

community or at national and international levels—to obtain a better break for the average citizen. It has been an agency not only for democracy, but for democratization. Because of union efforts the immigrants who came to our shores learned that America was really a haven for the oppressed of the world. They learned through their unions to speak the language and to appreciate the blessings of freedom. They discovered that here in America men and women could stand together and fight for justice and progress with reasonable hope of success.

Concern for Others

America's emancipation from isolationism was won the hard way—and the trade unions made a significant contribution toward the development of a more mature international policy.

We did not shrug our shoulders, as some did, and say it was none of our business if dictators engaged in wholesale murder and the degradation of humanity in other parts of the world. We insisted it was our business. We saw the inherent danger to our free way of life, whenever freedom was destroyed in other lands.

There was a time when many Americans applauded Mussolini for getting the trains to run on time in Italy. But it took an American trade unionist of Italian descent like Luigi Antonini, to awaken our people to the outrages committed by the Fascists. In like manner, labor led the opposition in America to the atrocities of Hitler and the Japanese war lords. We recognized them as enemies of free trade unions and therefore as enemies of all freedom. No group in America, from the very beginning, has been more adamant in its opposition to Communism and more active in resisting Soviet infiltration than the American labor movement.

Labor's influence in foreign affairs has not been merely negative. We have fought for justice and fair play for oppressed peoples everywhere. After the war, we helped the workers of Germany re-establish their free trade unions as a bulwark of democracy, social justice and peace. We have played a vital role in rallying support for the Hungarian and Algerian peoples in their struggle for national freedom. We are proud of the fact that we have been able to extend a helping hand, through Histadrut, to the people of Israel.