

"Reports From Labor"

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Labor Organizations

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Speaker: Jerry Tyler.....TAPE TRANSCRIPTION

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Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. We still haven't recovered from the cold that kept us from ~~making~~ making last Tuesday night's broadcast, so we are making a recording of this one. We figure that we can always stop and start all over again on a transcription if we run into a coughing spell... .but on a live broadcast, once we started coughing, it would be all over.

Once again we want to remind all members of the Alaska Fishermen's Union that your union meeting tomorrow night, a highly important meeting, will be held in Norway Hall, 2015 Boren Avenue starting at 7 p.m. There are three busses which will take you right to the meeting hall, the Roosevelt bus, and #7 and #8. This is a very important meeting, and all members of the Alaska Fishermens Union are urged to attend. Be sure to bring your union book. That's 7 p.m. tomorrow night in the Norway Hall, at 2015 Boran avenue. Take a Roosevelt bus, or a #7 or #8.

You know, speaking about this cold that's had us by the ears for a week or so now, we figure that we are very fortunate. Because we belong to a voluntary group health plan, the same one, incidently, that handles the health and welfare program of the ILMU longshoremen and other unions here in Seattle. This plan costs us \$4.50 per month. And we want to show you how it works, not to advertise the plan, altho we'd be glad to

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give you information on the outfit if you'll write to us, but because we received a letter today which ties right in with our experience as a member of this group health plan.

We made an appointment Tuesday and went up to the clinic. We got a thorough examination by not just one, but two specialists. They checked us from head to toe. Then they ran us down the alleyway to an X-ray machine and took some pictures, as the guy called it, wrote us out a prescription which we had filled right there in their pharmacy. In other words, we got real good medical attention.....attention that would have cost us any place else from 30 to 40 dollars. And it didn't cost us one thin dime over our regular \$4.50 per month dues.

Now you take the average working man or woman. He gets sick, or gets hurt. And he has to lay out a wad of money, money that comes out of what he is supposed to spend for food, clothing and shelter. He actually can't afford proper medical attention. We repeat that, the average working man or woman and his family cannot afford proper medical attention.

Well, a lot of people, especially those organized into unions, recognized this fact. The draft boards squawked loud and long about the number of prospective draftees that had to be turned down because of physical unfitness. And the pressure grew until even the politicians had to take notice. They grabbed at this issue of public health to use as a campaign issue. President Truman, for example, in his message to Congress in 1950 stated Quote: To fill a major gap in our social security system, I again strongly urge a comprehensive system of prepaid medical care insurance. Unquote. Pretty words. But we criticize him for his lack of action to back up those words.

Anyway, a good health insurance bill was written up and presented to Congress. And then the fun began. In spite of the fact that every trade union organization, practically, from the AFL, CIO on down the line, lined up solidly in support of this health insurance bill.....it never became law.

And who kept it from being a law? Why, the people who profit from sickness. There's the medical lobby, insurance companies, private utilities, patent medicine concerns and big business in general. The amount of money they spent, according to the congressional record of July 14th, was enough to train 9,000 new doctors. As it was, in the first three months of 1950 they spent \$369,526, and in the second quarter of this year they spent \$347,575, ~~and~~ about \$10,000 per day with an average of 100,000 pieces of propoganda daily, all to defeat a good plan of prepaid medical insurance to make it possible for every working man and woman to enjoy decent medical care.

And according to the Committee for the Nations health, of which both AFL President Green and CIO President Murray are honorary vice chairmen, a \$20,000,000 advertising campaign to saturate the newspapers, magazines and radio is timed for the critical pre-election weeks in October to defeat any chance of a decent prepaid health insurance program.

Yes, as we've said before, if there were large profits in national health, profits to a few, that is, we'd have national health. As it is, you, the people, will have to fight to get decent health.

~~Well,~~ you may think the cost of living is high now, but you havant seen anything yet. Here's just one of the indications. E.G. Plowman, \$62,000 vice president of U.S. Steel, has been appointed as a so-called dollar a year man in charge of the Defense Departments traffic Service. Now along with passage by the Senate of a bill taking rail freight ~~minimum~~ rates out from under the control of the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Justice Department, this appointment of Mr. Plowman will very likely have the effect of a juicy boost in freight rates for the railroads.....which will boost prices on nearly all goods, most of which are shipped great distances before they reach the consumer.....the boys are putting their hands in your pockets again, you lucky people!

~~We~~ picked up a copy of one of the resolutions passed by the

CIO Woodworkers convention in Minneapolis last month. This resolution called upon Congress to make necessary appropriations for the building of government roads into government owned timber. It claimed that these roads would pay for themselves in a very short time thru a tax on the timber moved over them, would allow for better forestry practices in selecting the timber to be logged, aid in firefighting and, most important, would do away with the curtailment of logging activities and open up new logging areas to competitive bidding.

We talked to Walter Belka, secretary of the northern Washington district #2 of the IWA about this resolution and we got a very interesting story.

The government owns large areas of timber lands. They latched onto them some years ago to keep the big lumber hogs from completely ruining one of our nations biggest natural resources. Now every so often the government opens up one of these areas for logging. They have certain rules and regulations, they go about the thing scientifically, allowing only the mature trees to be cut and demanding that the logging outfits clean up the area as they log it so new stands of timber are constantly maturing. Logging outfits are notified, then they enter sealed bids for the logging rights. The highest bidder gets the logs.....except for a cute little gimmick pulled by the biggest of the big logging outfits.

You see, these big hogs buy up all the available land around the best and most accessible government timber areas. And that is where these government roads come in. Because as long as a big outfit owns all the land around the timber area....no other outfit, no matter how much they'd like to bid for logging rights, can get in to do the logging. The big outfit holds what is known as the "right of way." No other outfit can cross their land to get to or haul out the logs. This makes a nice deal for the big outfits. No-one else will bid on the logging rights, because they know they can't get in. The big boys just send in a stinking little low bid....and the U.S. treasury gets beat out of hundreds of thousands of dollars....the big outfits

salt away great gobs of profits.

Now this has been going on for many years, this legalized robbery, and we have yet to see any daily newspaper complaining about it. Nor do we see any newspaper supporting the demand for government owned roads into government timber areas. But our listeners have pencils, and we suggest that you drop a note to your congressmen, tell them to pass a bill making available the money to build government roads into government timber areas so the logging rights will be open to all bidders.

In these days of rising prices, rumblings about wage freezes, no excess profits tax but a 20 percent increase on the working stiff's income tax....it's kind of nice to read that under the rules set up by William H. Harrison, who keeps on drawing down a quarter of a million dollars a year from American Tel and Tel while he runs the ^{war}military production set-up, all manufacturers are to give priority to war orders.....but.....a corporation can turn down Uncle Sam any time Uncle isn't willing to meet quote regularly established prices and terms of sale or payment unquote. In other words, while you have to pay the increased taxes out of your pay check no matter how hungry you are or how far in debt you go, and while any young working man of draft age must go to the army no matter how he feels about it.....corporations can tell Uncle to go fly a kite unless Uncle kicks in with the right kind of profit.

Who did you say ran this country?

Here's a gruesome little item which we received from the Michigan CIO in Wayne County, ~~Michigan~~. ~~Michigan~~ It's gruesome, because maybe so we'll catch the same thing here in the near future, unless we convince the city fathers that it shouldn't be done. Quote: A sixty percent increase in rents in Detroit suburbs and other Michigan cities has been reported following Federal decontrol. In some instances the increases have been higher. Federal and local officials reported this week that evictions have increased enormously where the protection of tenants against summary eviction has been removed.

With controls off in many Michigan cities, tenants have been at the mercy of their landlords. Some landlords have imposed no rent increase, some have raised 15 to 20 percent, some have doubled rents. There have been reports of large increases being made retroactive. (and then the cio makes this very interesting observation) Those promises of real estate interests that the end of rent ceilings would bring an increase in available housing have failed to come about. end of quote.

Well, that's what we face here in Seattle, unless, of course, we keep our eye on the ball and beller loud and long any time they start putting the increases on. Of course some increase has already come to many of us. The King County Rent Advisory Board told all landlords that if they had not received any increase since June of 1947 they could get 15% just by applying for it. And any landlord who got less than 15% since June of 1947, could get the difference. Pierce County Rent Advisory Board came out with practically the same deal a couple of weeks later. But at least they held the line to 15%. Now we've got to watch that they don't get their hooks any deeper.

This 15% grab, incidently, was sold on the basis that poor old Mrs Whoosis who had a couple of little apartments in her home, which was her sole means of livelihood, just had to have 15% increase so she and her cat could eat. But, actually, this 15% was a sweet kiss for the biggest of the big landlords in this area.

Incidently, remember when Senator Cain was running for office? And he claimed that he did not, as some people accused, represent the landlords? Remember? Well, if you don't like that rent increase when it comes, just drop Harry Cain a letter. We know he will have deep sympathy for your plight...but your rent will still be increased.

You know, the people we feel most sorry for in this rent increase deal is the Negro. Oh, sure, we hear a lot about Freedom Pledges and Crusades for freedom, we spend billions of dollars telling people of the world how democratic we are.....even if we have to hit them over the head....and we know

that every time you stand up and do a little fighting for fellow working people who have dark skins you are immediately labeled as a communist.....but never the less, the Negro is in an especially bitter predicament when it comes to a place to live.

In the first place, in spite of what the politicians say, there are only a few areas where the Negro can live. He's hemmed in there by these phony restrictive covenants, as they are called, which stipulate when you buy a home that you must sell only to people of certain races etc. He can't get out of those certain areas, and always those areas are slum or near slum areas. Your fellow worker, the Negro, must live with his family in some of the most crowded, run-down, disease breeding areas in the city. He pays taxes, he has to serve in the armed forces, he has all the community obligations you have.....but he lives in places where most people wouldn't even let a dog live.

We've seen whole families, even two or more families, forced to live in one room. We've called on shipmates, Negroes, at their homes and it made us sick and violently angry.

Now many well meaning people abhor this situation. They think something should be done. Politicians make promises. But the situation stays just like it is.....and here is why: There's profit to certain people in slums. That's the whole story.

Take a big apartment house. The rent is 50 dollars a month, lets say, for a three room apartment. Then say that this apartment finally falls into what is/called the "colored section." Those apartments which rented, three rooms for 50 dollars, will be cut in two. And the income to the landlord is doubled. That's where the profit comes in. The Negro ^{must stay} can't complain, he has nowhere else to go.

It is a rotten situation. And if you doubt that we know whereof we speak, look us up sometime and we'll go visiting. We'll show you.

Personally, we believe charity begins at home. We believe that here, in America, is where democracy should be made to work first.