

Meany on Khrushchev Visit

Warning that Nikita Khrushchev is quite familiar with American institutions and is not likely to lose any misconceptions during his impending U.S. visit, AFL-CIO President George Meany cautioned the 60th national convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars at Los Angeles that such illusions could be dangerous.

Meany declared, "These days the columns of *Pravda* are oozing 'sweetness' towards the United States! How reminiscent of the 'Geneva Spirit' of 1955! But let no one forget that this 'spirit' was followed by Hungary and Khrushchev's threats to launch a missile attack on London and Paris during the Suez crisis in 1956!

"No one should oppose negotiations with the Kremlin on any level in the interest of peace and freedom. But let us have no illusions. A change of phrase, a slick maneuver, pretension to international honor and morality does not mean a change in Communist basic aims. Only a change in deed, a change of Soviet purpose and practice can really be meaningful. Such a change has not taken place in the Kremlin hierarchy.

"If we do not delude ourselves, then there is no basis for panic or pessimism about the future of our country."

Meany asserted that the issue at the heart of the world crisis today "is not 'peace and friendship,' but peace and freedom."

While reasserting the AFL-CIO's advocacy of strong military defenses, Meany stressed the continuing responsibility of all Americans to constantly work for urgently needed improvement of our democratic institutions. "There is much to be improved and remedied and many wrongs to be righted on both sides of the Mason and Dixon line," he stated.

Removal of our shortcomings in the areas of racial discrimination, unemployment, and "un-American living conditions were called for by the Federation official." Our position of international leadership must be strengthened by actively working to have our allies break with all colonialism and by acting as friends of the world's oppressed," Meany declared.



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Senate-House Conferees Agree on Labor Bill: Strengthens Taft-Hartley Curbs

The joint Senate-House conference committee this Wednesday reached agreement on a modified labor-reform bill which AFL-CIO sources in Washington said "corrects only some of the more obvious injustices of the House-passed Landrum-Griffin bill," and contains provisions which make "Taft-Hartley worse."

(As we go to press, only sketchy reports on the bill's exact content are available through the daily press.)

With both houses expected to give quick approval to the compromise version, it appears certain that the National Association of Manufacturers and Chamber of Commerce, with the help of President Eisenhower, have realized at least partial success in their twelve years of anti-labor propaganda to tip the Taft-Hartley scales even more in favor of employers and against workers.

Although modified somewhat from the extremely harsh House version the compromise bill is recognized to contain the bulk of the anti-labor provisions in the Landrum-Griffin bill, including sections dealing with organizational picketing, boycotts, the so-called "no-man's land" created by the failure of the NLRB to exercise jurisdiction over large areas of labor-management relations, and "hot cargo" clauses in union contracts.

The measure, however, is reported to make some concessions to the building trades on their right to sign contracts barring non-union subs on a construction job, and authorizing pre-hire agreements with a seven-day union shop provision.

Exemptions for the garment industry from restrictions on secondary boycotts and picketing are also provided in the conference measure.

AFL-CIO President George

Meany, in San Francisco this Thursday en route to Salt Lake City where he will make his Labor Day address to the nation, pointed out that despite the modifications in the original Landrum-Griffin bill, and the industry concessions, the measure as a whole will seriously weaken the ability of honest labor unions to do an effective job in improving labor's wages and conditions of work.

AGREEMENT DEVELOPS

Announcement of the Senate-House agreement on a conference bill followed a series of rapid developments over last weekend and earlier this week, which headed off a showdown on the Senate floor where labor's hopes rested to defeat anti-labor features of the "reform" bill unrelated to the corruption issue.

Last Friday, in the face of a conference committee deadlock on House anti-labor curbs in the Landrum-Griffin bill, Senate GOP leader Everett M. Dirksen of Illinois introduced a resolution asking that the full Senate break the conference in favor of the adverse House bill. A counter-measure in support of the Senate version was introduced by Senator John F. Kennedy, co-author of the original Senate committee version supported by the AFL-CIO.

The anticipated floor battle earlier this week was precluded, however, when it was made known by House GOP conferees that new proposals and partial concessions

(Continued on Page 3)

Int'l Affairs, Education and Social Security Issues Reviewed at Fed Meet

The social security of American workers, their vital interest in international affairs and the education system of our free society were among major issues which commanded the attention of the 2,000 delegates who attended the recently concluded California Labor Federation convention in San Diego.

(Other basic economic and social welfare issues which produced extensive policy actions by the supreme governing body of California labor have been reviewed in the previous several issues of the Weekly News Letter. The following captures the substance of delegate declarations on remaining major issues.)

Social Security

In the field of social security, convention delegates urged that the nation's old age, survivors and disability insurance programs be brought up to standards befitting a national system of social security, with an increase in the tax base and contribution rates as necessary to increase benefits to realistic levels.

They demanded liberalization of the present bar against disability retirement before the age of 50 and the lowering of the legal retirement age to 60.

The greatest unmet need of the 15 million people over 65 years of age is that of health and medical care. The convention felt this problem should be dealt with by passage of H. R. 4700. The Forand bill would handle most such costs through a one-fourth per cent payroll tax on the first \$4800 of earnings.

Adequate medical care for all our citizens was also urged through a national health insurance program financed on a contributory basis along the lines of the Murray-Dingell bill. Federal aid for construction, research and assistance in various medical fields was advocated. Restoration of the FTC's regulatory powers over health and accident insurance companies was sought.

International Affairs

The convention reiterated its belief that preservation of peace and freedom remains the burning issue of our time. In relation to the Berlin crisis, it asserted that when the freedom of one is threatened, the freedom of all is in jeopardy.

The convention declared, "The real issue in the German crisis is

that the future of the entire German people is bound up with the fate of West Berlin. Since the fate of the German people decisively determines the fate of all free Europe, it is the future of freedom and peace that is at stake in the Berlin crisis.

"Russia is trying to gain its objective, step by step, through sundry so-called disengagement maneuvers. These maneuvers and so-called European security arrangements proposed by Moscow would not entail any international control of the Kremlin's gigantic military machine. Moreover, the Soviet rulers offer no political concessions in return for such American withdrawal; they will not permit the restoration of freedom to the captive nations and the Soviet zone of Germany. Instead of meeting concession with concession, Moscow seeks 'disengagement' only as a means of getting the Anglo-American troops out of their present defense positions, dismantling of the United States bases in Europe, and crippling NATO."

California labor concurred fully with the position of the national organization that "neither freedom of West Berlin, nor the freedom of 50 million people of West Germany, can be objects of international bargaining. In the interest of their own security and self-preservation, the democracies cannot accept any reunification of Germany which is not reunification in freedom, through UN supervised free elections."

At the same time, the Federation urged vigorous support for a consistent foreign policy for free peoples and their governments to accomplish the goals of world free labor — "Bread, Peace and Freedom."

The free labor movement is of necessity in the vanguard of the struggle for peace and freedom, it stated, because we have come to understand that the struggle for peace and freedom is inseparably tied together with the struggle for social justice.

The convention called attention to the need of the industrial nations to increase their aid to the independent but underdeveloped countries if they are to achieve full economic and political liberty. Unless we do so, it warned, such nations will in-

evitably come under the control of the Soviet Union or turn toward some form of domestic totalitarianism.

The Federation expressed the conviction, "The people in the lands which have recently won freedom have come to believe that political independence has set the stage for the economic growth of their countries—economic growth which will free them from the age-old burden of poverty which they and their ancestors have always borne."

It added, "As a nation, we must declare ourselves openly in support of the aspirations of all the colonial and oppressed peoples for national independence and human freedom. We must also energetically help our allies break with colonialism in Algeria and anywhere else. We must advance a most comprehensive program for rebuilding the Middle East so as to help Arab nationalism become a positive force for democracy and live in peace with Israel."

Similar sentiments were expressed in relation to the rapidly developing independence movement of the continent of Africa. The convention resolved, "The free nations cannot let these peoples down. The United

(Continued on Page 4)

Prices Up -- Purchasing Power Down

Prices of consumer goods and services in the United States rose another three-tenths of one percent between June and July, 1959, according to the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The U.S. Consumer Price Index for July, at 124.9 percent of the 1947-49 average, was eight-tenths of one percent higher than a year ago in July of 1958.

The announcement of increased prices was coupled with a simultaneous BLS release that the spendable earnings of factory workers and the buying power of these earnings declined substantially in July.

Spendable earnings, which are the average earnings of factory workers after deduction of federal income and social security taxes, declined by 85 cents (about one percent) to \$80.85 per week for a factory worker with three dependents

(Continued on Page 3)

MORE--SENATE-HOUSE CONFERENCES AGREE ON LABOR BILL:

(Continued from Page 1)

would be made in conference to head off the Senate showdown.

The new approach, as conference negotiations began this week, apparently led to the final agreement on the compromise bill announced this Wednesday.

COMPROMISE PROVISIONS

Reported major provisions of the compromise bill, besides the boycotting, picketing, jurisdictional and hot cargo restrictions, include:

—A revised so-called "bill of rights" for union members, apparently with a number of potentially "hamstringing" provisions of both the Landrum-Griffin and Senate-passed versions.

—Requirements that unions file detailed public financial reports with stiff criminal penalties for violations, and less harsh reporting requirements for employers with regard to their labor relations activities.

—Limitations on union trusteeships and guarantees of regular union elections.

—Repeal of the Taft-Hartley requirement that non-union officials sign non-communist affidavits, and substitution of a provision barring present and past Communist party members in the past five years from holding union office.

—Strict limits on conditions under which ex-convicts could hold union office.

BOYCOTTS, HOT CARGO AND PICKETING

Reported secondary boycott restriction would bar a union from securing agreement from a so-called neutral firm to cease doing business with another firm that is unfair to labor.

In addition to this prohibition, it is reported that the bill would ban boycotts involving railroads, municipalities and government agencies, and would prevent a union from inducing employees individually as well as a group to conduct a boycott.

Further, a union would be barred from picketing a store which sold products manufactured by a struck factory, allowing the union only the expensive process of advertising newspapers, radio and other media to inform the public that a store is selling unfair goods.

Building trades concessions granted would permit the signing of

labor contracts between any union in a construction concern before workers for a project actually are hired. This provision cuts the time limit permitted for a worker to join the union to seven days instead of thirty as in all other industries.

Another building trades provision specifically permits these contracts to carry clauses in which a contractor may agree not to subcontract work to a non-union firm. A breach of such contract, it is reported would enable the union to sue for the breach, but not call a strike.

The exemption given the garment industry from the secondary provisions is reported to permit garment worker unions to continue to keep subcontracting work away from non-union jobbers and manufacturers. It appears that a dress-maker could be picketed and his products boycotted as "unfair", for example, if he farms out sewing jobs to fly-by-night operators who pay substandard wages.

Organizational picketing restrictions, although not quite as all-embracing as in the vicious provisions of the Landrum-Griffin bill, appear to follow the general anti-labor character of the House bill.

Organizational picketing of any kind would be barred at a plant represented by another union, or when a picketing union has lost a labor recognition election during the previous twelve months.

In all other cases, it is reported that an employer could ask for a mandatory recognition election if the picketing were halting deliveries to his concern, or stopping tradesmen from entering. This type of picketing could continue only for a "reasonable" time, to be fixed by the National Labor Relations Board not to exceed thirty days.

Even where an employer is found guilty of an unfair labor practice, picketing is limited. The measure authorizes the general counsel of the National Labor Relations Board to determine whether or not a court injunction should be sought to halt picketing where an unfair practice has been committed by the employer.

FEDERAL-STATE JURISDICTION

In the so-called "no-man's land" created by the refusal of the NLRB to assume its full jurisdiction, the

compromise bill would give state agencies and courts jurisdiction over labor disputes which the NLRB now declines to accept. The NLRB however, would be required to continue to take cases falling within its jurisdictional standards in effect on August 1, 1959. The NLRB is also allowed to delegate more authority to regional directors in representation cases, it is reported.

The effect of the new jurisdictional provisions appears to break down recent labor-won federal preemption cases barring state action in interstate commerce where the NLRB has not assumed jurisdiction. Where the NLRB does not take jurisdiction in interstate commerce, the states would be allowed to move in, but at the same time the NLRB would be prohibited from refusing to handle cases of the size it now accepts, and would be permitted in the future to exercise its greater jurisdiction in interstate commerce.

SMALL "SWEETENER"

A small "sweetener" included in the compromise bill, designed to pacify labor, includes a half-way measure which would permit strikers to vote in so-called decertification elections. But even this right is limited to a period of twelve months after a strike begins.

(A MORE AUTHORITATIVE ACCOUNT OF THE PROVISIONS OF THE CONFERENCE-APPROVED BILL, NOW ALMOST CERTAIN TO BE ENACTED INTO LAW, WILL BE MADE IN NEXT WEEK'S NEWS LETTER AS THE WORDING OF THE BILL IS MADE AVAILABLE.)

Prices Up -- Purchasing Power Down

(Continued from Page 2)

and to \$73.31 for a worker without dependents.

The BLS noted that the increase in consumer prices over the month and the decline of spendable earnings reduced the buying power of factory worker earnings by about 1.5 percent.

Compared with recession levels a year ago, however, spendable earnings remained up by about 7 percent, as a result of higher hourly wage rates, a rise in the work week with recovery from the recession.

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MORE - INT'L AFFAIRS, EDUCATION AND SS

(Continued from Page 2)

States, in particular, must recognize here that long-term economic aid, and not guns, is necessary to do the job."

Education

California labor took to task the eager critics of educators and our public school system who appeared in the wake of Sputnik. This group, it charged, comes from the school of thought which tends to see America's appeal to the people of other nations almost exclusively in terms of its being the world's most far-flung distributor of military goods.

The Federation observed, "True enough, America is viewed by the world's people with a combination of admiration and envy because of her technology, gadgetry and abundance of consumer goods. But these are accomplishments more or less realized by Germany during the 1930's and which may foreseeably take form in the Soviet Union. Of themselves, they do not win the genuine respect and love of mankind—neither for Germany, nor the Soviet Union, nor for us.

"These latter tributes we have won primarily on those occasions in our history when our magnificent traditions in regard to the rights and dignity of man have been given meaningful life."

The convention stated, "Our nation must continue to afford full opportunity for the growth and development of esthetic and humanitarian values through which we maintain that spark which makes life a challenge and a joy."

Our development of only half the best brains of each new generation was considered a shameful blot on our way of life. The state body agreed with the AFL-CIO executive council's statement: "A nation which is prepared to spend upwards of 40 billion dollars for national defense can certainly manage one-

twentieth of that amount for an investment in the most precious of all our national resources—our children."

It acclaimed President George Meany's remark: "If Russia can find the funds to fully educate all students, so can the U. S."

The Federation noted that our public school system is burdened with 92,000 inadequately prepared teachers and is unable to fill another 135,000 openings. It is short 140,500 classrooms which would cost \$5.4 billion to build. Despite substantial investments of time and money for training, teachers' salaries average \$4,775, with one-sixth receiving less than \$3,500.

Delegates concluded, "Our schools' shortcomings are those of a nation which has been content with half-way measures in dealing with teacher and classroom shortages. In a nutshell, we have received exactly what we were willing to pay for—no more, no less."

Because of these considerations, and the fact that state and local governments already provide 96 per cent of the cost of our public school system, the Federation enthusiastically supported the Murray-Metcalf bill now before Congress.

This measure would provide a four-year outlay of \$11.5 billion for school construction and upgrading of teachers' salaries. It would provide California schools with an \$88 million shot in the arm during 1959-60 alone.

The back-tracking of the Eisenhower Administration, even on its own inadequate school construction proposals of 1957, was deplored. Of the Administration's current school proposals, the convention stated, "This package offer is hardly more impressive than if it were to guarantee a free pencil sharpener for each new school built by the local communities."

Union Label Week September 7-13

The period of September 7 to 13, 1959, designated as Union Label Week by the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations, has been officially proclaimed in California by Governor Edmund G. Brown.

Union Label Week is celebrated as an effort to maintain wages, to create prosperity, to insure job security and to protect America through the patronage of merchandise and services designated by the union label, shop card and service button.

The Union Label and Service Trades Department of the AFL-CIO has urged the cooperation of local bodies in making this event an outstanding contribution to the cause of organized labor by helping to impress upon the general public that the purchasing power of union members is a force for good in every community in our land.

As the direct result of labor's endeavors to obtain for the wage earners a more suitable share of the fruits of their labor, business everywhere has benefited by increased productivity and an expanded market, due to greater purchasing power among all segments of the people.

Manufacturers, merchandisers and service establishments who produce or sell union label goods or render union services are being urged throughout the state to publicize these facts and prominently display the products bearing these symbols of union workers' skills and craftsmanship.