italian trade unionists in Rome.

4. Here in the United States, AFL unions in many cities played host to visiting trade unionists from abroad.

TEXTILE UNION HITS PEAK OF STRENGTH

New York.—The AFL United Textile Workers is at the peak of its greatest strength.

Officials told the 11th biennial convention that in membership, wage gains and pension systems, the union is stronger than any time in its history.

President Anthony Valente enumerated the gains won in the last two years in wages and improved conditions in employment, as well as such matters as pensions.

"Already we have in existence several pension plans, financed solely by the employer—which, when combined with the old-age pensions of the federal government, guarantees our old-timers approximately \$100 a month when they retire from the industry," Mr. Valente said.

He said that in the southern cotton industry the UTW increased wages by 8 per cent, bringing southern cotton workers near the average wage and minimum wage of the northern cotton worker. In rayon, he reported, UTW won a 15-cents-an-hour wage increase, as well as other contract improvements. In woollens and worsteds, improvements were won in working conditions, despite the depressed character of that segment of the textile industry.

Other gains reported were in the so-called "fringe" provisions, such as holidays with pay, vacations and insurance and hospitalization protection, as well as pensions.

Secretary-Treasurer Lloyd Kienert reported that the UTW dues-paying membership had reached a new peak of 78,858 in 1950 and chartered 25 new local unions since the previous convention.

PRAISES HARRIMAN

Washington.—Paul G. Hoffman, Economic Co-operation Administrator, stated that Ambassador W. Averell Harriman, retiring as ECA special representative in Europe to become special assistant to the President, has made a major contribution toward the Marshall Plan.

Delaney Makes Point



Geneva, Switzerland.—George P. Delaney (left), AFL international representative and U. S. workers' delegate to International Labor Organization, outlines employe views at ILO huddle with Rep. Augustine B. Kelley of Pennsylvania and U. S. Assistant Secretary of Labor Philip M. Kaiser, U. S. government delegates.

Delaney Urges ILO Members To Copy U. S. Output of Products

Geneva, Switzerland.—AFL International Representative G. P. Delaney, U. S. worker delegate, urged member countries of the International Labor Organization to copy American production methods to increase output of food, clothing and necessities.

Mr. Delaney's speech was probably the most important delivered during the world's first official international debate on ways to increase the productivity of labor.

The debate was on the report of ILO Director General David A. Morse calling for increased labor productivity as one method of attacking the poverty which breeds unrest, dictatorships and war.

Poverty anywhere is a threat to peace everywhere, the ILO holds. And the elimination of poverty will lay the groundwork for lasting peace.

In his speech Mr. Delaney cited shoe production. He said in 1944 the U. S. produced three pairs of shoes for every man, woman and child in the country whereas many countries do not produce

as much as one pair per person in a year.

He said in part: "American workers believe in high productivity. They know it brings higher wages and shorter hours. They are not opposed to greater profits for their employers so long as their own standard of living rises in proportion. They have welded together a strong trade union movement to make sure that such a sharing of increased output takes place.

"American workers know that under the give-and-take of free industry and free labor within the framework of a democratic society their hours during the first half of this century, have been reduced in most cases to 40 a week.

"The American workers know that while their hours have been decreased, their real wages have gone up. They have better housing, finer food, improved educational opportunities.

"American workers know that increased productivity through the teamwork of intelligent labor

(Continued on Page 4)

Way To Go!



New York.—The International Ladies Garment Workers Union film, "With These Hands," ends with the cloakmaker, ready to retire, greeting a new member by looking at her first union book. He says: "A simple cardboard folder, something to hold your dues stamps. But it's more than that. It's a way to go, a good way!"

Dedicate Gompers Room



Geneva, Switzerland.—AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany formally presents room furnished by the American Federation of Labor in honor of its founder and first president, Samuel Gompers, to the International Labor Organization which Mr. Gompers also helped to establish. At left is U. S. Assistant Secretary of Labor Philip M. Kaiser and, right, ILO Assistant Director General Jof Rona.

SENATE OK'S NEW SECURITY BENEFITS

WASHINGTON.—The U. S. Senate voted 81-2 to overhaul the social security system, hiking benefits and bringing 10,000,000 more persons under the program. The action brought many improvements long advocated by the American Federation of Labor and other liberal groups, though the overhauling was not as far-reaching or complete as the AFL desired. There is still some hope that the bill finally approved by both houses of Congress and sent to President Truman will be better than either house passed because of incorporation of the best features of each measure.

The bill will raise payroll taxes as much as \$18 per year per person to cover the higher benefits.

Sens. Hugh Butler (R., Neb.) and Harry P. Cain (R., Wash.) cast the only dissenting ballots.

Before the final vote, the Senate defeated efforts to increase benefits even more for certain groups of wage earners, but adopted a series of other amendments intended to strengthen the old age and survivors insurance program.

President Truman is committed to sign the bill, assuring the first board reform of the 15-year-old program since it was launched in 1936.

The measure now goes back to the House, which passed a similar bill last session. If the House refuses to agree to the Senate amendments, it must go to a joint conference committee to thresh out differences between the two versions.

The Senate bill would extend social security protection for the first time to domestic servants, farm hands, persons who are their own bosses and several other groups.

It would double the minimum old age benefit from the present \$10 to \$20 a month; increase the maximum family benefit from \$85 to \$150 and raise the average payments to industrial workers from \$26 a month to \$49 a month.

When all increases under the new bill are taken into account, average benefit payments would

be about double what they are now.

The Senate agreed by voice vote to increase the amount of wages subject to social security taxes from the present \$3,000 to \$3,600, a move urged by the AFL.

This would mean an increase of \$9 a year to each worker now covered who earns \$3,600 or more, with employers matching the boost.

It also would raise the maximum individual benefit for the aged from the present \$72.50 a month to a new high of \$80 a month.

Defeated by a voice vote was a provision to pay disability insurance to workers permanently disabled.

Approved by a voice vote was a resolution calling for a new study of social security, particularly proposals for "pay-as-you-go" systems to cover everybody.

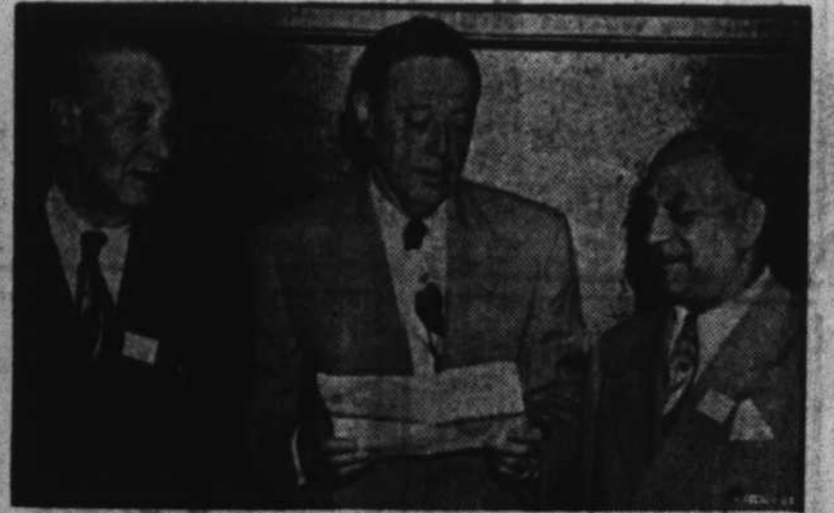
The Senate bill generally provides more liberal benefits than the House version, which would increase payments an average of only about 70 per cent.

The House bill, however, would add 11,000,000 persons to the program, and increase the tax rate to 2 per cent on the first \$3,600 of income, starting next January. The Senate measure would freeze the present 1 1/2 per cent rate until 1956, when it would begin rising to a maximum of 3 1/2 per cent in 1970.

Neither bill comes up to requests by Mr. Truman, who

(Continued On Page 4)

Mark Rutgers Jubilee



New Brunswick, N. J.—Vincent J. Murphy (center), secretary-treasurer New Jersey Federation of Labor and chairman joint planning committee of the 20th Jubilee Institute of Labor at Rutgers University, discusses program preparations with Harry Wander (left), New York vice-president International Ladies Garment Workers Union, and Ed Biano (right), Paterson, N. J., president New Jersey Building and Construction Trades Council.