

Randolph (A. Philip) Institute

The Union Card And The Ballot Box

Fourth National Conference of A. Philip Randolph Institute Affiliates

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"Let Us Have The Truth"

By George Meany
President, AFL-CIO

In an age where lesser leaders come and go, or sometimes fall flat on their faces, history will recall that Phil Randolph was one of the towering and durable freedom fighters of the 20th Century.

Even in adversity I have never known Phil to fall on his face or to stoop or shuffle before any man. I have only known him to stand tall and straight; a credit to the cause of freedom; a credit to the labor movement and a credit to the working people we represent — black and white alike. It sometimes takes a lot of courage to stand tall and straight in the image of Phil Randolph.

And I want you to know that I am well aware that there are many of you here tonight whose names are not as well known as Phil Randolph's or Bayard Rustin's, who have shown that kind of courage every day in standing up for principle, despite the pressures to surrender to expediency, to demagoguery or to opportunism.

And I am not going to say "thank you" for that courage and dedication because, frankly, I think it would be a little condescending. After all, standing on principle does not diminish you or take from you, it enhances you. It brings honor to your family; it wins you the respect of your communities.

But I did want you to know that I understand the pressures that you are sometimes under. And I want you to know that the AFL-CIO stands shoulder to shoulder with you and the Philip

Labor and Blacks: Dynamic Force for Social Change

By Bayard Rustin

Executive Director, A. Philip Randolph Institute

The 1973 National Conference of the A. Philip Randolph Institute was a milestone for the coalition uniting the black community with the trade union movement. Its size, the unity of its participants, and their determination to continue the job of building a political movement geared to the needs of working people were important reflections of the strong bonds between the two most dynamic forces for social change in America.



Congresswoman Yvonne Burke and Bayard Rustin enjoy a light moment.

Randolph Institute in the good and important work that you are doing.

Now what are the principles that we are talking about? What does it mean to talk about labor and civil rights — a common struggle?

It does not mean that just by being a good trade unionist you are going to bring about racial equality, nor does it mean that the cause of racial equality can never be advanced by being anti-labor.

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Over 750 delegates, representing more than 50 national and international unions, made this the largest Institute-sponsored conference ever. Among the participants were a broad cross-section of the labor movement: There were industrial workers from the Steelworkers, Auto Workers and other unions; teachers, members of AFSCME and other public employe groups; members of skilled construction trades, garment workers, textile workers and many others.

Running through the workshops and forums were two themes which have important implications for all working people. The first is the unity of the Negro-labor alliance; how this alliance has contributed to the important social progress in America and the essential role it must play in rebuilding a vibrant, majority liberal movement. The second theme was the key role black trade unionists are playing within their unions and their communities.

New Strategies For New Goals

Symbolizing the growing bonds between blacks and trade unionists was the fact that the conference heard major spokesmen of both groups. We heard labor leaders like George Meany, Lane Kirkland and I.W. Abel and leaders of the black community like Congressman Andrew Young and Congresswoman Yvonne Burke.

The message of these and other speakers was unequivocal. They are convinced that blacks and labor, working together for common, personally-felt objectives, can turn America around and bring us a government that responds to the poor and working people.

Another theme that emerged from the conference was that civil rights is not, as many assert, a forgotten issue. Those who participated in the conference expressed a passionate concern for the problems that most severely affect blacks.

And just as the earlier civil rights

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Keynote speaker George Meany: "If the full promise of America is denied to black Americans, it will never be wholly fulfilled for labor."

=New York, 1973? =

Confronting the Issues of the '70s

By Lane Kirkland
Secy.-Treas., AFL-CIO

This conference has attracted the participation of our top line — President Meany and all of our leading staff members — and that participation means to convey to you and any of those who have doubts that the AFL-CIO does attach the very highest importance to the work of the Randolph Institute.

We want to see that work expand. We want to see it flourish. We want to see it disregard the small-time snipers and operators who would rather take pot shots at something that works than risk exposing their own records of achievement.

What bothers some of your critics — and I gather that you have a few — is not that you have fallen short of your goals, but precisely because you are so far along the road to achieving them. They don't like and they can't accept the idea that between the labor movement as it is — the real labor movement with all of its shortcomings — and the movement for racial equality and progress with all of its problems — there can be a strong community of interest, mutuality of purpose and the binding alliance of action. In the eyes of those critics, that kind of a coalition ought to be possible only between an ideal labor movement of some far off day — a movement that never existed and never will, one conforming to their peculiar vision, if not to that of working people — and some kind of an ideal civil rights movement undertaking this or that narrowly based revolutionary mission, even if that mission holds no particular interest for the black man in the street.

But we live in the real world. Our members have real mouths to feed. They have real families that they must house. They have real bills to pay, they have real jobs to do. Real problems like these require real solutions — not words, not slogans, not theories. The fact that many black workers couldn't get jobs — good jobs — in the building trades was for a long time a real problem. The Randolph Institute and the Workers Defense League helped to provide a real answer through RTP, as did the Urban League through its league program. These and other Outreach programs have produced solid concrete results: 21,000 minority youths placed in building trades apprenticeships. Last year over 20% of the new apprentices were minority youth.

Does that mean anything? Not to some people, who are really more interested in preserving their right to flog the building trades than scoring jobs for black youth.

Likewise, in the field of political action, there are still those who would rather denounce the general wickedness of the system and the corruption of the culture than register people to vote to

effect lasting change. While a good deal of nonsense was being spoken, written and performed in 1972, the Randolph Institute, with the backing of COPE, was working to register black voters and to get them out to the polls.

We saw some very interesting and instructive results. Every Senator with a strong civil rights record was reelected. Only one Congressman with a perfect civil rights record failed to win reelection, and that was because of reapportionment.

That was quite a victory, and it happened despite an unparalleled disaster at the top of the Democratic ticket.

The Un-hysterical Majority

That victory was brought about by people who did not allow themselves to be distracted by the political hysteria of the time. It was brought about, in the words of Kipling, by those "who kept their heads while all about them were losing theirs." And that includes the people in this room, representing the real

You will recall, of course, that the new and not-so-mysterious development turned out to be their own defeat on a nearly unprecedented scale, whereas our own old "over-the-hill gang" produced the only substantial good news of the year. Certainly, now it's clear that it's the only protection that we have — shaky as it is — against this Administration's meat-ax assault on practically every social program enacted from the New Deal to the Great Society.

To be sure, the Administration has not yet sought repeal of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 or the Voting Rights Act of 1965. But it is seeking, in effect, to repeal a great multitude of programs that provide the economic and social underpinnings of equality and of opportunity. And so, the first item on the agenda before us is to try and stop this from happening. We have to stop the federal government from turning its back on the housing problems of low and middle-income Americans. Our right to a decent



Lane Kirkland: "There can be a strong community of interest between the labor movement and the movement for racial equality."

working alliance between labor and civil rights.

Of course, there is another version of Kipling's line, which says that "if you can keep your head while all about you are losing theirs, perhaps you just don't understand the situation." Maybe they know something that you don't know. And, indeed, it did seem sometimes in 1972 that a goodly number of people thought they knew something that we didn't know, that some mysterious new forces were at work in our political life, in our cultural life, to which we were blind, and that unless we opened our eyes and our arms to the "new" and to the "now," that the wagon train of history would roll right over us, leaving our bones to bleach on the desert of irrelevance.

home cannot be conditional on the ups and downs of the private money markets or the bankers' order of priorities. We have to stop the federal government from unloading its responsibilities and killing programs by means of phony revenue sharing schemes that leave local governments with bigger burdens and less money. We have to stop the federal government from instituting a sub-minimum wage for teenagers which would only encourage employers to fire Pop and hire Junior.

I could go on — there is a long list of things that we must stop this Administration from doing, as best we can. But we cannot be content simply to stop those things. We are not interested in keeping

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KIRKLAND

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things as they are and stopping them from getting worse. We don't mean to be trapped in a negative, defensive kind of future.

Moving Ahead

Therefore, the second item on the agenda before us is this: At the same time that we work to stop that clock from being turned back by the Nixon Administration, we must work to turn it ahead.

It is not enough to prevent Administration raids on the Treasury to finance tax giveaways to the corporations. The time has come, and is long overdue, for thorough-going tax justice; and that means closing the loopholes, bringing fair play and democratic values into the tax system that lies at the base of every governmental program that has any meaning to us.

And it is not enough to prevent the Administration from increasing Medicare costs for senior citizens. We need to enact the National Health Security bill to provide quality health care for every citizen regardless of age, race or economic circumstance.

It's not enough to prevent the Administration's moratorium on federal housing assistance from continuing. We need to undertake a massive, nationwide program to meet the goal of 26 million new housing units in the next decade.

It's not enough to prevent this Administration, through its loaded, inequitable economic programs — control programs — from raising unemployment still higher. We do not accept 5% or 4% unemployment as a definition of full employment. Full employment means a job for every American willing and able to work and that is what we're after.

But if we're to meet our goals for the decade of the '70's, it will be because of hard work and forward motion on many

RUSTIN

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movement formulated strategies to deal with Jim Crow, so have black union activists found ways to deal with the political and economic needs of the black community.

They have registered hundreds of thousands of voters and have enabled the ordinary citizen to overcome often discriminatory and confusing voting procedures throughout the nation. At election time they help mobilize the black community so that its full voice can be heard at City Hall, the State House, or in Washington. To point to just one example, the efforts of the Institute group in Memphis were instrumental in producing a black voter turnout of 73 per cent in 1970, a remarkable figure for a non-presidential year.

Remembering the March on Washington

By Congressman Andrew Young

My victory was not a victory for an individual, but for a process, and an idea. Whenever people join together to struggle for an idea they believe in they will achieve victory.

We could not have had a successful civil rights movement without Mr. Randolph. For it was Mr. Randolph and Bayard Rustin who turned the civil rights movement around right at its most crucial point — after the Birmingham demonstrations. We were then a predominantly black movement in the South. Even with the leadership of Martin Luther King we had gone just about as far as we could have gone.

We would never have become a national movement had Bayard Rustin and Mr. Randolph not organized the March on Washington and gotten the support of a broad spectrum of the liberal forces in the country. It was the March which transformed what had been a southern movement into a national movement.

That national movement, we now know, also produced the most important civil rights bills, a new sense of hope for

different fronts.

In this effort there is a very special role for the black trade unionist. There is an important role for him within the trade union movement, and there is an equally important role for him as a trade unionist within his community.

Black union members, of course, have always played an important role within the civil rights movement. Now that the basic goals are economic, the black unionist's position is that of a vanguard, a leading force for bringing about social change.

The Randolph Institute is helping to coordinate these efforts throughout the nation. The Institute is active in every major city, working through either its own affiliate organizations, or in conjunction with other groups. We are also active in numerous smaller towns and rural communities.

The conference also dramatized the important job the labor movement is doing to organize low-paid, unorganized minority workers. We heard reports from representatives of three unions engaged in strikes that are crucial to black and Spanish-speaking workers throughout the South and Southwest. Since the conference one of these unions, the Textile



Congressman Andrew Young with A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin. Young told the conference that Rustin and Mr. Randolph "turned the civil rights movement around at its most crucial point."

Chicanos, poor whites, for people like the Farah strikers, for teachers trying to organize all across the country and a new thrust to make America what we all know it should be.

To assist you in playing both of those roles is a major function of the A. Philip Randolph Institute. In that task, as in the many others thrust upon it and upon you by the urgencies of our times, you will have the enthusiastic support of the AFL-CIO.

Workers, has won its strike against the Oneita Company of South Carolina. This victory may very well lead to further unionization in the south's rigidly anti-union textile industry. A spokesman for the Amalgamated Clothing Workers told of the strike and boycott campaign against the Farah Company in Texas. And we heard of the continuing struggle of the Farmworkers to establish a permanent base in California.

Finally, I think the conference demonstrated the commitment and determination of the black-labor coalition to fight the discriminatory policies of the Nixon Administration.

This was an important development at a time when there is so much confusion about political objectives. For if our political leadership has been deceitful, its consequences have been most cruelly visited upon poor people, working people, and black people.

The Key to Black Progress --Full Employment

By Ray Marshall
Director, Center for the Study of Human
Resources, University of Texas

What are the most important economic problems we face? General consensus would put unemployment at the head of the list. The Administration's present position is that unemployment is not a very serious problem. And they give us two reasons for that conclusion. One is that those who are unemployed don't have serious problems because unemployment is heavily concentrated among teenagers and people who are not heads of households. A second reason is that we now have unemployment insurance. And therefore, unlike the 1930s, the unemployed have some recourse and are not completely without income.

It seems to me that there are a number of fallacies in this line of reasoning. The first one is if you take a black perspective, the single most important force for black economic progress has been a tight labor market. But when unemployment is five or six per cent, it becomes extremely difficult to do what we need to do to get more jobs for blacks and to upgrade blacks that have jobs. So as a measure of the looseness of the labor market the unemployment rate that we presently have is serious.

A second point is that only about half the people who are unemployed have unemployment insurance. The other half do not. And therefore it is a serious problem for those people regardless of how old they are or whether they happen to be heads of households. Another consideration is that the unemployment rate greatly understates the problem that we face. It camouflages pockets of unemployment as high as forty per cent among blacks in some central city areas. And therefore it covers up a lot of very serious problems. The Russians have a proverb that the trouble with looking at an average like an unemployment rate is that cows have drowned in water an average of four inches deep. So you need to be aware of the deep holes as well as the average.

Another reason it understates the problem is that *underemployment* is a much more serious problem than unemployment. The unemployment rate is really not a very good measure of the looseness or tightness of the labor market. There were during 1972 an average of 8 million people unemployed. There were also 14.6 million people who worked and earned less than two dollars an hour. These people earned less than the poverty wage.

Now from an economic point of view, another serious problem about unemployment is that we seem to be in an era when we get a fair amount of inflation, and the things we have to do to solve the unemployment problem tend to generate more inflation. I don't think that's necessary but nevertheless the fact that people assume it is true makes them reluctant to do things that they need to do to reduce unemployment. The reason we're supposed to have a dilemma is that what we do to overcome unemployment tends to generate inflation, and the kinds of things they've been doing to overcome inflation tend to generate unemployment. So it seems that people are convinced that we've got to have either one or the other of these but that we're not able to check inflation and keep unemployment down at the same time. I think this is fallacious reasoning.



From left: Walter Davis, Nat Goldfinger and Ray Marshall, members of panel on "Blacks in an Economy of Scarcity."

I think it is possible for us to keep unemployment down and check inflation, but we've got to do some things that aren't being done now. I also believe that what we're doing to solve the so-called inflation-unemployment dilemma contains some very serious dangers for blacks and low income workers. The first thing that we try to do is control wages and prices and have wage-price controls. Ordinarily the standards adopted to regulate wages are biased against blacks. The reason they're biased against blacks is

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Nixonomics-- A Story of Setbacks

By Nat Goldfinger
Director of Research, AFL-CIO

The 1960s represented a period of fairly steady progress for working people and for minorities in particular. This was a period of declining unemployment and general improvement in the conditions of the general population. This progress was even greater for blacks. For example, in 1961, the first year of the Kennedy administration, there were 971,000 unemployed blacks, representing an unemployment rate of nearly twelve and a half per cent. And by 1969 that unemployment had declined to about 570,000, or 6.4 per cent. The improvement here was most marked among adults: there was a reduction in the unemployment rate for adults from 11.2 per cent in 1961

to 4.6 per cent in 1969.

There was also a decline in the number of people below the government defined poverty level. At the same time there were a series of breakthroughs in terms of government programs, not simply in terms of monetary policy, interest rates, and government programs to lift employment but also in civil rights legislation, voting rights legislation, improvement in the minimum wage, in the adoption of manpower training programs, and in federal aid for education.

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The Political Bonds of Blacks and Labor

Al Berkan
*Director, AFL-CIO Committee
on Political Education*

The labor movement faced a very difficult campaign in 1972. The Democratic Party was split asunder. Labor was divided over the presidential election. Because of this, we at the AFL-CIO decided to concentrate on local races, state races, Congress and the Senate. And I think it's a tribute to our political operation that we were able to buck the political tide, overcome the Nixon landslide, and save the Congress.

One of the most important things about last year's election was that, in spite of the divisions, the black community and the labor movement was united in almost every election. In Rhode Island, where Senator Pell was in deep, deep trouble, the black vote and the labor vote were instrumental in providing him the margin of victory. In Delaware, Joseph Biden won a terrific upset because black voters and unions members supported him. In Kentucky, the black vote in Louisville made the difference for Huddleston.

The same pattern was repeated in state after state. And it testifies to the common bonds between blacks and the labor movement and to the mutuality of interests which have made the black-labor coalition such a powerful force for social progress. . .

Washington isn't a happy city these days. No American can feel happy or take satisfaction with what is going on in the capitol. It's true that both parties have had their share of hanky-panky. Neither the Democratic nor the Republican party is blameless. Harry Truman had his Harry Vaughn with the deep freeze for alleged favors. Harry Truman didn't hesitate to tell Vaughn not to invoke executive privilege. He told him to go and testify. Ike had Sherman Adams and to his credit didn't invoke executive privilege.

The A. Philip Randolph Institute has pledged its overwhelming support for the boycott against the Farah pants company of Texas.

Don Lee, of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, told the conference that the Farah strikers were determined to win their struggle against an employer who "does not believe that the laws of this land are made for him."

The strike began over a year ago. The main issue was union recognition for Farah's workers, most of whom are Mexican-Americans. Lee said their average take-home pay was \$69 a week.



COPE Director Al Berkan: "Watergate is only the tip of the iceberg."

But Nixon . . . The crimes that have been committed, and you know Watergate is only the tip of the iceberg, boggle your imagination. I hate to even read the newspapers to see the depth of the corruption and moral rot. State Department collaboration in faking telegrams to implicate John F. Kennedy in an assassination in South Vietnam. Fake letters sent up to New Hampshire putting Muskie in a position where he was using a derogatory term against the French in that state. Forged letters accusing Jackson and Humphrey of moral misconduct. FBI, CIA. It boggles your mind.

But I tell you what is the worst crime. It is the cover-up by this administration. The people have lost confidence. Do you blame them. When Nixon goes to Milwaukee and says Ramsey Clark is soft on crime and if I'm elected I'll give you an Attorney General that'll take the crime off the streets. What did he give us. He gave us Mitchell. And he took the crime off the streets, but he swept it right into the White House. People are so distrustful of Washington that I read down in Atlanta, Georgia, some people are beginning to doubt the verity of the moon-shot.



Ernest Green, Director of the Recruitment and Training Program, served as chairman for plenary session.

But it also means that the cause of labor can never be advanced by being anti-black. If the great majority of black Americans were employers, then maybe the cause of civil rights could be advanced by holding down wages, by weakening unions, by passing right-to-work laws or otherwise by enriching the bosses at the expense of the workers.

But the great majority of black Americans are not employers, they are working people. And any improvement in the conditions of working people generally brings an improvement in the conditions of black people. Maybe that explains why the latest statistics show that black workers are more likely to be union members — and this is true — than white workers. And maybe it also explains why a Chicago Urban League study showed more blacks in decision-making positions in the labor movement than in any comparable institution in American life.

And it is a two-way street. If you can't advance the cause of racial equality by being anti-labor, neither can you advance the cause of labor by being anti-black.

If that were the case, we might have Carswell and Haynesworth sitting on the Supreme Court today. They are not on the Supreme Court because we wouldn't buy anybody who was either anti-labor or anti-black, because we have found out so often in the past that if you scratch one, the chances are you will find the other.

So this is a common struggle. If labor is wounded, black America will bleed. And if the full promise of America is denied to black Americans, it will never be wholly fulfilled for labor.

I must say that there are days when I wonder whether anyone can afford the American dream anymore — it is getting more and more expensive.

A few years ago there was a saying around the civil rights movement: "What's the good of being able to sit at the lunch counter if you haven't got the price of a hamburger?" Now that was back in the Sixties when chuck roast was 60 cents a pound but now it is \$1.40. At this rate, nobody will be able to sit at those lunch counters before long.

It is as if, in the Sixties, we took down the "white only" signs and now have put up "rich only" signs.

Anyway you turn it, when the cost of living goes up, so goes the cost of equality. You can't be equal to your neighbor if you can't afford proper food for your family or clothes for your kids or a decent home.

Crisis

And why are we in this economic mess? Maybe there should be an investigation of this economic mess along with the Watergate business. Unfortunately, newspapers aren't interested in this question at the moment. They feel they have the White House over the barrel on Watergate and they are playing it for all it's worth.

Mayor Washington mentioned the fact that Watergate represents a crisis. Well, it is the greatest government crisis in my

lifetime, I can say to you. And I have a very simple solution.

You know, the American people can stand it if they know what it is all about. We are not going to go down the drain because of the machinations of a few. What we ought to have on Watergate is very, very simple. Let us have the truth, no matter how bad it is and as soon as we can get it. We can live with it and we can go on and make the corrections that are necessary.

Let us be done with these lies and deception that we are getting from the Executive Branch of this government.

For God's sake, let us have the truth. We can live with it and we can make the corrections. We can change our electoral laws.

I am not worried about a few people that broke in — a few clumsy people. I am worried about what this means to democracy in America. Are elections to be bought by those that have the most money? Or are elections to be won by the people? Lincoln said, "A government for the people." Fine, I think the people over in the White House should know who the people really are, and the people are not the corporations of America.

And I can say to you very advisedly, that we are not going to forget this crisis and this crisis is not going away until the



George Meany and A. Philip Randolph

American people know the truth. And if we can get the truth in a few weeks, fine. But, until we do get the truth, we are going to be practically without an Executive Branch of the government.

We are concerned about this. Our Executive Council made a very strong statement on it. And, as citizens, we have a right to be concerned.

But we are interested in other matters like prices, profits, unemployment and tax reform. And I would like to suggest to the press, if we can get their attention away from Watergate for a few minutes, that if they are interested in deception, lies and skulduggery, Watergate isn't the only place to look.

When this Administration first took

GEORGE MEANY

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office back in 1969, the President made a promise to the AFL-CIO — and he made it in writing — that he would bring inflation down without increasing unemployment.

Well, you know what happened to that promise. Inflation and unemployment both went up. And as a result of that false promise, unemployment among American workers climbed by 2,400,000.

When this Administration pushed its so-called revenue sharing plan against the strong opposition of the AFL-CIO, it gave the governors and the mayors the impression that the new revenue sharing funds would be on top of existing funds.

Well, you know what happened to that promise. The local and state governments will be worse off than before and this at the hands of an Administration that claims it wants to strengthen state and local governments; that it wants to bring power closer to the people.

Next time you hear somebody shout "Power to the people" you had better run for your life because it is either some nut representing the New Left or it is a spokesman for the Administration.

The fact is, when Nixon took office, the inflation rate was 4.5 percent. Four years later it was up to 6.3 percent. By March of this year, prices were rising at an annual rate of 8.8 percent — and these are government figures; these are not my figures.

And here is another one from the same article by Mr. Ash. By most of the usual statistics, the second Nixon Administration is off to an excellent start. This is what he said — this is in writing in the New York Times. "Unemployment is down from 6 percent to 5.1 percent." Well, now that's cute. Mr. Ash must think we are a lot of dumbbells. You see, unemployment is down from 6 to 5.1 percent, but how did it get up to the 6 percent to begin with? It was only 3.3 percent when Mr. Nixon took office. So, of course, it went up to 6 percent and now it is back down to 5.1 percent.

I guess you wouldn't call that a lie. It is a half-truth, with the most important half left out.

Finally, Ash goes on to say that the Nixon Administration — and get this one — the Nixon Administration is doing more for the poor, the sick, the aging and hungry than did President Johnson.

Help For The Poor?

Yes, the Administration is doing a lot for the poor. It is dismantling the OEO. It is doing a lot for the sick. It is terminating the federal health programs. And it is doing a lot for the aging. It is forcing them to pay more under Medicare. And it is also doing wonders for low and middle-income families by cutting off their federal housing programs. And it is doing wonders for our children by slashing the school lunch programs for needy children and trying to cut federal help to schools and libraries.

Oh, it's a wonderful record. I wouldn't mind so much if they would just carry out their dismantling project and accept the consequences. But they can't seem to break the habit of deceit.

Perhaps the most galling example is Social Security. The Administration now claims credit for the 20 percent increase in Social Security. They think the people are too dumb to remember that the Administration fought this increase tooth and nail and tried to keep it down to 5 percent.

So this is a cold-hearted Administration all right, but it wants to be loved and so it lies.

I don't know any other way to express it. Oh, I suppose I could say, maybe that's not true, but, when you are told a damn lie, you have got to recognize it as a damn lie.

They want to be loved and they are going to keep on trying to deceive us. The Administration wants to act like Scrooge but, at the same time, to look like Santa

Claus. And, boy, that takes quite a make-up job.

But this is not a selfish Administration. Not completely. It does not lie only for itself, but lies for others, too. It covers up for its big business friends.

Just last week, for instance, on the 9th of May, the Cost of Living Council issued a news release stating that the pay of corporate executives had risen less than 5.5 percent, which is the permitted raise for workers under the Phase II guidelines and Phase III.

Well, it is nice to know that if the average workers' wage increase was being held down to 5.5 percent, well, when his bosses were held down to 5.5 percent.

The only trouble with this report is that it is a lie. It is not true. It is based on an IRS survey of about half a million people. Incidentally, these half a million people work for 94 companies, these "executives." Boy, that is a lot of executives per company — you just figure that one out.

But, actually, it was mostly white collar, salaried and clerical employees, including file clerks, stenographers, and secretaries. And they were included in this survey of executive compensation.



Gilbert Padilla told the opening night dinner of the continuing struggle of the Farmworkers Union. He emphasized that the union is resolved to win its latest fight.

Actually we checked and found that four tenths of one percent of this group really consisted of executives.

This is how the Administration actually doctors its statistics. And I mean this. They doctor them for their own political purposes and for the purposes of saving the faces of their big corporate friends. I wouldn't be surprised if they do some little adjusting on the unemployment statistics.

Rich Get Richer

Fortunately, we have other ways to get facts. According to Business Week magazine — and that is not a labor maga-



Velma Hill tells how the United Federation of Teachers organized school paraprofessionals in New York City.

zine, it is a business publication and they ought to know — compensation for top corporate executives increased last year by an average of 13.5 percent.

Well, that is a long way from the 5.5 that the government agency reports.

And at the same time, according to government statistics, the average hourly earnings of Americans rose 5.6 percent — just about the guidelines. So, while workers' wages were being effectively controlled — very effectively controlled — executive compensation was not being controlled, just as we have said right along.

As for prices, I don't have to tell you how they have gone through the roof. However, there is no figure that can come out so bad that it discourages Mr. Herb Stein. He can't be discouraged, no matter how bad it gets. Soybeans have gone up from \$3.64 a bushel in April of 1972 to \$8.85 a bushel today. But you can't discourage Mr. Herb Stein. He can't be discouraged. This is a way of life.

You remember when the President said to 4,000 people "If you don't think we are controlling prices, if you don't think prices are going down, you ask your wives." You remember that, you were there. And those were his words. "You ask your wives." Of course, he got very upset when 4,000 people laughed in his face. And they didn't laugh because he was trying to be funny.

But we still have the guideline for prices at 2.5 percent. The annual rate at the present time is 9 percent — almost four times the guidelines.

Well, when prices shoot up and wages do not, you know what is going to happen. You don't have to bother with government figures. Go look at the Wall Street Journal. They will tell you the story. They did a survey of 655 corporations. The found that the after-tax profits

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Labor: The Cutting Edge of Social Change

By I. W. Abel
President, United Steelworkers Union

The record clearly shows that organized labor has been the cutting edge of decent legislation in the history of our nation. Despite what some critics think it is fashionable to say about labor's stand on issues, we have been first on the Hill in the whole area of social legislation. We have refined our procedures and have become more effective in each passing election. We almost turned it around for Senator Humphrey in 1968, and looking back now, wouldn't that have been a real blessing!

We intend to keep our political machinery in good working condition. We intend to keep it well oiled and ready to move into high gear. We intend to keep looking for ways and means to make it still more effective.

Yes, the list of political objectives is a long one. We of the trade union movement can negotiate wage increases but we cannot negotiate an economic controls program that is equitable.

We can negotiate hospital benefits but we cannot negotiate health insurance for the nation.

We can negotiate fringe benefits but we cannot negotiate a fair Federal tax structure. We can negotiate paid vacations but we cannot negotiate a Congress that is responsive to the needs of people.

We can't do anything at the bargaining table about national leaders who won't level with the American people; who treat them as children; who tell us the crisis of the cities is over when it is not; who tell us on national TV of Christmas Eve goals of jobs for all who are willing to work but whose own economic policy actually increases unemployment.

Nor can we negotiate over national leaders who look us in the eye during a national TV address — dubbed the Tiny Tim version of the Checkers speech — and claim goals of making this a land of opportunity for everyone; of making it a land where each person can live his dreams in dignity. And yet say this after opposing a 20% increase in Social Security to help the aged live with dignity; who sought to slash the school lunch program for needy children; who seeks to cut Federal help to schools and libraries and whose Administration is hell bent on dismantling needed social programs while inventing economic programs favoring the privileged.

I do not presume to speak for all American workers but I would guess that if American workers could speak to our national leaders with one voice, this is what they would tell them:

Start telling us the truth.

Stop trying to manipulate us.

Let us get on with the unfinished business of America.

No more Watergates. No more political fat cats with brief cases stuffed with \$100 bills. No more departments of dirty campaign tricks.

We of organized labor intend to continue to do all we can to see that the

American people get the kind of elected public officials they deserve.

We intend to remain a political force in America because we think we have done some good. We hope we can do some more.



Steelworkers President I.W. Abel explained how labor's political struggles affected the individual worker.

The latest figures from the Census Bureau prove that the union card really does pay off. A special report on the social and economic conditions of blacks shows that:

- Median earnings of blacks in unions were substantially higher than earnings for non-blacks — 31 per cent for males; one per cent for females.

- Where both blacks and whites are in unions the difference in earnings is extremely narrow. Blacks who are in non-union jobs, however, lag considerably behind whites in terms of income.

The report said black, unionized workers in the skilled trades earned over \$2,000 more than non-union blacks in the same occupation category. Furthermore, unionized skilled black workers had reached an earnings level 87 per cent of the earning level of whites while non-union skilled black workers earning only 76 per cent as much as did non-union whites.



Charles Montgomery, chairman of the Jackson, Mich., Randolph Institute chapter, addresses plenary session.

Teachers, Civil Rights, and Political Action

By Albert Shanker

President, United Federation of Teachers

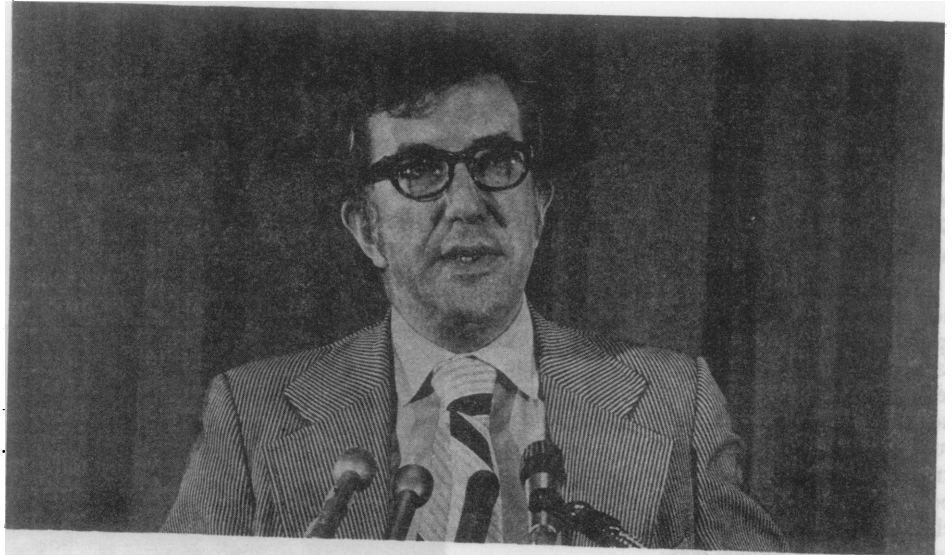
In 1960 there was no such thing as collective bargaining for teachers anywhere in the United States. There were no contracts or grievance procedures. There was only a union struggling to convince teachers that they should have these rights, but which did not have a single contract negotiated. The national membership of the Teachers Union in 1960 was 50,000. The membership in the state of New York was 2,400.

Teachers would not join the union. They wouldn't join for a very simple reason. They came from homes where their parents were workers, perhaps immigrants. They thought that unions were a fine thing which had helped their parents earn money so that they could go to college. And having gone to college, they now felt that they were professionals and were above it all. To join the union would mean that they really hadn't gotten beyond their parents. Thus they were willing to endure low salaries, rotten working conditions, no grievance procedures, no security or anything else, because this proved that they no longer needed what their parents needed. It also meant teachers were not very much involved in politics: keep politics out of education and education out of politics. These were the phrases.

However, between 1960 and 1965 something happened. Teachers got tired of working for less. They saw what was happening in the civil rights movement, and said we too have a right to be heard. And it was precisely during that period that the same teachers who involved themselves in marches in Selma, Montgomery and Washington and who opened up freedom schools in Mississippi and Prince Edward County came back to their own communities to find that they didn't have any rights.

And so teachers began to organize. I mentioned a moment ago that in 1960 there were 2,400 unionized teachers in the state of New York. Today there are 187,000. In 1960 there were fifty thousand teachers in the American Federation of Teachers; now there are 375,000 teachers in the organization nationally. And during that period half the states adopted legislation which gave teachers and other public employees the right to collective bargaining.

During this period we saw another development, the employment through federal funds of paraprofessionals. In New York City we represent approximately 10,000 paraprofessionals. These are mainly blacks and Puerto Ricans who were on welfare and had no high school degree. Because of the union their salaries have more than doubled; they have also won time and money so that they can enroll in college programs. Now six thousand



Albert Shanker told of the United Federation of Teachers' role in the civil rights movement and of the growing awareness among teachers of the importance of political action.

and paraprofessionals are attending college and hundreds are becoming teachers every year. Because of the UFT, these are not dead-end jobs but a kind of career development and advancement program where paraprofessionals who started out without high school degrees become college graduates and professionals. . .

A Turn For The Worse

Through the late 1960s there was a great feeling of optimism on the part of teachers. Things were getting better; we had contracts, better working conditions, better salaries. And then all of a sudden the momentum seemed to slow down, indeed the courts and federal and state agencies started making decisions which were actually backward steps. Who would have thought in 1965, after all the progress in civil rights, that within a few years the President of the United States would dare to nominate people like Carswell and Haynesworth. It was unthinkable, and yet within a very short period of time it happened.

And the unthinkable happened not only in the civil rights field, but it happened to those of us in education and public employment. For the first time we saw what is called an oversupply of teachers. Now there is no overabundance of teachers. It's true that there are tens of thousands of unemployed teachers, but that's because there are children in class who are not being attended while there are tens of thousands of teachers who are unemployed. That's not an oversupply. And for the first time in American history we can talk about the possibility that within four or five or six years not only will the schools be in worse shape, but there may not be anything left of

public education if some of the plans of the current administration take root.

And so teachers have realized organization is not enough. Everything in our contracts are now in danger. There is the danger of cutbacks in federal funding. There is danger of legislation which invalidates parts of the contract and which would prevent teachers from negotiating on matters like class size which are essential to educational progress.

Within the last few years the very same teachers who wouldn't organize and said let's keep education out of politics came to understand that everything that they do in their schools and their classrooms depends on politics. This includes class size, paraprofessional programs, job security, and whether there will be twenty thousand unemployed teachers.

Teachers also came to realize that nobody has enough power to accomplish anything by themselves; nobody has enough power to do it alone. We realize that without friends we could gain nothing. So we looked for friends in this struggle for better education. There's the Chamber of Commerce, but we haven't gotten very much support from them. And then there are the real estate groups. We haven't gotten too much support from them. You start listing all the groups that exist in any community and the very same teachers who felt that they didn't want to be part of the labor movement because they didn't want to feel that they were still just workers finally reached the conclusion that the only other people that would work with them, and that they can work with, are other unions, civil rights groups, and some of the liberal groups, and that is what we're trying to put together.

The Unique Role of the Black Unionist

By Norman Hill
Associate Director,
A. Philip Randolph Institute

One of our biggest problems is that we have been on the political defensive. Last year, we did not define the issues which determined who was elected President. George Wallace defined them and Spiro Agnew defined them.

Thus busing was a central issue, but not quality education. Both candidates spent plenty of time denying they favored employment quotas when the real issue, about which we heard almost nothing, was developing a program to ensure decent jobs for everyone. And while crime and violence affect minorities and poor people more severely than anyone else, once again our forces were not defining the issue — Agnew was.

Our job is to take these issues and make them our issues, so that we offer a real program that appeals to working people. We don't have a ready-made blueprint, or automatic answers to how this can be done.

But we do think there are five things you should be doing as trade unionists in the coming period.

First, continue to play a day to day role in the political life of the black community.

Second: Where there is confusion, where there is misunderstanding and when there are a few people who are trying to misguide black people, you must stand up and speak out for what makes good sense. In other words, you've got to be the voice of militant responsibility in your community.

Third: You must help make the trade union movement a vibrant and necessary part of the life of the black community.

Fourth: We must go beyond the point where the primary objective of black politics is simply getting more representation. There are now more blacks and more Latinos holding public office than at any other time — and that is a great accomplishment. But we can no longer be content with representation as an end in itself. We must be concerned with whom that representation feels responsible to. Are our officials concerned with a few more patronage jobs, or are they committed to fighting for programs that will benefit the poor people and working people that comprise their constituency. The question of *who* we elect is going to be much more basic than *how many*.

Fifth, and finally, you must take a more active role within your own unions so that you can effectively tie the civil rights and labor movements together. We believe that, because of the sacrifices of A. Philip Randolph and because of the

example he set, the national trade union leadership recognizes the unique role of the black unionist as never before. But it can't stop there. The buck really rests with you. You are potential leaders within your unions. You can determine whether the political decisions of your

unions are truly in the mutual interest of the labor movement and the minority community. But you can serve this role only by exercising your democratic rights, by raising your voice and helping to make decisions on these issues. There is no other way.



Norman Hill, Randolph Institute Associate Director, told of the Institute's program for the coming period.

Do Randolph Institute affiliate groups have substantial impact on local black communities?

The answer to this question was provided by Leon Lynch, chairman of an Institute affiliate in Memphis. First, Lynch told the conference, the Institute has contributed to a substantial increase in black registration: since the group was established black registration has risen from 75,000 to 118,000. The Institute also ensures that the black political voice is heard by mobilizing the black electorate at election time. In 1970 the Institute's Operation Big Vote resulted in a black turnout of 73 per cent, a record for a non-presidential year.

In addition to its voter registration and voter education programs, the Memphis group carries on a vigorous campaign to educate black trade unionists so that they may serve as union officers and as members of central and state labor councils. "We try to develop a more aware trade unionist," Lynch commented.

Finally, Lynch said that the Memphis group helps the unemployed obtain jobs by working in conjunction with the local Human Resources Development Institute.

GOLDFINGER

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All of these programs had an impact. They lifted the living conditions, employment and incomes of the great mass of people, particularly in the black community. These programs were not perfect; there was a significant section of the black community which still remained outside the mainstream of society and the economy as late as 1969, particularly those with little education, those in the fatherless families, and the aging in hard core ghetto areas. But there was improvement, and had it continued there probably would have been further inroads towards helping many of those in the hard core areas of poverty and unemployment.

All this progress ground to a halt in 1969 and 1970. From the beginning of 1969 we've had a series of government measures, taken almost in succession, which have resulted in serious setbacks. Rather than reduced unemployment, we had a recession in 1970, and rising unemployment for over a year. We had a turnaround in the poverty figures so that for the first time in more than a decade we had an end to the reduction of the num-

ber of people below the government defined poverty level.

What we are facing now is a continued fairly high level of unemployment despite a period of boom. We have controls on the wages of the working people while prices are increasing and inflation accelerates. We have booming profits; a kind of lopsided, unbalanced situation of benefits to the few and setbacks for the many. And this is the kind of situation in which the black community suffers the most, particularly those in the black community which have begun to move into the mainstream of the economy. For example, you may think that rising interest rates have very little to do with you. But interest rates are very important to the black community. As interest rates rise and as the government begins to tighten the money supply and make it tougher to expand business and expand employment, residential housing construction is affected. In the past several months, as in 1969 and 1970, there is tighter money, rising interest rates and a decline in housing starts. So that the progress in housing that was being made for a couple of years is over. This means that the jobs and pro-

grams that are related to construction, including the outreach programs, are placed in jeopardy by declining employment and declining housing construction and construction employment. And this is only the beginning.

Dismantling

We also find the dismantling of social programs through a whole series of presidential vetoes and impoundments. Something like ten to twelve billion dollars appropriated by Congress for existing programs have been frozen by the President and withheld from operation.

All of this is a story of setbacks. Unfortunately, one of the things we have failed to do is let Congress know how bad it is. If you recall the 1972 elections resulted in what looked like a fairly good Congress. But Congress has not responded because Congress does not realize the serious plight that this country's economy is in. They don't seem to show the slightest realization that we have serious problems. And I think that it's high time that all of us got our pieces of paper and pencils and pens out and sent some clear messages to Congress to let it know of our needs and our concerns.

MARSHALL

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that they adopt the standard of percentage wage increases. And if you have a percentage wage increase people who make very high incomes are allowed to have very high increases in their incomes. People who are at the bottom tend to get relatively little.

The other problem is that wage-price controls ordinarily freeze the status quo. Since we're trying to make some progress in terms of bringing blacks and other low income people up from the bottom, freezing the status quo is not a very satisfactory solution. A third problem is that in most programs it's very important for people to have some participation to ensure that their interest is looked out for in formulating the programs. We have a long history of programs that seem to be all right. But when you look at the implementation of those programs they follow that biblical admonition that "to him that hath shall be given and to him that hath not shall be taken away."

No blacks participated in the formulation of phases one, two and three. So there was nobody there to look out for the interest of blacks. Nor was labor asked to help formulate the policy. I don't believe we will ever get a program that's effective unless we get participation.

Now a final reason that this is a dangerous situation is that it almost invariably will not only be biased against low income people, but will be biased against wage earners. It's much easier to control wages than profits and other non-labor income. Profits skyrocketed under Nixon's program. Why? Partly because the people who were interested in profits had something to say about the rules that were adopted. But it's also because if you have power in the legislative market and power in the product markets you're able to see to it that you come out all right regardless of what kind of system is adopted.

Now if you cannot solve the inflation-unemployment problem through wage-price controls, how can you do it? You cannot do it through monetary-fiscal policies which try to solve unemployment problems in a particular labor market by pumping money through the whole system rather than pinpointing the problem. The people with high incomes and relatively high skills will benefit more from monetary-fiscal policies than those who are relatively uneducated and have lower skills and lower income. Therefore monetary-fiscal policy alone operates against the interest of black people. Effective monetary-fiscal policies can

help, but it's not enough.

That's why it's very important to have an effective manpower policy. Manpower policies take a different approach to the unemployment problem from monetary-fiscal policies. If you have unemployment among people in a rural area then you adopt a policy to deal with that rural area and try to get those people to work. And if you cannot generate jobs in the private sector then the manpower system says public employment is the best way out. I believe that. Of course the Nixon administration has been opposed to employment programs mainly for ideological reasons. But we're not likely to have an effective reduction in unemployment without serious inflation unless there is a significant public employment program.

Instead of cutting back on manpower programs and cutting out public employment we need to expand and perfect them. There's a myth that the poverty program failed and the manpower program failed. They did not fail. And I defy anybody to debate that question on the basis of the facts. Some of the programs failed. Some didn't. But by and large these were very effective programs, and particularly effective in helping blacks and other low income people get into the labor market.

MEANY

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of these companies, for the first quarter of this year, were up by 27.8 percent over the first quarter of the previous year.

Yesterday the Department of Commerce reported that it had underestimated the rate of price increases during the first quarter of this year. Well, that's refreshing to admit that they lied to us a couple of months ago. You know what I mean, you take corrective measures. After all, they did give Vesco his money back you know.

Now, the Commerce Department also reported in the same month that corporate profits jumped \$11.6 billion. The previous year they went up \$5.8 billion. In other words, the rate of increase in corporate profits more than doubled in three months. In the same period, consumer purchasing power went down and, in effect, was no higher than it was a year ago. At this rate, corporate profits will reach \$113 billion this year and will go up much more than they did last year.

And all of this has been going on and we are being told that the wages of workers are the cause of inflation. It was inflationary for workers' wage increases to go beyond 5.5 percent. But somehow or other, it is not inflationary for executive compensation to go up 13 percent or more than twice as much. And it certainly wasn't inflationary for profits to go up 28 percent — more than five times as much as wages.

It was inflationary, according to the Administration, to exempt the worker making more than \$1.90 an hour from wage controls — we had to fight in the Congress to get this raised and did get it raised to \$3.50, and that is not high enough — but there was nothing wrong with a man who made \$689,000 in 1971 getting himself a raise up to \$874,000 in 1972.

Of course, that is not wages; that is executive compensation. That fellow's name was Ford.

Now, I hope you have had some fun watching the leap-frogging going on among the corporate fat-cats. If you didn't you ought to look it over and maybe it will take your mind off some of your problems that Bayard spoke about.

Who's On First

You see, back in '71, the highest-paid executive was Harold Geneen of ITT — you have heard of him, and I am sure you have heard of ITT. He was number one. He got \$813,000 that year. Now, poor Henry Ford was only number two. He only made \$689,000 so he decided, like Avis, to try a little harder. And, lo and behold, Henry got his raise in the beginning of April and became number one with \$874,000. That's pretty nice.

But you know how this free enterprise system is. Poor Henry wasn't allowed to be number one for more than a few

weeks. Along comes Richard Guerstenberg, chairman of General Motors, and his salary was \$874,567. He gets \$396 more than Henry. So that is where the contest stands now and we will try to keep you informed if Mr. Guerstenberg loses his crown.

While all these shenanigans are going on, the federal government continues to lose about \$20 billion in revenues each year through tax loopholes for wealthy families and corporations.

This is \$20 billion that could go toward serious programs to abolish poverty and tear down the slums of America. This is \$20 billion that could go toward providing quality health care for every American regardless of age, race or economic circumstances. This is money that could go toward providing decent housing for our families, dignity for our senior citizens, education and training for those who need it, child care centers for working mothers. This is money that could go toward programs to fight drug addiction and crime and to provide other desperately-needed community services. Despite what the President said, we still have some crime in America. We haven't solved the problems of our inner cities.

And in the process of doing all these things which are so badly needed to be done, we could create a job for every American willing and able to work. But we can't spend money on these things because that is excessive government spending and everybody knows that is inflationary.

It is a funny thing, though, that that is the only government spending — that it is the only government spending on social programs — that is inflationary. When you give the farmers \$4 billion not to plant 60 million acres, somehow or other, that \$4 billion is not inflationary. When we taxpayers subsidize — and I say this advisedly because this is what happened

— when we subsidized wheat exports to Russia with taxpayers money, somehow or other this is not inflationary. When prices, profits, dividends, interest rates and executive compensation go up, it is not inflationary. The only cause of inflation are workers' wages and government spending for social programs to help those who sadly need help.

Well, we in the AFL-CIO don't buy this at all, and we are not going to accept it. But the only way we are going to be able to change it is by working together. And I mean the whole labor movement, the civil rights movement and those liberals who have not completely lost touch, and there are some who have not completely lost touch with ordinary people.

The new programs we need for the '70's, unlike those of the '60's, may not carry a civil rights label. They may not carry a racial label. But insofar as they are programs to help most those who have least, rather than to continue giving more to those who have too much, they are programs for which black Americans and the great majority can accelerate their progress toward equality in fact, as well as in principle.

Some people have said that the civil rights movement is dead, that the cause of racial equality is passe. Well, I don't believe that. I believe that the ideals of equality have been broadened to embrace the great majority of the American people. And in that broadening, I believe we will not see a watering down of the ideals of equality, but new possibilities for realizing these ideals on a far wider scale and on behalf of far more Americans than ever before.

This is the task that we have before us in the years ahead. And I am sure that the AFL-CIO and organizations like the A. Philip Randolph Institute and others that all together can be equal to this task.

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