

AFL-CIO Merger's Success Or Failure Depends Largely On One Man--George Meany

Editor's Note—AFL and CIO will merge next week into a single, powerful alliance of 16 million members. What are the aims of this group, socially and politically? Will it succeed? Can it reconcile factions long at odds? The answers depend largely on one man, George Meany. This first of three articles by a veteran labor reporter looks at Meany the man.

By NORMAN WALKER

NEW YORK (AP)—George Meany, erstwhile Bronx plumber, became head of the AFL three years ago. He quickly announced his primary aim was to arrange a merger with the CIO.

It seemed an impossible task. Jealousies and conflicts among rival unions and their leaders had doomed many prior merger attempts.

Considering all the problems, three years have been a short time. For Meany, with his typical plodding, make-haste-slowly approach, has succeeded in steering the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations into a single powerful alliance of 16-million members. It will end a 20-year split in organized labor.

Will the new organization endure? What will this formidable combination mean in terms of its inroads against employers, in organizing more union members, in influencing national politics—the stated union objectives for the merger?

Answers to these questions largely depend on Meany, the pudgy, 225-pound, coldly practical union veteran. Walter Reuther, dynamic young head of the CIO, has stepped aside and Meany, as the undisputed choice for president of the new AFL-CIO, will be America's No. 1 labor chief.

He has tried to calm the fears expressed by some businessmen and politicians that the merged union federation will become a "giant labor monopoly" seeking eventually to take over control of the government.

"To indicate that the united labor movement will attempt to horsewhip the rest of the country is a complete distortion of the facts," says the blunt-spoken, 61-year-old Meany.

"It is dedicated, not to predatory objectives, but to serve as a force for good in the progress of our country."

The merger is all set. It will be formalized at separate AFL and CIO conventions beginning Thursday, followed next week by a joint convention of the new AFL-CIO.

The joint convention, by the way, will be in an armory just a few blocks from Grand Central Station. The rail terminal is one of the structures Meany helped build when as a young man he was lugging his plumber's wrenches around New York.

Those were the days when Meany's wages were the chief support for his grandfather, his mother and seven younger brothers and sisters. His father Mike, a local

union president and Democratic party precinct captain, had died. Meany, Irish as they come, married an Irish girl, a garment worker's union member.

Meany's rise in unionism was swift. Becoming president of the New York State Federation of Labor in 1934, he pushed 72 labor bills through the State Legislature in one year. His achievements led to his selection as the AFL's national secretary-treasurer five years later.

Ever since then, Meany has been a man to be reckoned with in union affairs. While the late AFL President William Green was inclined to compromise and avoid conflict, Meany as his chief lieutenant was constantly prodding Green to take more stands.

Gradually, both before and after he was selected to head the AFL on Green's death in November 1952, Meany quietly took on all the old-line AFL chiefs in tests of strength and, by besting them one by one, has in practically every case earned their respect and support.

Out in San Francisco at the 1947 AFL convention, Meany tangled

with John L. Lewis, head of the miners union. Lewis wanted the AFL to refuse to submit the non-Communist affidavits required by the newly enacted Taft-Hartley law. He cowed AFL bigwigs with such scathing language as "I don't think the federation has a head—its neck has just grown up and bared over."

It was Meany who rose to answer the attack. "None of us," he reasoned with AFL leaders, "thinks it is a good law. But it was placed on the statute books under the Democratic system, and the only way it is going to be changed is by our representatives under that system."

Just as the convention supported Meany against Lewis in that in-

stance, Meany by courage, persuasion and logic has won all the big arguments he's had within the federation. There have been a lot of them.

His determination and diplomacy in dealing with fellow union leaders are largely responsible for patching together the AFL-CIO merger. Perhaps these qualities are a clue to what to expect from the new combined organization.

The AFL, now with about 11

million members, has been considered on the whole conservative. The smaller CIO, with about five million members, has often been called "radical" and regarded on the "left" on the American scene. It appears likely that Meany will try to steer a middle course, whipping the old-line AFL chiefs into more economic and political activity while taming the CIO to a more moderate course.

So long as Meany is the dominant figure in the new setup it will depend much on him whether the distillation of the AFL and CIO becomes strong, weak or moderate. The chances are he'll move cautiously at the outset, gradually consolidating the cumbersome alliance.

"We have a united labor movement determined to use its best brains and brawn and energy to continue to move forward," Meany has said. "We like the idea of saying that America is the wealthiest nation on earth. We are given to bragging a little bit too. Perhaps we don't mean it the same as others when we say that, because when we measure the wealth of this nation we measure it by the human yardstick, not by tall buildings, roads or natural resources, but by the standards of life of the great mass of the citizens."

Orgy Of Rapine In Everett Area Keeps Cops Busy

EVERETT, Wash. (AP)—Two women were raped in their homes in a suburban area near Paine Field early Saturday.

Undersheriff Bob Ryan said two women complained of assaults and their descriptions pointed to the same man. Both acts occurred in homes within a mile of each other. Ryan said a 5-foot 6-inch intruder broke into the home of a 31-year-old woman first, shined a light in her eyes, threatened to kill her if she cried out, and raped her. The woman was alone in the house.

Shortly afterward, a second woman, whose husband had just left for work, was assaulted by a man who also threatened to kill her if she cried out. He would not permit her to remove her 3-year-old son from the room.

It was the fifth instance in four weeks in which a man had broken into homes in the area.

Sheriff's officers started a house-to-house canvass of the area on Route 2. Everett in search of the man and to warn residents to keep doors locked at night.

Raped By Outcrys

Earlier, a man broke into the bedroom of an 8-year-old girl and threatened to kill her if she cried out. Her screams frightened him away. Two other instances involving an 18-year-old girl and a 20-year-old woman also were reported within a radius of a half mile. In both cases their cries drove the man from the houses.

Ryan described the man as about 25-35 years of age with an "eastern accent." He was dressed in khaki with a smooth material khaki jacket and denim or khaki trousers.

Eugene Laundry Loses \$150 To Shotgun Bandit

EUGENE, Ore.—A masked man carrying a shotgun got away with an estimated \$150 Friday evening from a Eugene laundry establishment.

The bandit was still at large Saturday and police were checking the possibility he escaped in a stolen auto.

Police reported an 18-year-old attendant, Esther Marie Sweeten, was alone when the armed man entered about 7 p. m. He had a handkerchief tied about his face and the barrel of a shotgun appeared from under the right sleeve of his overcoat. Miss Sweeten reported. She said he appeared to be about 20 years old.

He said nothing and took the money from the till after punching the no sale key with his elbow. Several hours later, a stolen car was reported by a nearby address.

Iron Curtain Torn Aside, Russ Claim; West Challenged

NEW DELHI, India (AP)—While the Kremlin's two bigwigs are touring India and making speeches, their top aides here are examining ways of supplying promised Russian technical and economic aid to the subcontinent.

Indian sources said talks on the subject are under way between high officials of the Foreign Office and Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister Gromyko and Deputy Trade Minister Kymukin. They remained in New Delhi when Premier Bulganin and Communist Party Secretary Khrushchev struck out on their tour.

Five Russian mining experts already have reached the capital to advise the Indian government on prospecting for oil and nonferrous metals.

Khrushchev, addressing the Indian-Soviet Cultural Society in Bombay, claimed that Russia has torn aside the Iron Curtain. Challenging other countries to open their frontiers — "as we have to foreigners," he said. "No one will be applied for permission to enter the Soviet Union was refused a visa this year. Why, we had at least 17 American senators touring Russia this year. I believe, as well as farmers, news-men, and others. Does that sound like an Iron Curtain?"

West Receives Warning

Khrushchev sounded a warning to the West, saying: "Russia does not stand alone today. We have many other countries who think as we do, and India is among them."

"In competition for peace we are sure to win. The capitalist press accused me of making a slip of the tongue when I said that in Moscow — they said my tongue was loose — but it was no slip. We will not deviate from the path set for us by Lenin."

He added that he doesn't "like the capitalist system, and when I speak about coexistence it is not for the purpose of continuing that system. But I give default recognition to capitalism and grant that it does exist."

Khrushchev was cheered when he said Russia would not beg for coexistence but would fight for it. He declared the Russians "are determined to maintain and expand world peace."

Cutover Land Owners Abetted By Tax Law

Owners of cutover lands in six western Oregon counties will have the opportunity to list their lands under the forest fee and yield tax law in time for the 1956 tax roll, the State Board of Forestry announced today.

Public hearings will be held in Douglas, Marion, Yamhill, Clackamas, Washington and Columbia counties early in March 1956 to consider classification. Applications to come under the law should be filed with the state forester prior to Dec. 15, state forestry officials advised.

Lands coming under the forest tax act pay 5 cents per acre in lieu of the property tax. The low rate enables owners to retain title to cutover lands until they can grow a new tree crop. When the timber is harvested, the county is paid a 12½ per cent yield tax. This tax reimburses the county for any difference between the 5-cent rate and the regular property taxes.

The reforestation act is intended to stimulate ownership of cutover and logged lands through the 5 cent per acre feature. Currently, about 950,000 acres in 18 counties, have been placed under the law.

Classification of the lands must be approved by both the state forestry department and tax commission, forestry officials advised. The forestry department urged all owners of cutover lands to investigate the possibilities of classifying their properties under the act.

Slavery-Born Woman Passes Century Mark

BOLEY, Okla. (AP)—Mrs. Hannah McCutcheon, born in slavery in 1855, passed her first century Friday. She attributes her long life to "being nice to everybody."

A widow for 66 years of her life, she still does her own housework and gardening, although she had to give up raising chickens last year. She uses neither a cane nor crutch. Mrs. McCutcheon has 20 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Mon, Nov. 28, 1955—The News-Review, Roseburg, Ore. 9

Mother Accused In Abortion Death

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—Mrs. Gertrude Silver waived a hearing Saturday and was held in \$1,500 bail by magistrate Elias Myers for grand jury action on charges of conspiracy and being an accessory in the abortion death of her food chain heiress daughter, Mrs. Doris Oestreicher.

Dist. Atty. Samuel Dash agreed to permit Mrs. Silver to waive Saturday's hearing in Philadelphia police court.

Dr. Abraham Ornstein, Mrs. Silver's physician, told the magistrate that Mrs. Silver now is able to comprehend the charges against her. Mrs. Silver, following her daughter's death, was hospitalized for extreme shock and Dr. Ornstein said she was unable then to appear for arraignment.

Mrs. Oestreicher, 22-year-old bride of a Miami, Fla., policeman, collapsed and died last Aug. 24 in the North Philadelphia apartment of Mr. and Mrs. Milton Schwartz, now awaiting trial on charges of performing an illegal abortion.

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