AFL-CIO COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION
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1 WHY LABOR IS IN POLITICS

THERE IS NOT A SINGLE LABOR-MANAGEMENT CONTRACT ANYwhere in America that is worth the paper it is written on if there is a Congress or state legislature that wants to weaken or destroy it.

That, in substance, is the principal reason organized labor entered the political field—and will remain active in it.

In the words of AFL-CIO President George Meany, unions are active in politics because they now find that, although the company spy and the professional strikebreaker have about passed from the scene, and although unions have certain protections under the law, even though not as many as before passage of the Taft-Hartley Act, "the employer has decided that the place to curb the trade union movement, the place to do battle with the workers and their trade unions, *is in the legislative field.*"

In short, the employers, not the unions, chose the political battleground. "We are in politics," President Meany says, "for the same reason that our people have taken beatings from company goons, for the same reason that our people have gone to prison in order to defend their unions. We are in politics to preserve the American trade union movement and by doing that, to make tremendous contribution towards preserving the American way of life."