Anti-Union Move

According to certain literature and films which have been printed, much of the impetus for businessmen's activity in the political field stems from the desire of their leaders to stimulate action and initiate legislation against the union movement.

It is a one-track special—and sure to be derailed just as is any political action taken in vengeance against any segment of the population.

If the boys in the front offices and board rooms want a business-controlled government, they want something that would mean the end of the American way of life. It would mean that one fragment of the people—whose main purpose in life is to make profits—would be taken care of to the detriment of the rest, and our entire system would collapse.

Trade unionists have no objections to management managing their businesses. They have no objection to investment capital getting a return on its investment. They have no objections to profits in itself.

What unionists say to industry is that under this dynamic American system the workers want their *fair* share of the wealth that is produced, and they contend that the worker, the human element, comes first.

THE POSITIVE Legislative Achievements

Aside from adding to the number of liberal, forward-looking Members of Congress and of state legislators, and improving the climate of public opinion regarding the aims and purposes of trade unions, organized labor's political activities have resulted in the passage of many laws of benefit to its members and the American people as a whole.

A few of these are:

Child labor laws.

A system of free public education.

The Clayton Act which states that labor is not a commodity to be sold in the market place.

Establishment of the U.S. Department of Labor.

Better housing.

Better health regulations.

The AFL-CIO, in fact, is constantly working to improve the working and living conditions of *all* the people and preserve the American democratic way of life. Its representatives on Capitol Hill work with Congressmen on legislative matters in which the trade union movement is interested.

But there is an old saying that you can't squeeze blood out of

a turnip. Neither can you squeeze liberal laws out of a reactionary lawmaker.

Congress in Action

Often, especially after large numbers of liberal Senators and Representatives have been elected to Congress, many citizens become irritated because liberal legislation is not enacted immediately.

Seniority System

That situation is due to a number of reasons. One of the chief causes is the seniority system which prevails in both houses.

Under the seniority system, Senators and Representatives with the longest service head the Congressional committees. These committees are where legislation is originally considered, shaped and eventually recommended or disapproved.

So the committee charimen are the most powerful Members of Congress. But under the seniority system, they tend to be conservative or outright reactionary. That is because most of them, particularly the chairmen of the more powerful committees, are from the conservative South. That is due, in turn, to the fact that the one-party system is predominant in the South, which enables Congressional incumbents to win election after election with little or no opposition.

Leadership

Another cause is a leadership matter. Sometimes the leader of the party which holds a majority in one house or the other, for one reason or another, does not consider the wishes of the Congressional newcomers. Perhaps he owes a political debt to the veterans who put him in the leader's position. Perhaps his ears are naturally attuned to Members whom he has known for years rather than to freshmen Members. Or perhaps he is either a conservative himself or a liberal who naturally moves slowly.

Timidity

Another cause frequently is the timidity of newcomers. Even many so-called "flaming liberals" dislike to appear brash by introducing bills hastily or making a lot of speeches soon after entering the halls of Congress. They want to become familiar with the rules and regulations, as well as with the customs, of the Senate and House before embarking on an active legislative course.

They want, in other words, to get the "feel" of the Capitol.

All of these things contribute to what appears to be slowness on the part of what many persons consider a liberal Congress.